

CANADIAN LYMPHEDEMA FRAMEWORK LAUNCHED

Winter 2009 Volume 12 Issue 1

Background

Formed in 2002, the **International Lymphoedema Framework** is a collaboration among health professionals, community based organizations, patients and industry partners to improve the standards of lymphedema management in Great Britain. This initiative has made tremendous strides in raising the profile of lymphedema in the U.K. Two important achievements are the Best Practice document and a standardized minimum data set. Japan and the United States are in various stages of implementing their own models of this important global initiative.

Canadian launch

It is with great pleasure that we announce the official launch of **Canadian Lymphedema Framework** on February 6, 2009. The executive committee's leadership is headed by Dr. Anna Towers and Dr. David Keast, as Co-Directors, in collaboration with Christine Moffatt.



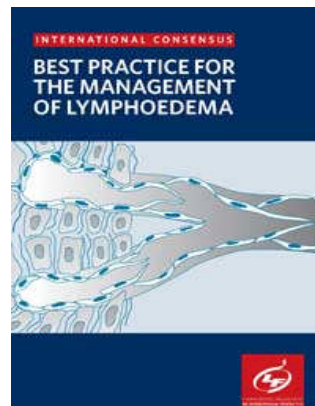
Pictured from left (back row) are: David Keast, Jill Allen, Anna Towers and Rachel Pritzker. Front Row: Anna Kennedy (left) and Pamela Hodgson.

Anna Towers, MDCM, CCFP is recognized as a leading lymphedema expert in Canada and is Director of the Interdisciplinary Lymphedema Program at McGill University Health Centre, Montreal, Quebec. She is Associate Professor of Oncology and Director of the Palliative Care Division, McGill University. She also sits on the International Advisory Committee for the International Lymphoedema Framework.

David Keast, MSc, MD, FCFP is Founding President of the Canadian Wound Care Foundation and Centre Director, Aging, Rehabilitation and Geriatric Care Research Centre of the Lawson Health Research Institute, London, Ontario. He was appointed to an international working group to produce a white paper for the World Health Organization on the management of lymphedema in countries with scarce resources.

Two additional executive members represent patient focused community organizations and are Anna Kennedy, Executive Director of the Lymphovenous Association of Ontario (Toronto, Ontario) and Rachel Pritzker, President of the Lymphedema Association of Quebec (Montreal, Quebec). Anna and Rachel bring both patient experience and business skills to the team.

Administrative support is provided by Pamela Hodgson, MSc, RMT, a certified lymphedema therapist and research assistant to Dr. Towers and Jill Allen, RN, WOCN/ET located in London, Ontario.



This new Canadian initiative is ready to move forward with the collaboration of the International Lymphoedema Framework (ILF), and the support of Christine Moffatt, PhD, ILF Clinical Director and CLF executive committee member (pictured above).

Our Vision

Comprehensive effective treatment for lymphedema and related disorders will be accessible to all persons across Canada.

Our Philosophy

- Effective treatment is based on best practice guidelines
- Lymphedema treatment must be fully covered or reimbursed
- Patient views are integral to all development of care
- Contributing to the rapidly growing evidence base is paramount
- International collaboration will increase global awareness of the importance of lymphedema in healthcare
- Investment in lymphedema will lead to new product development

Our Mission

The Canadian Lymphedema Framework (CLF) will work to improve the management of lymphedema and related disorders in Canada

In collaboration with the International Lymphedema Framework (ILF) and the American Lymphedema Framework Project (ALFP) we will contribute to the global international advancement of lymphedema care.

We will

- Raise the profile of lymphedema and related disorders nationally and internationally
- Define and promote best practices
- Develop a Lymphedema Minimum Data Set for Canada to improve lymphedema outcomes

- Take a leadership role in risk reduction, early diagnosis, treatment, education, health care and research of lymphedema.
- Place lymphedema and its management as a priority on regional, provincial and national health care agendas
- Address issues of inequity of provision

This work can only be done through partnerships with all stakeholders including persons living with lymphedema and related disorders, community organizations, health care providers, educators, researchers, government, industry representatives and insurance companies.

Call for Action

A critical next step will be the Canadian Lymphedema Framework stakeholders meeting scheduled for Friday, November 6, 2009 in Toronto, Ontario.

This is the opportunity to make your voice heard and influence the future of lymphedema care in Canada.

This "open space format" meeting will facilitate small group discussions. The basic principles of this important event are that

- there is full representation of all constituencies concerned about lymphedema care in Canada.
- everyone attending is passionate and committed to be part of the solution and participate in consensus-building about the issues, barriers, resources and priorities in lymphedema care in Canada.

Planning is underway so stay tuned for more details about this critical meeting.

We look forward to collaborating with you in this exciting endeavor.

The Executive Committee Canadian Lymphedema Framework

For more information please contact

Anna Towers, MDCM, FCFP
Co-Director
annatowers@muhc.mcgill.ca

David Keast, MSc, MD, FCFP
Co-Director
david.keast@sjhc.london.on.ca

Anna Kennedy
lymphontario@yahoo.com

Pamela Hodgson
pamela.hodgson@mcgill.ca

Rachel Pritzker
aql@info.lympho.ca

Jill Allen
joallen@mmm.com



Lymphovenous News is a publication of the

Lymphovenous Association of Ontario

4161 Dundas Street West, Toronto, Ontario M8X 1Y2 ♦ 416-410-2250 ♦ www.lymphontario.org