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Northern Passages

Newsletter of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine

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A new era for cancer research

Dr. Roger Strasser, Founding Dean of Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Mr. Ron Saddington, President and CEO of Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre and Dr. Fred Gilbert, President of Lakehead University unveil the identity of a new institute of cancer research at a media conference in Thunder Bay

ICR Discoveries, Institute of Cancer Research, is the result of a new formal partnership between the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Lakehead University, and the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

Ultimately, the partnership will grow the critical mass of cancer researchers in Thunder Bay and attract new dollars for cancer care clinical trials, medical physics and imaging research, wet lab or biosciences research, health outcomes research, and supportive care or psychosocial research.

The implementation of a jointly managed cancer research institute will open doors to new sources of research funding, opportunities, and recruitment, that otherwise might be unavailable.

ICR Discoveries will foster enhanced collaboration between the three institutions in an effort to attract new research funding, provide a platform for the recruitment and retention of cancer care professionals and investigators in cancer research, enhance the profile and prestige of Northwestern Ontario in the national and global research community, and strengthen the technical capability and the programs and services that are offered by the partner institutions.

As well, ICR Discoveries will provide education and training for students, researchers and physicians who would like to engage in cancer research, assist in the establishment of educational programs that will produce researchers in Northwestern Ontario, and generate economic growth through new investors and community partners.

New Associate Dean joins School of Medicine

Dr. Joel Lanphear

Following a lengthy and comprehensive competition process, the Northern Ontario School of Medicine extended an offer to a new Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education (UME). Subject to Canadian Immigration approval, Dr. Joel Lanphear will join the School in May, 2005. As the Associate Dean, UME, he will be responsible for all aspects of planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the undergraduate medical education (MD)program. The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Medical Education is a member of the Senior Management Group and the Senior Academic Leadership Group.

Dr. Lanphear earned his Ph.D. in Education at Michigan State University, and has gained extensive experience as an administrator at various U.S. medical schools. Dr. Lanphear is currently Provost and Professor of Medical Education at the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine & Health Sciences in Arizona. He was involved in the start up of the medical school at the United Arab Emirates University. Also he has held teaching and administrative positions at the University of North Texas Health Science Centre at Fort Worth, The School of Medicine of the University of Nevada, the School of Medicine of the University of California and the College of Human Medicine at Michigan State University.

Dr. Roger Strasser, Founding Dean, is pleased with the appointment. "Dr. Lanphear's experience and enthusiasm will be advantageous as we develop and implement academic performance standards for undergraduate medical students and teaching faculty," says Strasser.

Francophone Reference Group to host "La médecine Franco-Ontarienne" SymposiumTraining

Mark your calendar: May 13-14, 2005.

The Francophone Reference Group (FRG), the School's advisory group to the Founding Dean on Francophone issues, will host a symposium. "La médecine Franco-Ontarienne" will be held in Sudbury and target the Francophone communities, Francophone health practitioners and prospective students.

"The symposium will provide participants with an excellent opportunity for discussion and input in the ongoing development of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine," explains Nicole Ranger, President of the Group."We are looking forward to having the opportunity to listen to people's recommendations in the development of the Medical School."

« Le symposium fournira une excellente occasion de parler de la mise sur pied de l'École de médecine du Nord de l'Ontario,» explique Nicole Ranger, présidente du groupe. «Nous avons bien hâte d'entendre les recommandations de l'auditoire concernant l'édification de cette école. »

Francophone health issues and other necessary assistance for francophone students attending the medical school will be the main focus that will be addressed during the symposium.

"We are committed to createing a Francophone friendly school. Therefore every effort should be made to ensure that Franco-Ontarians feel welcomed and are proud to be part of our School," says Dr. Roger Strasser, Founding Dean of the Medical School.

« Nous avons pris l'engagement de créer une école accueillante pour les Francophones. Par conséquent, nous ferons de notre mieux pour qu'ils se sentent bienvenus et soient fiers de faire partie de notre école » a déclaré le Dr Roger Strasser, doyen fondateur de l'École de médecine.

The Group is actively meeting and networking with various universities and organizations as part of its preparation for the symposium. Check our Spring 2005 newsletter for more details of the symposium!

Northern Ontario School of Medicine staff from both campuses pose at Science North in Sudbury. The group gathered there for a two-day Staff Retreat in December, where they participated in a team-buiilding workshop.

Founding Dean receives WONCA award

Dr. Roger Strasser

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine is proud to announce that Founding Dean, Dr. Roger Strasser, recently received a Fellow of WONCA (World Organisation of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of Family Physicians/General Practitioners) award. The prestigious award, presented during WONCA's 17th World Conference of Family Doctors in Orlando Florida in October was in recognition of Dr.Strasser's outstanding service to WONCA and family medicine around the world.

Dr. Strasser has been the Chair of the WONCA's Working Party on Rural Practice since 1992. The Working Party on Rural Practice, formed in 1992, has initiated a series of World Rural Health Conferences, Rural Practice Policies and Statements, and the Health for All Rural People co-sponsored consultation between WONCA and the World Health Organization. Under Dr. Strasser's chairmanship, the Working Party has pursued its mission of improving rural health care around the world with considerable energy and enthusiasm. Dr. Strasser recently completed his term as Chair of the Working Party.

Symposium Series

Mark your calendar! Northern Ontario School of Medicine's Symposium Series continues in the new year. The symposia are held from noon - 1:30 pm (Eastern time). They are videoconferenced to NorthNetwork members throughout the region, and webcast live at www.normed.ca. Guests are welcome to view the symposia (either live or videoconferenced) at either campus location. Please contact Sherry Carlucci at (705) 662-7257 for details and reservations.

January 20, 2005
"Medical Professionalism:
A Call to Authenticity and Integrity"
Dr. William F. Sullivan, University of Toronto.

February 17, 2005
Maureen Lux
Historian of Aboriginal Health

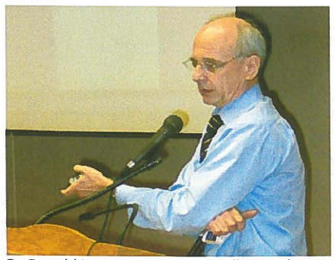
Other 2005 Symposium dates:
March 24
April 21
May 19

Spots are still available for various health–related symposium topics. Send your suggestions on topics and speakers to: sherry.carlucci@normed.ca

Conference engages medical educators

Faculty from all six Ontario medical schools gathered in Thunder Bay to attend a conference hosted by the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. The sixth annual AMS/COFM Educational Conference was held in November. It featured discussions that influence medical education in the province. Each year, Associated Medical Services Inc. (AMS) and the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine (COFM) provide funding for this event.

The Conference started on a high note with a very successful symposium which was networked to 29 video conference sites and web cast. The guest speaker, Dr. Donald Low delivered an excellent presentation on "SARS and Pandemic Influenza: the Need for Public Health" which triggered a wide range of questions, comments and discussion. If you missed it, the Symposium is archived on the School's website at www.normed.ca. The remainder of the afternoon focused on Interprofessional Education with a keynote address from Dr. Carol Herbert, Dean of Medicine at Western and President of the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, followed by reports from all six Ontario medical schools on their interprofessional education initiatives. On Thursday evening, conference participants went back in time to the early 19th century for dinner and festivities at Fort William Historical Park.



Dr. Donald Low presents a compelling and informative symposium on SARS.

Day two began with a keynote address from the Honorable Dr. Carolyn Bennett, Minister of State for Public Health on the topic "The Generalist Perspective in a Specialist World". This was an inspiring presentation which challenged participants to reflect deeply on trends in medicine and health care. The final session of the Conference was a series of four parallel workshops. These were: a Distributed Learning Panel with presenters from the Universities of Minnesota (Duluth) and Washington (Seattle), as well as Northern Ontario School of Medicine; Gender in Medicine with presenters from the gender curriculum project; Effective Teaching in a Distributed Learning Environment; and New Tools in the Evidence Based Model of Clinical Practice.

Conference participants learn early 1900s dancing at Fort William Historical Park.

Those who had attended previous COFM Conferences rated this one as the best. Dr. Dan Hunt, Vice Dean and principal organizer of the conference, is thrilled with the outcome. "For two days, participants were engaged by timely, relevant information and compelling discussion. Ultimately, medical students in Ontario will benefit from this conference," he says.

The Division of Clinical Sciences

The Division of Clinical Sciences, led by Dr. Tim Zmijowskyj, is one of three Divisions of the School and is the organizational unit responsible for teaching the clinical aspects of medicine.

Dr. Tim Zmijowskyj

The Division is organized by Sections, each of which is composed of health care professionals with Section specific clinical expertise. Most of the faculty members will be physicians. However, as the School's curriculum is interdisciplinary, other health care professionals are encouraged to seek faculty appointments. Faculty members of the Division may also assist in the development of the medical curriculum and conduct independent research.

"It is quite an honor to lead this Division and to serve with a team of excellent faculty members," says Tim. "Their invaluable investment of time and energy will benefit Northern communities for years to come. Their contributions will strengthen the legacy of high quality medical education in Northern Ontario," Tim adds.

The Clinical Sciences faculty will include approximately 10 full-time and 600 stipendiary faculty members. Currently, the Division has appointed 200 clinical faculty members.

The following Sections will be coordinated by the Division of Clinical Sciences:

- Anesthesia
- Child Health & Adolescent Health (Pediatrics)
- Clinical Education (Non medical health professionals)
- Diagnostic Imaging (Radiology)
- Emergency Medicine
- Family Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Laboratory Medicine and Pathology
- Mental Health
- Surgery
- Women's Health (Obstetrics and Gynecology)

Real life experiences for medical students

Hands-on learning is critical to preparing medical students to practice medicine. This hands-on learning serves two purposes: to allow students the opportunity to master their core clinical skills and to introduce them to career and practice options.

Students will undertake much of their studies outside of the main campuses. About 40% of the students' undergraduate time will be spent in many Northern Ontario communities, or Distributed Clinical Learning Sites (DCLS).

Distributed learning is a key component of the medical degree program. Students will learn in a range of health service settings including regional hospitals, mental health programs, long-term care facilities, small community hospitals, family practice clinics and in a range of community settings. Known as community-based medical education, this approach ensures our students receive the widest possible experience in the region.

To better understand and appreciate Aboriginal culture and health, an Aboriginal Health thread as been woven throughout the curriculum.

All students will participate in a four-week Aboriginal community placement at the end of first year. Students will live and learn in various communities with health centers and nursing stations. In these settings they will continue their core medical education by distance learning and will also learn about Aboriginal culture and the health care delivery system. Our important community partners have committed to welcome and help teach our students. The preceptors at the Aboriginal distributed sites will be local health care providers.

The Northern Ontario School of Medicine's progressive curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of Northerners by training students to be generalists who will flourish in Northern communities. It is also designed to reflect the reality of rural and remote lifestyles.

In the second through fourth years, students will continue to travel to large and small communities, some with and others without hospitals, to continue their learning. In all of these experiences faculty will be supported in their teaching.

For more information please contact the UME office at 705-662-7227.

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