

Care for the elderly and chronic disease management present challenging issues for the healthcare system as we move from institutionally based care to care in the community. In this issue of *Healthcare Quarterly*, we present a series of papers focused on community-based care.

Amédé Gogovor, Michelle Savoie, Yola Moride, Marilyn Krelbaum and Terrence Montague at the University of Montreal review the recent history and current status of disease management in the province of Québec and summarize its evolving perspectives and future prospects. Although a relatively new innovation in Québec and Canada, the available evidence suggests that public-private partnerships in disease management are practical and functional vehicles to facilitate knowledge creation and transfer in the care of whole populations of patients.

As chronic disease management grows in prominence, ensuring adequate healthcare workers to provide care will become increasingly challenging. A perspective by Margo Orchard, Esther Green, Terrence Sullivan, Anna Greenberg and Verna Mai at Cancer Care Ontario, looks at the development of community-based interdisciplinary teams to provide care.

Another outstanding paper by Marcus J. Hollander and Michael J. Prince presents a best practice framework for organizing healthcare delivery systems for individuals with ongoing care needs and their families. The authors base this work on a Canadian project during which they studied care delivery for four populations with ongoing care needs – the elderly, persons with disabilities, persons with chronic mental health conditions and children with special needs.

Quality care at the end of life has been called the right of every Canadian. Hsien Seow at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Susan King who was the End-of-Life Care Strategy coordinator for Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and Vida Vaitonis the former director of the Ministry's Home Care and Community Support Branch examine the impact of Ontario's end of life strategy one year after its implementation.

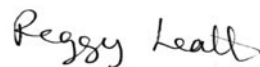
We also present a special report on the Guidelines International Network (G-I-N) conference held earlier this year in Toronto. A collaboration of 73 organizations from 36 countries, the network promotes the systematic development of evidence-based guidelines and their application into practice worldwide.

In the Ideas at Work section, Mat Mercuri and colleagues at the Hamilton Health Sciences Centre Interventional Cardiology unit, describe work done in developing formal policies for monitoring and recording the radiation dose administered to patients. A case study by Tina Saryeddine and colleagues at the Toronto Rehab Institute demonstrates how patient education websites can also be used to educate providers with the right support from thought leaders.

In the FutureThink section, Kevin Leonard, Mark Casselman and David Wiljer from the University of Toronto and the University Health Network, continue the theme of chronic disease management with a piece on the critical importance of electronic patient records to ensure consistent care for these patient populations. The authors suggest that patients will soon begin to demand access to the information they require to manage their health.

We feature photos from the 2007 HealthAchieve Convention in November. Congratulations to all award winners included in this highlight.

These papers, together with all material published by Longwoods, is available online. This virtual library of ideas, policies and practices can provide you with insight illuminating many of the issues you face on a day-to-day basis. Be our guest.



–Peggy Leatt, PhD



About the Cover

The work carried out at Les Impatients of Montreal is focused on the well-being of its clientele. ... Art is of great help to those having to cope with psychiatric problems – by expressing themselves through art they come out of their closed-in world and establish contact with a community considered normal.

... a perspective on chronic disease management taken from the pages of the book *“Les Impatients of Montreal – Artists from the Fringe”* (www.impatients.ca) Cover artwork by Pierre Bellemare.



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