



PRU update

Fall 2010

CONTRIBUTING TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING...

Initiated in 1996, the POGO Research Unit (PRU) focuses on research that contributes to a better understanding of childhood cancer and to improved outcomes for children with cancer, ultimately reducing the impact of cancer on children, families, and society.

POGO Collaborates with Canadian Cancer Society

In 2010, POGO and the Canadian Cancer Society, Ontario Division formed the Pediatric Cancer Outcomes Initiative (PCOI). This initiative brings together two prominent players in the cancer realm to build a childhood cancer research platform to stimulate research that improves the quality of outcomes for kids with cancer and childhood cancer survivors, and reduces the overall burden of cancer on families.

Through initiating projects that increase knowledge of the outcomes for children and adolescents diagnosed with cancer, there is the opportunity to improve the delivery of cancer care in this population and to equip survivors with the information needed to make informed decisions about their health.

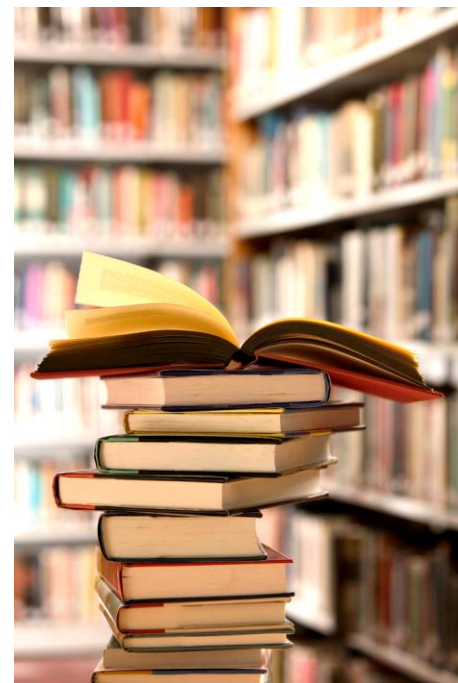
This initiative will: capture patient treatment and outcome data from 1985 to 1994 to augment POGO's database (POGONIS); conduct studies directed at improving outcomes and reducing the burden of cancer on children, adolescents, and their families; and launch a request for proposal (RFP) focused on outcomes and impacts of pediatric cancer.

Visit us at www.pogo.ca for funding opportunities related to this initiative.



Canadian
Cancer
Society

Société
canadienne
du cancer



CIHR Research Operating Grant

Nathan, P., Agha, M., Pole, J.D., Sutradhar, R., Hodgson, D., Guttman, A., and Greenberg, M.L.

Researchers at The Hospital for Sick Children, the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES), Princess Margaret Hospital, and POGO have secured a Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) grant for *Patterns and Predictors of Health Care Utilization by Adult Survivors of Childhood Cancer* (\$427,057 over three years). The study involves a data linkage between POGO and ICES and will: describe the pattern of long-term cancer follow-up care in adult survivors of childhood cancer; explore the demographic, disease, and treatment factors that predict attendance in specialized long-term follow-up clinics; and evaluate the use and predictors of guideline-recommended cancer follow-up care in two high-risk sub-populations of adult survivors of childhood cancer - echocardiography in survivors at increased risk of cardiac dysfunction and breast imaging in females at increased risk of breast cancer.

Research Activity Update

- PRU activities across an interdisciplinary spectrum have been productive and led to professional advancement for trainees and the development of new granting opportunities.

- Over the last few years, POGO has enhanced the PRU infrastructure with expansion of POGO's database (POGONIS) and scientific strength gained through recruitment of additional scientific and analytic staff to facilitate both in-house and collaborative database research.

- Highly acclaimed knowledge transfer and educational events have occurred and a significant number of presentations and publication have been generated.

- POGO and its partners are working on an *Atlas of Childhood Cancer in Ontario*. This publication will: provide a detailed picture of childhood cancer in Ontario; describe the patterns of childhood cancer by gender, geography, age, and birth cohort; and analyze patterns of care and healthcare utilization.

- Supported by CCS and CIHR, a project is currently underway to retrospectively capture treatment and outcome data from 1985 to 1994. Currently POGONIS contains demographic and incidence data on all children diagnosed within Ontario since 1985 and treatment and outcome information since 1995.

With the addition of this information, POGONIS will be a richer, more comprehensive resource for research and policy-relevant studies examining the outcomes of cancer in children and the late effects of treatment from a patient, population, and policy perspective.

Fellowship Program

POGO Research Fellowships are awarded to applicants working toward a PhD or pursuing a post doctoral degree, or to clinicians and healthcare practitioners of any discipline working on pediatric oncology-related research

Ms. Nicole Law

The PRU is pleased to announce its new fall 2010 Fellow, Ms. Nicole Law. Ms. Law's project is entitled *Cognition, Behaviour, and Affect in Children with Brain Tumors: The Role of Regional White Matter Integrity and Genetic Markers in Predicting Functional Outcome*.

Dr. Jillian Baker

In January 2010, Dr. Jillian Baker, Clinician Scholar recipient of POGO's 2007 Fellowship Award, successfully defended her Master's thesis investigating the influence of length of time to diagnosis and treatment on the survival of children with acute lymphoblastic leukemia or Hodgkin's lymphoma. Congrats!

Dr. Talar Hopyan and Dr. Argerie Tsimicalis

Two former POGO Fellows, Dr. Talar Hopyan and Dr. Argerie Tsimicalis, successfully defended their PhD theses in September 2008 and February 2010, respectively. Dr. Hopyan began her fellowship in 2006 with her project entitled *Emotion in Music in Children with Cerebellar Tumors*. Dr. Tsimicalis joined POGO as a Fellow in 2008 with her project *Costs Incurred by Families of Children Newly Diagnosed with Cancer in Ontario*. Congrats Drs. Hopyan and Tsimicalis!

Applying for a POGO Research Fellowship

The PRU is now accepting applications for the 2011 Research Fellowship Program.

Interested applicants can download an application form from the POGO website. The deadline for application is December 3, 2010.

Visit us at www.pogo.ca for more details regarding the POGO Research Fellowship Program and other PRU funding opportunities.

POGONIS

POGO has upgraded the POGO Networked Information System (POGONIS) platform over the last two years in conjunction with Artificial Intelligence in Medicine Inc. (AIM). The POGO data dictionary has also been revised. The new platform, now complete, is an event-driven model that:

- Enables data in individual records to be tracked longitudinally over the trajectory of illness;
- Ensures that entry of defined data required for each event is complete by requiring sign-off before further data entry is possible;
- Ensures better workflow management;
- Provides ready differentiation between missing and non-applicable data;
- Has an improved query functionality allowing for easy user-generated queries; and
- Uses current technical security standards to enhance security and privacy of data.

RESEARCH GRANTS



Seed Funding Grants

In 2009/10 four Seed Funding Grant applications were approved:

- *Improving the Quality of Palliative Care Delivery for Children with Advanced Cancer: Perspectives of Bereaved Parents and Pediatric Oncologists* (Kassam, A., Wolfe, J., Alexander, S., and Sung, L.)
- *Using White Matter Integrity to Predict the Speed of Neural Processing and Cortical Maturation in Healthy Children and Children with Brain Tumours* (Mabbott, D. and Dockstad, C.)
- *Canadian Family Physicians' Attitudes and Knowledge Regarding the Care of Adult Survivors of Childhood Cancer: A Survey Study* (Nathan, P., Henderson, T., Daugherty, C., Grunfeld, E., and Del Giudice, M.E.)
- *Long-Term Family Economic Consequences of a Childhood Cancer Diagnosis* (Pole, J., Mittman, N., and Greenberg, M.L.)

The PRU is now accepting applications for the 2010/2011 Seed Funding Grant competition (Deadline: November 26, 2010).

Open Operating Grant

This grant focuses on Ontario-based projects that involve at least three tertiary centres, may be time-sensitive, and/or fall outside of the priorities of typical funding sources.

In September 2009, Dr. Maru Barrera and her research team were awarded an Open Operating Grant for *Cultural Adaptation, Evaluation of Psychometric Properties of the Psychosocial Assessment Tool (PAT2.0) and Feasibility of Its Use with Families and Children Newly Diagnosed with Cancer in Ontario*.



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