

RADIATION TREATMENT PROGRAM COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

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The purpose of the **Community of Practice (CoP) Newsletter** is to provide updates on CoP quality projects and highlight current provincial initiatives

For more information regarding the two working group or additional initiatives/projects that the RSO CoP is leading, please contact:

[Dr. Katharina Sixel](#)
(RSO CoP Co-Lead)

[Dr. Michael Sharpe](#)
(RSO CoP Co-Lead)

OR

[Carina Simniceanu](#)
(CCO Coordinator)

Radiation Safety Officers CoP Announcement

In 2015, Radiation Safety Officers (RSO) from all regional cancer programs came together to develop the RSO Community of Practice (CoP) which focuses on issues pertaining to their practice (Figure 1). Following a face to face meeting on June 22nd, the group prioritized key issues which led to the establishment of two working groups:

1. Security Guidelines Working Group- This group is working collaboratively on determining how to best interpret the new [security guidelines](#) from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC)
2. HARP Liaison Working Group- This group is focused on communicating RSO goals and concerns to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care as the [Healing Arts Radiation Protection \(HARP\)](#) Act is being revised

Cancer Centre	Representative Name
Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario	John Schreiner
The Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Program	Keith Nakonechny
Stronach Regional Cancer Centre	Ivan Yeung
Odette Cancer Centre	Geordi Pang
Northeastern Ontario Regional Cancer Centre	Konrad Leszczynski
Juravinski Cancer Centre	Joe Hayward
Juravinski Cancer Centre	Kevin Diamond
Carlo Fidani Peel Regional Cancer Centre	Raxa Sankreacha
R.S. McLaughlin Durham Regional Cancer Centre	Katharina Sixel
Grand River Regional Cancer Centre	Ernest Osei
London Regional Cancer Program	Craig Lewis
Windsor Regional Cancer Centre	Jeff Richer
Princess Margaret Cancer Centre	Hamideh Alasti
Princess Margaret Cancer Centre	Robert Heaton
Thunder Bay Regional Cancer Centre	Peter McGhee
Ottawa Hospital Regional Cancer Centre	David Wilkins
Algoma District Cancer Program	Jeff Konieczny

Figure 1. Breakdown of the Provincial Representation for the RSO CoP



Advanced Practice RT
@AdvPracticeRT

Photos and videos



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Just one way CSRTs improve access to care for oncology patients #quickstart #AdvPracticeRT youtu.be/6li4JTmj9xA via @YouTube

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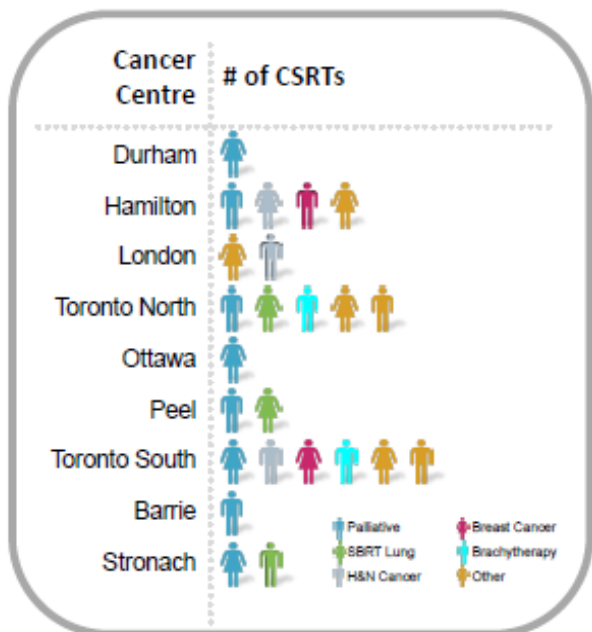
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The Clinical Specialist Radiation Therapist (CSRT) CoP: We are on Twitter!

The Clinical Specialist Radiation Therapist (CSRT) is a new advanced practice radiation therapy role. Currently there are 24 positions in 9 regional cancer centres in the province (Figure 2). CSRTs are able to assume responsibility for certain key radiation medicine activities traditionally performed by radiation oncologists, while maintaining and improving access to care, patient experience, implementing quality initiatives and increasing capacity. The CSRT Community of Practice (CSRT CoP) came together to build relationships and networks amongst the CSRTs and showcase this exciting new role provincially.

One of the activities that the CSRT CoP has been working towards is the development of a social media presence, which will allow CSRTs to interact with other advanced practice roles and models that have been developed worldwide. One pivotal milestone within this work is the development of the [@AdvPracticeRT](#) Twitter account. Be sure to follow [@AdvPracticeRT](#) for information around relevant conferences and publications, various CSRT announcements and many other items of interest!



For more information on the CSRT CoP, please contact [Michelle Lau](#) and [Laura D'Alimonte](#) (CSRT CoP Co-Leads), or [Carina Simniceanu](#) (CCO Coordinator)

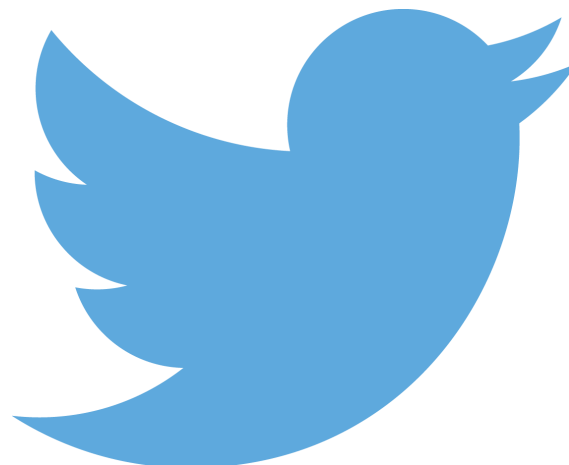


Figure 2. CSRT Distribution across Ontario

Lung Community of Practice Update

The Lung Community of Practice (CoP) was established in late 2013 following a discussion among the Heads of Radiation Oncology who agreed that variation in care for Ontario patients receiving radiotherapy for lung cancer should be minimized. The decision was made to set up a CoP to identify potential areas for improvement in the domain of radiotherapy quality potential issues in the area of radiotherapy for lung cancer, and drive projects to improve the quality of care.

Since that time the CoP has:

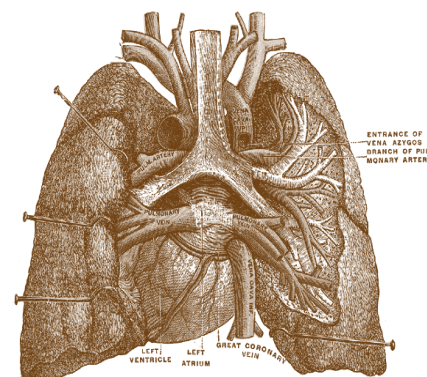
- **June 2014:** Hosted a workshop for representatives from all cancer centres to develop a current state assessment survey to better understand the current quality of lung cancer radiotherapy in Ontario, and identify specific areas for the CoP to focus on.
- **Fall 2014:** Administered and analyzed the current state assessment survey, and identified projects for the CoP.
- **Winter 2015:** Recruited and established four Working Groups with participation from across 14 Ontario cancer centres. All Working Groups have full multi-professional participation (radiation therapists, radiation oncologists and medical physicists).
- **March 2015:** Hosted a workshop for Working Group members to meet for the first time and begin progress on the projects.

The four established Working Groups are:

Working Group/Project	Objectives
Lung Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) Guidance Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a set of general IGRT Lung guidelines and define criteria to assist with identifying how to manage anatomical changes during radiotherapy treatment • Consider how to develop training/educational tools to facilitate the above objective
Peer Review for Lung Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inter-centre peer review network
Lung Stereotactic Body Radiation Therapy (SBRT) Implementation Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the basic framework of a lung SBRT program (e.g. treatment planning, QA, IGRT, treatment delivery) to help enable all Ontario cancer centres to provide high-quality SBRT for eligible lung cancer patients • Establish an infrastructure for networking among cancer centres to promote SBRT knowledge transfer, program refinement, peer review and QA
Incorporation of Positron Emission Tomography (PET) into Planning Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess barriers to timely access to PET and recommend solutions based on findings • Review current practices for the incorporation of PET into treatment planning and make recommendations based on available evidence

For more information regarding the four working groups or additional initiatives/projects that the Lung CoP is leading, please contact:

- [Dr. Stew Gaede](#), Physics Lung CoP Co-Lead
- [Andrea Marshall](#), Radiation Therapy Lung CoP Co-Lead
- [Dr. Brian Yaremko](#), Radiation Oncology Lung CoP Co-Lead
- [Carina Simniceanu](#), CCO Coordinator



Head and Neck CoP Update

The inaugural meeting for the Head and Neck (HN) Cancer Community of Practice (HN CoP) was held on 16 December 2010 and the group has met on a regular basis since that initial gathering (Figure 3). The HN CoP's vision is to reduce variation in and improve the quality of radiation treatment for patients with HN cancer in Ontario. The group identifies quality improvement opportunities, sets priorities for action and works together on CoP specific quality initiatives.

The HN CoP's first two initiatives focused on attaining current state assessments and developing recommendations for [contouring nomenclature in HN cancer](#) and [dose objectives for HN IMRT treatment planning](#). The recommendations reports are accessible via the [CCO website](#). Work is currently underway to evaluate the impact and usefulness of these reports to radiation treatment professionals in Ontario cancer centres.

Working groups of the HN CoP are also working on the following initiatives:

- **Standardized IGRT Processes**
Focus on: examining variation in HN IGRT practice across Ontario and providing recommendations for standardizing IGRT protocols and processes, based on available evidence and clinical consensus.
- **Local HN Peer Review Practices**
Focus on: developing a framework for HN local peer review processes.

For more information around the HN CoP, please contact [Dr. Stephen Breen](#), [Dr. John Kim](#), [Dani Scott](#) or [Dr. Khaled Zaza](#) (HN CoP Co-Leads) or [Elizabeth Lockhart](#) (CCO Coordinator)

Progress To-Date

Let's take a moment to appreciate what the H&N CoP has accomplished so far...

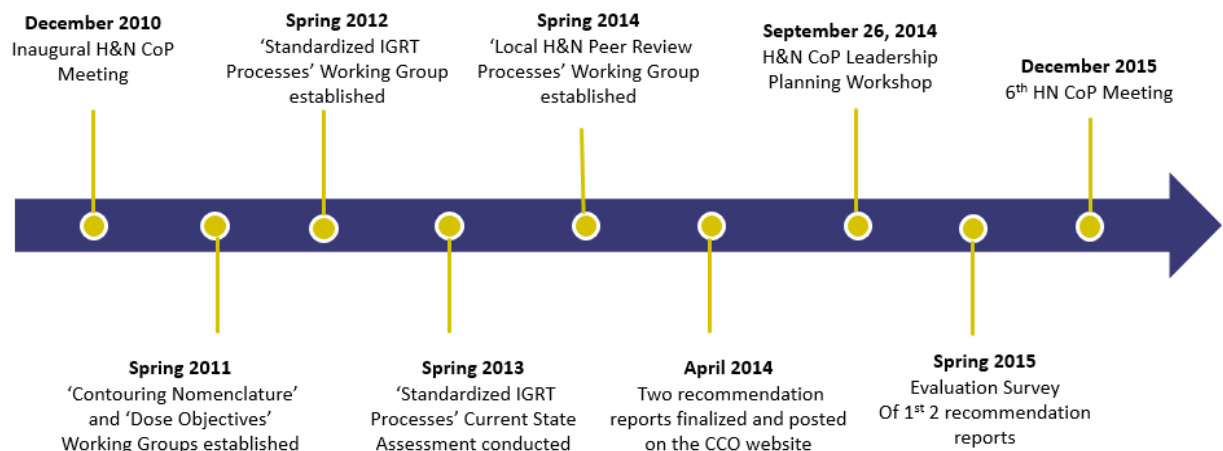


Figure 3. Head and Neck CoP Progress to Date

Radiation Therapy CoP Update

The Radiation Therapy Community of Practice (RThCoP) was developed in 2011 after identifying a need to reduce variation in frontline clinical practice. Made up of representatives from all 14 cancer centres, the RThCoP had two initial goals:

- 1) to identify areas of practice that are important for Ontario radiation therapists, and
- 2) to develop strategies to improve radiation therapy practice and quality of care.

To tackle these goals, the RThCoP has developed several projects which were identified as priorities by group members. Some notable completed projects include:

- **The Image Guided Radiation Therapy (IGRT) Education Module** – The RThCoP determined that therapists across the province were in need of further education for IGRT treatments and developed a template module that can be adapted to fit any Regional Cancer Centre (RCC) to assist with these goals.
- **Standardized Educational Checklists** – The RThCoP identified several areas where variation in patient education was observed and developed several checklists to reduce variation. Lists were developed around patient education, weekly chart checks, CT simulation and treatment and last day patient education. All checklists can be adapted to suit RCC needs.
- **The Safety Straps Recommendation Report** – Following a critical incident involving a patient fall from a treatment bed at a centre, the RThCoP, with the Radiation Therapy Professional Advisory Committee, developed a recommendation report around the use of removable safety straps for all patients undergoing radiation therapy. This statement has been posted on [CCO's web-site](#).

Several projects are also currently underway, including:

- an examination of imaging frequency practices in treatment,
- development of additional checklists,
- recommendation of therapist-led imaging quality assurance rounds,
- investigations into the culture of incident reporting at the frontlines, and
- examination of the use of post-treatment follow-up phone calls.



For more information on the RThCoP, please contact [Margaret Hart](#) (Radiation Therapy Clinical Quality Lead) or [Michelle Ang](#) (CCO Coordinator)

Gynecological Cancers CoP Update

The inaugural meeting for the Gynecological Cancers Community of Practice (GynCoP) was held on 17 October 2011. Invited members identified many potential initiatives that could be undertaken to help improve patient care across the province and identify initiatives that were determined to be high priority by group.

Collectively, the group determined that magnetic resonance (MR) imaging guided brachytherapy for cervical cancer would become the future standard of care, and working groups were formed around this concept.

Two initial initiatives focused on attaining a current state assessment of radiation treatment around cervical and endometrial cancers, as well as the development of a recommendation report on the [Imaging Strategies for Definitive Intracavitary Brachytherapy of Cervical Cancer](#) were essential in influencing policy, contributing to an investment of additional MR equipment in the province.

Further work in developing a provincial MR strategy is currently underway including:

- **The Models of Care Working Group** – Working towards developing an ideal provincial strategy for referral of patients with cervical cancer to ensure that all patients across the province have access to MR brachytherapy
- **Contouring and Education Working Group** – Focused on ensuring that providers are able to access contouring education for MR brachytherapy
- **MR Cost Effectiveness Working Group** – Examining the cost effectiveness of MR guided Brachytherapy in comparison with other traditional methods of brachytherapy

Together, the GynCoP has been striving to ensure all patients in Ontario will have access to MR brachytherapy, and the best possible care.



For more information on the GynCoP, please contact [Dr. Michael Milosevic](#) or [Dr. David D'Souza](#) (GynCoP Co-Leads) or [Michelle Ang](#) (CCO Coordinator)

Physics CoP Update

In November 2013, the Medical Physics Community of Practice (Physics CoP) was created after the CCO Radiation Treatment Program Leadership and Heads of Physics across Ontario cancer centres identified an opportunity to increase inter-centre collaboration on quality initiatives. Representatives from all 14 cancer centre were identified, and a new CoP was born.



CoP members established two Working Groups:

Managing Equipment Downtime

This Working Group aims to identify a better approach for documenting and characterizing service downtime events, with the ultimate goal of improving the data available to inform capital replacement and investment decisions.

Currently, the Working Group has developed a detailed taxonomy for classifying and characterizing service downtime events, as well as a web tool based on this taxonomy. The group plans to develop an approach for validating the taxonomy and determine other next steps for the project.

Chart Checking Practices

The goal of this Working Group is to assess the variation in physics chart checking practices, and develop recommendations that would lead to greater constancy and effectiveness.

To date, the Working Group has developed and administered a comprehensive survey on present practices in physics chart checking, achieving 100% participation from all Ontario cancer centres. The Working Group has analyzed the data and identified areas of inter- and intra centre- variation in chart checking practices for further exploration. The survey has been presented at the [Canadian Winter School on Quality and Safety in Radiation Oncology](#), and some preliminary findings from the survey at the [World Congress of Biomedical Engineering and Medical Physics](#).

For more information regarding the Physics CoP or around any of the projects/initiatives that the Physics CoP is leading, please contact [Dr. Michael Sharpe](#), (Physics CoP Co-Lead) or [Carina Simniceanu](#) (CCO Coordinator).

We want to hear from you! Please send your ideas for CoP Newsletter Spotlights and Updates and your feedback to RTP@cancercare.on.ca

If you have any questions about the content of this newsletter or about the RTP, don't hesitate to contact us. You can reach us by sending an email to our general mailbox (RTP@cancercare.on.ca) or contacting us individually.

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