



December 2009

NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1

Alberta Sepsis Network Update

I am pleased to report the very successful launch of our team grant in 2009. We kicked off our project year with the first annual Alberta Sepsis Network (ASN) Retreat in Red Deer, Alberta on May 6th. I believe all that attended would agree it provided a great opportunity for the team members to meet and share ideas to start the project. Members from Edmonton, Lethbridge and Calgary presented their pieces of the sepsis puzzle as it related to our team grant proposal. Knowledge gained from this meeting combined with the ongoing and greatly appreciated financial advice from Dr. Anwar Haq, Business Manager, enabled us to write our Research Management Plan to expand on the foundation of our five year research and clinical goals. We have just declared May 5, 2010 as the date for our second annual ASN Retreat to be held once again in Red Deer. We hope to see new and familiar faces in attendance this year.

Dr. Brent Winston, PI, teamed with Josee Wong, Coordinator, to successfully establish the Critical Care Epidemiologic and Biologic Tissue Resource (CCEPTR). This is an essential component of the ASN which contributes to the success of our project by providing a sophisticated tissue bank

utilizing bar code technology and customized software. The bank provides means to accurately catalogue and efficiently dispense biological samples to our basic scientists for analysis.

As anticipated, ethics approval was a major hurdle but thanks to the hard work of Dr. Brent Winston, Dr. Chip Doig and Research Coordinator, Linda Knox, we finally succeeded in getting approval in the fall which allowed Dr. Ari Joffe at the Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton to initiate their approval. We started collecting samples from the ICUs at the Foothills Medical Center and the Peter Lougheed Center in late September. We anticipate receiving our first septic samples from Edmonton in January, 2010. This will undoubtedly pave the way for the Alberta Children's Hospital to follow suit early in the new year.

This could not have happened without two very important members of our team, our Research Coordinators. Linda Knox at the Foothills Medical Center brings to the table over 30 years of nursing experience specializing in research management. Also joining us since September and situated in the Peter Lougheed Center is Cheryl Dielissen.

We are in the process of recruiting another Coordinator to be located at the Alberta Children's Hospital early in 2010. They have been instrumental in helping us procure almost 100 samples at time of press. Thanks for all of your hard work Linda and Cheryl!



Project Manager: Derrice Knight

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Jessie Kaur

We have established a close working relationship with University Technologies International as our technology transfer and commercialization entity. Dr. Jessie Kaur has been relocated onsite at the TRW building to assist our team with early recognition and marketing of intellectual property.



Carol Gelette

The ASN would also like to acknowledge the terrific efforts of Ms. Carol Gelette, Administrative Assistant, who miraculously keeps us all organized and is responsible for establishing and maintaining our website (www.albertasepsisnetwork.ca), our Google Group and is editor in chief of our newsletter! She will also work closely with Karen

Thomas, the AHFMR Communications Officer, to help promote ASN.



Dean Yergens

Dean Yergens, our IT consultant, is currently working on software development, database integration and establishing strategies for future data mining. Our goal is to unite clinical patient data with results obtained from biosamples analysed by our basic scientists to reveal trends in septic patient profiles to personalize treatment to the specific

septic condition and identify new molecular targets.



Other ASN Members

Other members who have recently been added to our research group are Cathy Sheppard, Research Coordinator at the Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton, Monica Faria, technician for Dr. Mike Surette in the Microbial Communities Laboratory, Dr. Caroline Leger, Director, Snyder Translational Laboratory in Critical Care Medicine, Dr. Pina Colarusso, Scientific Director of the Live Cell Imaging Facility and Dr. Zhiwen Guan, Research Associate in leukocyte trafficking. Currently we are actively recruiting trainees which will be joining our group in the near future. We are also planning to engage the

expertise of cognitive behaviourists Dr. Deborah Saucier and Dr. Robert Sutherland, our colleagues in Lethbridge, to evaluate the long-term outcome of our septic patients.

The Alberta Sepsis Network is presently working on establishing research collaborations with other hospitals in Canada, the USA and Brazil. Derrice Knight has visited Dr. Eliezer Silva who has banked numerous samples and after visiting us this year as the Snyder Chair speaker, Dr. Derek Angus, has indicated interest in collaborating using his tissue bank. Finally, Dr. Brent Winston and Dr. Hans

Vogel have started collaboration with Dr. Hector Wong, Pediatric ICU Physician, in Cincinnati. This will allow us to not only compare septic samples from patients in Alberta to patients in different regions of Canada but also on an intercontinental level.

Thank you to all involved in the continuing success of this project and on behalf of the AHFMR funded Alberta Sepsis Network, we wish to extend a very Happy Holiday Season with the Very Warmest Wishes for 2010!



Anwar Haq, Business Manager



Alberta Sepsis Network

University of Calgary
Health Research Innovation Centre
4A26A, 3280 Hospital Drive NW
Calgary, Alberta, T2N 4N1

Derrice Knight, Team Manager
Phone: 403-220-3012
Carol Gelette, Administrative Assistant
Phone: 403-220-4574
Fax: 403-270-7516



Sepsis is a life-threatening blood infection and one of the top 10 causes of death in Alberta. It can be caused by a variety of bacterial infections which overactivate the immune system in different ways, triggering inflammation throughout the body. Drugs exist that can treat the infections and block the inflammation, but sepsis is often not diagnosed until organ damage has already occurred.

The Alberta Sepsis Network is composed of 25 researchers, including immune experts, microbiologists, biochemists, infectious disease physicians, and intensive care physicians, at the University of Calgary, University of Alberta, University of Lethbridge and the University of Toronto.

If you would like further information please contact Ms. Derrice Knight, Project Manager or Ms. Carol Gelette, Administrative Assistant.

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