

# APPHON-ROHPPA

# NEWSLETTER

Atlantic Provinces Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Network  
Réseau d'Oncologie et Hématologie Pédiatrique des  
Provinces Atlantiques

May 2026

The best care  
for young Atlantic Canadians  
with cancer and serious blood disorders.

ADVISORY COUNCIL EXECUTIVE:  
CHAIR – DR. HEIDI BUDDEN  
VICE CHAIR – DR. NATACHA HÉBERT

## APPHON Conference, Nov 5-7

Hosted in-person at the IWK in Halifax. Virtual access for some sessions.

*Celebrating*  
30 Years of APPHON

Join health care professionals from the Atlantic Provinces for three information-packed days of learning.

Conference Updates coming soon to [APPHON Website](#)

## Advisory Council Membership

**Marjorie McGibbon** has been a very active and valued member of our APPHON Advisory Council since May 2018. She will be missed, but we look forward to continued collaboration and insights from her in the future.

*Thank you, Marjorie!*

As Marjorie steps down, we are delighted to welcome aboard **Christa Wheeler-Thorne**, Clinical Executive Director of the Women and Children's Health Program at The Moncton Hospital.

*Welcome, Christa!*



View [Advisory Council Membership](#)

In this newsletter  
you can expect:

Nursing CoP Meeting

Jack Hand Education  
Fund

Chemotherapy and  
Biotherapy Courses

OPOR Transition

IWK COG Leadership  
& Coordination  
Update

Updated Guidelines  
& Resources



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## Meeting – Nursing Community of Practice

Co-Chairs, Mirelle Gougeon and Shelby LeBlanc, invite you to our upcoming meeting:

**Thurs, June 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**10:00 – 11:00 AM ADT**



**Submit topics of interest** and  
**REGISTER TODAY**

to receive the meeting invitation

“The Nursing Community of Practice (CoP) is a collaborative forum that brings nurses together to share knowledge,

*strengthen professional practice,*

and support continuous improvement in patient care.

The CoP promotes dialogue, learning, and the integration of evidence-informed practices across nursing roles and specialties.”

- Draft Terms of Reference

### Dr. Jack Hand Education Fund

APPHON/ROHPPA supports educational endeavors for health care professionals who care for pediatric hematology/oncology patients in Atlantic Canada. We are pleased to offer educational funding in honour of the memory of Dr. Jack Hand.

Dr. Hand practiced as a Pediatric Hematologist/Oncologist at the Janeway Children’s Health and Rehabilitation Centre in Newfoundland and was the Vice Chair of APPHON/ROHPPA. He was a driving force behind the development of

APPHON/ROHPPA and contributed greatly to its growth and success.

**Dr. Hand served as a positive role model for his colleagues and students by his love, compassion and humour. He has had a tremendous impact on the lives of the children and families in his care.**

We wish to continue that legacy by offering funding to promote and support ongoing education that will benefit all members of APPHON/ROHPPA, as well as the children and families for whom we care.

Applications for 2026 funding (up to \$1,500) are **due by June 30**. The application form is available on our website.

## Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Courses

The IWK does not have a confirmed date for any upcoming Pediatric Chemotherapy and Biotherapy Provider Courses.

We recommend the APHON sponsored courses which are listed here: <https://www.aphon.org/events/>



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## OPOR Transition - Document & Result Access

There have been issues identified with health care providers receiving and being able to find letters and results on their computers since OPOR was launched at the IWK. The system still has challenges in autosending documents and letters to multiple community (and other) providers. **Currently, only the primary healthcare provider is automatically included on any sent document.** If providers have multiple destinations in the provincial provider directory, documents may also be misdirected. Additionally, the internal "message centre" for secure communication is

currently only available for users within OPOR. However, all relevant documents, laboratory reports, imaging reports, etc. generated within OPOR are immediately available on the Provider Portal. Once additional sites "go live" on OPOR, this should become easier.

**We encourage everyone to ensure their local communication practices are robust and clear** to ensure that relevant documents and communications are received and distributed appropriately.

– Dr. Bruce Crooks

## IWK Children's Oncology Group (COG) Leadership & Coordination Update



The IWK COG Clinical Trials office is announcing some upcoming transitions and extending our deepest gratitude to departing team members for their service.

First, we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to **Dr. Craig Erker** as he steps down as our COG Principal Investigator. We are immensely grateful for his years of hard work, leadership, and unwavering dedication to improving access to life-changing clinical trials for oncology patients across Atlantic Canada.

At the same time, we are thrilled to welcome **Dr. Chelsea Ash** into the role of IWK COG Principal Investigator, and look forward to her leadership in moving our research forward.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to **Mary Jean Howitt** for her dedicated time and contributions as the IWK's COG Regional Clinical Trial Coordinator. Through her tireless work developing the provincial agreements, procedures, and policies that support regional trial delivery, Mary Jean helped make it possible for children across Atlantic Canada to receive clinical trial treatment closer to home. Mary Jean's essential work has been transitioned to **Erin MacKinnon** and **Jeff LeBrun** within the COG office.

Please join us in thanking Craig and Mary Jean for their outstanding dedication to pediatric oncology research, and in welcoming Chelsea, Erin, and Jeff into their new roles!

– Jeff LeBrun, COG Clinical  
Research Associate

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# Updated Guidelines & Resources

We are currently reviewing and updating the following guidelines:



## GUIDELINES

- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Mucositis

These (and many more!)  
guidelines are available on  
the [APPNON website](#)

**Les ressources pédagogiques sont maintenant offertes en français.**

The newly created oncofertility resources are now translated into French and are available on the APPNON website in both colour and black and white.



**A video animation is also being created**

that provides an overview of the oncofertility resources  
in multiple languages:

**Arabic, English, French and Mi'kmaw.**

The videos will be posted on the website this summer.



## Our Vision:

For Atlantic Province children and youth to access comprehensive, current, effective, integrated, evidence-based hematologic/oncologic care delivered as close to home as effectively and safely feasible.

## Our Mission:

APPNON/ROHPPA acts as a vehicle for communication, education, advocacy, and development of standards by and for member organizations, groups and individuals to achieve shared goals of comprehensive health services and clinical care, education and research related to the health care of children with hematologic or oncologic disorders and for their families.

We welcome  
newsletter  
submissions  
to share with  
our APPNON/  
ROHPPA  
Community --

[email us  
today!](#)



*Thank you for reading!*

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