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CANADA'S VOICE FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH AN OSTOMY

ostomy canada CONNECTS

SPRING
2023

What's Up

with **Ann Durkee-Maclsaac & John Hartman**

What is up? Really up? What kind of question is that these days? Well, we can tell you a lot has been going on since the last time we 'connected.' (Sorry for the pun). **Ostomy Canada is thrilled to share some bits and pieces of news and updates.**

- The Nominating/Succession Planning Committee, under the stewardship of Jayne Kerr, was busy looking for a new Executive Director. We are thrilled to announce that Dana Ypma (right) from Burton, BC, has joined Ostomy Canada as the new Executive Director, effective April 3, 2023. Dana brings with her a strategic mindset, leadership, and collaborative experiences. She has over fourteen years of experience in fund development, donor relationships and a wide range of skill sets to help support our Mission. She also brings an intimate knowledge of the ostomy world through her daughter's journey. Connect with Dana at Dana.Ypma@ostomycanada.ca. Welcome aboard!
- The Visitor Training Program (VTP) online version is now LIVE. On March 28, we sent a complete "launch package" to Chapters and Support Group leadership and Visitor Coordinators. The package outlined the changes and requirements needed to go online. Some of these tools will also impact those that use the binder for group training. One of the most significant benefits of the online version – you can take it anywhere and anytime as long as you meet the data requirements. The new version uses video, improved graphics, voiceovers and reflection points to help support the critical program. Questions? Please connect with Deb.carpentier@ostomycanada.ca or Ann.durkee@ostomycanada.ca.
- Step Up for Ostomy – this year's date is Saturday, September 30, 2023, to avoid an early Thanksgiving in October. Start your planning now and get a head start. Stay tuned for more information in the months to come.
- Ostomy Canada's Board adopted some important new policies in February around Diversity, Inclusivity and Equity, as well as an Ingenious Land Acknowledgment Policy. A full set of revised and updated Governance policies are available through Steve Maybee at steve.maybee@ostomycanada.ca.



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NEWS & UPDATES

What's Up

continued from page 1

- You may see a few changes when you visit our website (www.ostomycanada.ca). We are piloting a program with some of our core supporters on "website advertising." This three-month pilot will help Ostomy Canada test the validity, traffic, and ROI of marketing our website to generate income and awareness/support for you. We are grateful to Inner Good, Wellwise, Hollister, Coloplast, and Convatec for their support in this pilot.
- Our Youth Camp Program is back on for 2023. We hope to host thirty-two or more campers from across Canada to Camp Horizon in Alberta and, as a test, another ten campers to attend Brigadoon Village in Nova Scotia. If you have questions, please get in touch with lisa.gausman@ostomycanada.ca
- Last month we sent samples of the Bravery Bag Covers (www.braverybagcovers.com) to Chapters, Facilitators, and stakeholders. These covers are free – so please check out the website for more information.
- So where is John Hartman going? Golfing, cooking, gardening, golfing, travelling, family time, being curious, and trying new hobbies (he makes cool things out of discarded wooden pallets). We could say nice things about John and his accomplishments over the past two years – but he wrote this insert, and we all know it was not just John doing the work. Our shared success and applause go out to our Board, volunteers from across Canada, Operational Committees and those that want to forge ahead, make changes, collaborate and build a better future. Thank you. Did he tell you he was going golfing when the snow melts? ○



John Hartman (middle) & friends Jack & Arnie

April Webinar Postponed

We regret to advise that Ostomy Canada's National Webinar scheduled for April 19, 2023, will be postponed, but will be excited to host you again on July 19th, 2023. Please stay tuned as we will be announcing the topics and speakers for our upcoming webinars in the near future. Thank you for your understanding and hope to see you online soon!

A New Peristomal Assessment Guide

is available online from WOCN (Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses in the US). A couple of Canadian nurses assisted in the development, including our very own national board member, Andy Manson from Parksville, BC. People will find suggestions and recommendations for care or treatment of peristomal skin issues as they work through this interactive guide.

To assess your peristomal skin health, please visit: <https://psag-consumer.wocn.org/#home>

Camp Plans Are In Full Swing!

Since last year, the Ostomy Canada Youth Camp Committee has been hard at work on several key initiatives. Here is a brief update:

- They have been busy creating the first ever Camp Manual, an important resource for general yearly plans and operations, as well as succession planning.
- Lisa and Janet (Camp Coordinator and Camp Administrator) have been busy creating and sending the letters to all current camp families and Chapter Presidents (Camp Coordinators) with all the necessary registration information. Registration closes on May 1, 2023.
- With a great deal of effort, we now have streamlined the registration process so that it is all on Easter seals camp brain now. No more duplication of forms.
- Chapters and sponsors have been contacted and are stepping up to offer sponsorship for registration fees and/or flight costs. Camp costs alone are now \$900.00/child.
- Applications are now closed for 2023 for NSWOCs and volunteers. We are thrilled to see an increase in the number of applicants. Reviews, references and final selections have been completed. It will be nice to have some new and diverse energy at camp.
- Easter Seals has allocated up to forty spots for ostomy campers and an additional eight to nine nurses and volunteers. We will again be sharing the facility with Crohn's and Colitis Canada who have been allocated thirty camper spots and a few volunteer spots. The volunteer cabin will be shared with both groups and all volunteers are mandated by Easter Seals to have their COVID vaccinations up to date.
- Ensuring that everyone has a fun and safe time is the priority for us all!



- We appreciate all of Ostomy Canada Society's (OCS) supporters for their continued efforts to ensure that no child is ever denied the camp experience. If you know of any potential campers or sponsors (donors) for financial means or product means, please have them contact the Camp Administrator at lisa.gausman@ostomycanada.ca.
- **Note** – as previously shared any child/youth from across Canada can attend Camp Horizon, AB. In addition, as a pilot, OCS announced that they will also support up to ten campers from Ontario 'east' if there is interest in attending Brigadoon Village in Nova Scotia. If you have any questions, please feel free to connect with Carole at info1@ostomycanada.ca. ○



Yaser, wife Safah and their baby Arwa.
Halloween 2021, Ottawa, ON

UNsung

Yaser Nadeem

- Ottawa Ostomy Support Group

About seven years ago, Ian McNeil (President of the Ottawa Ostomy Support Group at the time) received a call from a young man - Yaser Nadeem. Yaser was looking at a few non-profit websites and sent a note asking if he could help bring Ottawa up to date. (The website was redone in 2010-2011 - yet if anyone knows Ian - this is not his core strength!)

The website had several broken links, inconsistent formats, and off graphics - the list of repairs was extensive. Being intrigued, Ian invited him to get together over coffee. They discussed the website, and Yaser made suggestions that, at the time, were cutting-edge.

During their conversation over coffee, Ian asked what motivated him to help charities in the area. Yaser explained that his family were immigrants who had been made welcome to Ottawa and that he wanted to give back. Over the next few months, Yaser built a completely new website. He located a better web hosting vendor and improved security. He provided add-ons such as MailChimp, WordPress and email contact forms. To this day, he continues to make adjustments to the website, monitors incoming emails from the Ottawa contact page to ensure that queries are directed to the correct individual, and manages the distribution of the newsletters.

Yaser performs these chores whenever we ask of him without a complaint. Indeed, Yaser is the definition of an **Unsung Hero**.

(Editors note from John Hartman: the national office can attest to Yaser's website strengths, customer service, and "can-do and will-do attitude" as Yaser is Ostomy Canada's national Senior Tech Support and Webmaster).



**Your
Community
Needs You.**

For volunteer opportunities visit www.ostomycanada.ca today!

HEROES

Patty Gianoli

– Regina & District Ostomy Society

What does it mean to be an Unsung Hero? An Unsung Hero is a person who often works behind the scenes and does the little and big jobs without much thought or expectation of a big thank you or recognition for what they are doing. The President of the Regina and District Ostomy Society, Patty Gianoli, has been doing just that for years.

Even though she is not an ostomate, Patty has been a faithful member of the Regina and District Ostomy Chapter for well over ten years, always going above and beyond to help and make things happen in our group. Most of us got to know Patty when she worked as the hospital's office manager at the Ostomy and Wound Care Clinic. She was always helpful and willing to take the extra step to help.

Patty started working for the Saskatchewan Health Authority in 1987 and spent 32 years working in various positions, including emergency, Wascana rehab, SHA records and the most recent position of thirteen years in the Ostomy Clinic as the office manager. She retired in 2019 but, of course, continued what she's always done, volunteering for STARS, the Marian Center, Food Bank and the 2022 Grey Cup in Regina.

In 2018 Patty headed up the organizing committee for our regional Ostomy seminar. She was our Visitor Coordinator for several years, where she interacted with the nurses and members and helped organize training.



She took on the membership lists and fees and coordinated with the Ostomy Canada office. Patty is never afraid to put up her hand. She got involved in organizing gatherings and special events and helped when needed. Most recently, she agreed to be our Chapter President and brings her good nature and compassion to that role as well.

Patty is married to Greg, and they have three wonderful children, Derek, Stephen and Christina. She's an avid gardener and master puzzle maker (the harder, the better). She adores her family and is always there to help a friend. When Patty does something, she puts her whole heart and soul into it. You might ask why? Just because. ○



4 reasons an ostomy can be exhausting!



Feeling Tired All the Time after Ostomy Surgery? Being an ostomate simply means your body works differently. In the case of a colostomy or ileostomy, you are functioning with little or no colon. That alone is truly remarkable, but before the applause, it can also be exhausting. Watch out for these four common energy zappers.

1. Trips to the Bathroom

While non-ostomates probably have one bowel movement per day, you might be in the bathroom several times per day emptying your ostomy pouch. This can happen more with an ileostomy or urostomy versus a colostomy. It is unavoidable, so just know that this ongoing need can leave you feeling pooped, especially for ostomates dealing with high output. And on days where you are changing your system, do not forget that this task also takes extra time and energy. Quick tip: Drink fluids after each restroom trip. Rehydrating your body can help restore some lost energy.

2. Lack of Sleep

In the weeks following surgery, you may wake at least three times per night to empty the ostomy pouch. For some ostomates, it takes months for their bodies to heal or for output to slow down. Plus, if you were a stomach sleeper prior to surgery, adjusting to a side or back sleep position can be challenging. If days of broken sleep are turning into weeks or months, it is no wonder why you are feeling exhausted. Quick Tip: Avoid eating large meals at night and know which foods run through the system faster. Do not lean on caffeine drinks, Red Bull, etc. – take a power nap to help boost your energy. Get the best quality sleep possible to reduce fatigue.

3. Nutritional Deficiencies

Lack of proper nutrients can directly affect our bodies energy levels. If we do not get enough nutrition from food, we tend to feel tired and sluggish. Vitamins, such as B-12, for ileostomy patients is highly recommended because much of your body's essential nutrients are absorbed through the large intestine and ileum, body parts that you are missing or are reduced in size. Quick tip: Eating healthy is important to getting proper nourishment for energy. Talk to your doctor about blood tests for deficiency of specific nutrients, such as vitamin B6, vitamin B12, folic acid, thiamine, and niacin.

4. Endless To-Do Lists

Engaging in too many daily activities—even fun activities— can sometimes leave ostomates feeling completely drained. Know your limits. Remember to reserve some energy for completing daily responsibilities. Over-scheduling yourself can equal over exhausting yourself and may leave you feeling guilty or inadequate because you cannot keep up. Quick Tip: Ask for help. Every ostomate should have an extra set of helping hands around for times when life gets crazy busy. Having an ostomy comes with a huge responsibility – always taking care of yourself. This may seem like a full-time job at first, but it is an important step to creating a happier and healthier life. Remember that you are unique; learn what works best for you. ○

Source: *Insider Ostomy Newsletter, Fall 2022; Ostomy Connection: <https://ostomyconnection.com>*

SPORTS AFTER OSTOMY SURGERY

There is no reason to reduce sports activity just because one has had ostomy surgery, though there are some common-sense considerations that should be utilized:

- A tight and strongly sticking pouch is absolutely necessary. There is no need to do anything extraordinary. One should try to keep one's pouch reasonably empty. One must consider the physical shape one is in, plus the day-to-day ostomy management.
- Avoid sports with high risk of injury, such as boxing. If you insist on contact sports, and some still do, protect yourself. There are manufacturers of special stoma guards which will permit you to do just about anything. Do not allow the stoma to keep you from doing any activities you wish. Of course, if you are 120 years old, you may want to limit your sports activities to those your body would ordinarily tolerate without a stoma.
- A sport that stresses your abdominal muscles too much should be avoided, unless you have slowly and deliberately, under the guidance of a knowledgeable professional, built up these muscles to the point where you can easily perform the skills necessary without undue exertion.
- When playing ball games such as tennis, you may want to cover or in some way protect your stoma. There are vendors advertising in the Ostomy Quarterly that sell stoma caps and stoma guards.
- Check your pouch after a strong physical effort. A change of pouch may be necessary due to perspiration and movement. We all get less wear time due to any kind of physical activity. It is better to change the pouch after an exciting, active day than relaxing, yet not putting a strain on your equipment.
- Before you go swimming, make sure your pouch is secure and empty. There is no reason that having an ostomy should keep you from swimming. Some people may need to take extra steps, though. If your skin is oily, tape your pouch with pink tape, rather than taking a chance.
- Many ostomates water and snow ski. They only take normal, common sense steps when active. The newer ostomy equipment with advanced adhesives works pretty well on its own. Specialty stores have specific swimming wear for ostomates, which are higher cut, with a pocket for the pouch. In summary, have fun, do the sports you like. You do need to use some common sense, protect your stoma from injury, then go out and do it. ○



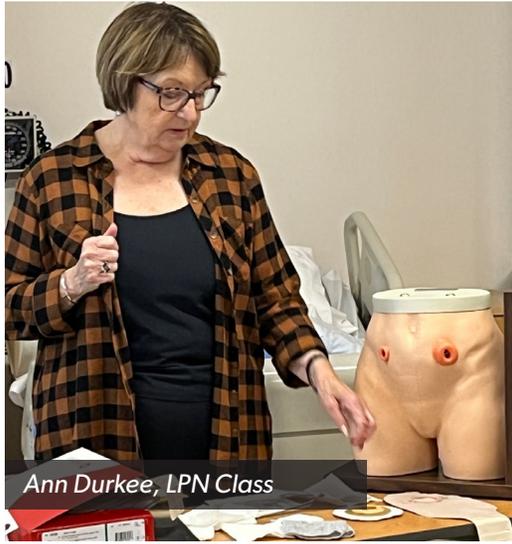
Source: Swiss Ostomy Website; via S. Brevard (FL) Ostomy Newsletter, via Greater Seattle (WA) The Ostomist, May 2013 & Regina & District Ostomy News Sept/Oct 2020. Reprint from Ostomy Hamilton, January 2023.

**Looking for ostomy care tips?
Check out the Ostomy 101 section at
www.ostomycanada.ca**

United Ostomy Associations of America
8th NATIONAL CONFERENCE
2023
HOUSTON
TEXAS
Embracing New Frontiers
August 10-12

For info: www.ostomy.org/2023conference

Learn to wear your PATIENT'S SHOES



Ann Durkee, LPN Class



LPN Class



LPN's daughter

I have a passion. It is to assist each year in the LPN classes at my local Nova Scotia Community College. I do a lecture and a lab with them. My main objective is to teach them "empathy," the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. I do this by telling them of my own journey from an extreme illness for three years, the ostomy surgery and the recovery both bodily and mentally. Lots of stories to tell and share on how I felt waking up in the recovery room, what it felt like reaching down and knowing that the bag on my belly was replacing my large bowel. The hardships of educating friends and family, a new diet, a new way of life and the successes of what followed by living a normal life.

Many nurses in a hospital or community setting have no idea what it is like for someone with an ostomy. They are hired to care for their patients, but many have a lack of understanding. How do they feel? How will they manage their different lifestyle? How will they work again? How will they handle the difficult situations that might occur while introducing your new body to a new lifestyle? Patients will survive and, most all, will enjoy their new life free from an illness. Yet the key to success is having a nurse that understands how their patient feels minutes and days following surgery.

Each year at the Nova Scotia Community College, these student nurses show expressions of shock and understanding. I know why I am sharing my journey and assistance to gain knowledge of their patient's journey. I ask - if you could watch thirty nurses in training put on a device and fill it with instant oatmeal and ask them to wear it for a 24-hour period (eat, walk, sleep, etc.) and show it to their families and friends. Would you not feel like you have served the ostomy world in some small way? My involvement is my passion, and I love it.

Ann Durkee-Maclsaac has been teaching these nurses in training since 2010. OCS is grateful for her story and the student's participation in the SWAN program.

Final note: This little girl's (left) mom was a student taking the LPN Program. Her mom wore a device filled with oatmeal home following the lecture. She sent this note back to Ann, "My children were interested, and I remembered what you said about people living with ostomies should share the experience with their families. My daughter wanted to know more and asked if she could try to wear it for a while. I wanted her to know what you meant when you said, "Learn to wear your patient's shoes." I know that if I ever had ostomy surgery, I would be able to share the experience with this daughter of mine. ○

STEP UP FOR OSTOMY

September 30, 2023

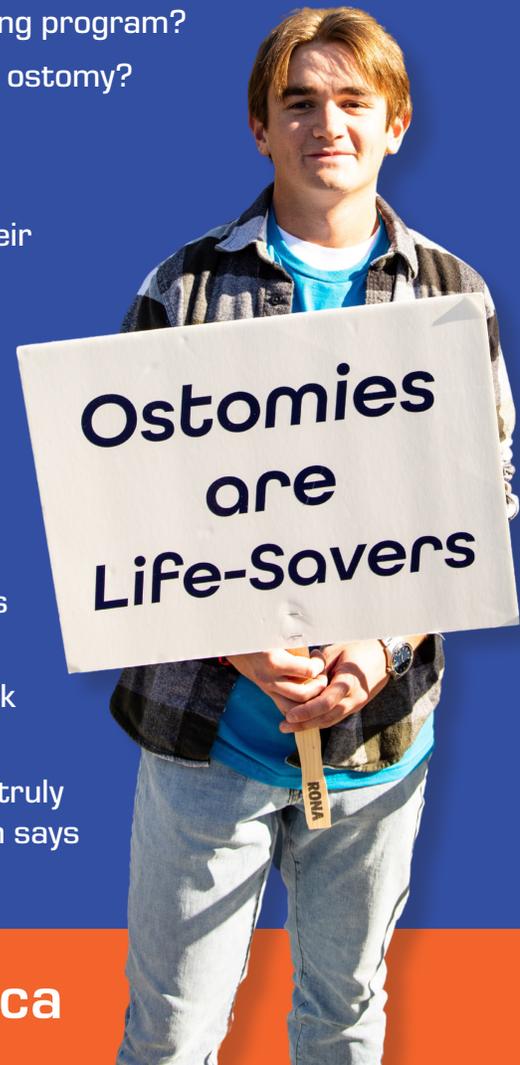
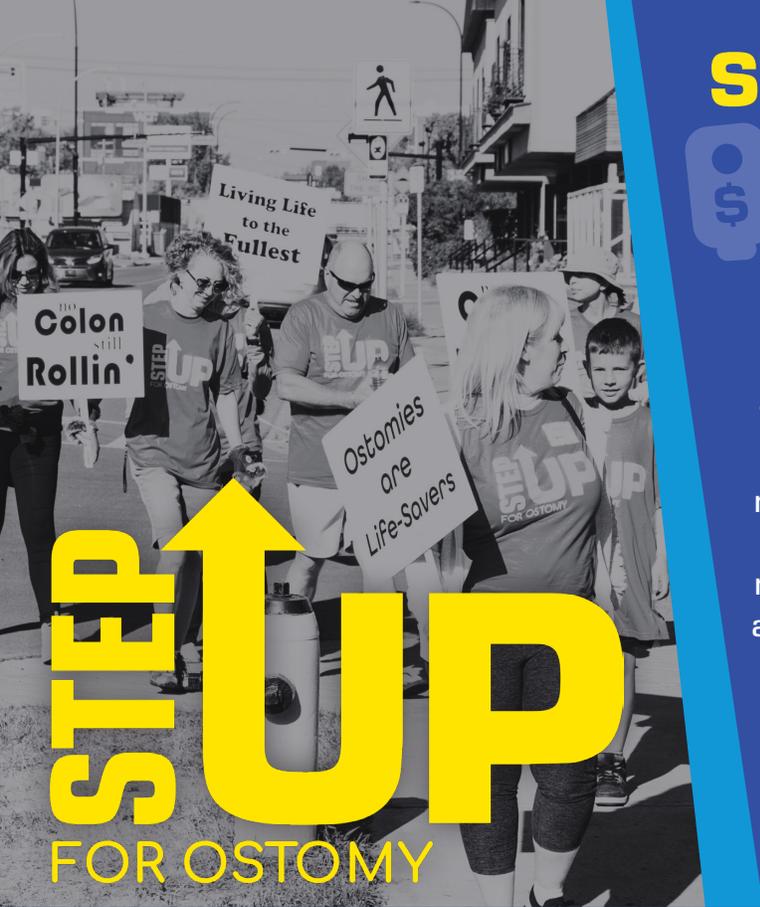
Ostomy Canada Society's mission is "dedicated to all people living with an ostomy, and their circles of support, helping them live life to the fullest through advocacy, awareness, collaboration and support." This September, we are seeking your help. We hope to break out and generate awareness and much-needed funds to drive our mission forward. Create a committee or a team, plan your activities now, and make a list of who to ask, big or small we appreciate all you do. Last year we generated nearly \$100,000! In 2023 we plan to be even bigger and better.

WILL YOU STEP UP FOR THOSE WHO NEED OUR SUPPORT?

This year's top 10 questions:

1. Will your group help support our only national & collective fundraising program?
2. Do you like to have fun and bring awareness to people living with an ostomy?
3. Do like to plan and get together and create excitement?
4. Do you have friends that would support your efforts, if asked?
5. Did you know Ostomy Canada has all the tools and resources on their website?
6. Did you know funds are used to send kids to camp; manage the Visitor Program; support our Magazine; support advocacy; help print brochures; and manage our website?
7. Did you know you can do almost anything – like walk in a park, play cards at a meeting, ride bikes, play golf or pickleball or whatever you feel like?
8. Did you know that even if you think your group is small – your help is much appreciated? And yes, you can do it.
9. Did you know that many of our prominent corporate supporters look forward to this event and always ask who is participating?
10. Did you know that this year you can join others across Canada and truly celebrate our mission on Saturday, September 30, 2023 (and John says the weather will be perfect coast to coast)?

Enroll or donate at stepupforostomy.ca



From Our Ostomy Family To Yours

Despite the challenges during Covid, we faced them together and discovered many great learnings along the way. This experience has changed us, and as we go forward, we become stronger. The Directors of Ostomy Canada share a special bond, and that is



Steve Maybee, Secretary/Treasurer (Mississauga, ON):

From the perspective of the Treasurer and as a Director of Ostomy Canada Society, it has been a pleasure working with a professional Executive Director who has left the organization in a strong financial and organizational position with newly updated programs to support individuals with ostomies across the country.

YOU



Joan Peddle, Director (Moncton, NB):

Reflecting on my time on the Board, I have enjoyed getting to know my Chapters and Peer Support Groups in the Atlantic area, even through the different times during the pandemic. I hope to connect with more people this year. Because of you, we have a great organization, and I am there to support you all in your journey as an ostomate. As we continue to raise awareness, advocate for improved products, and make progress, I look forward to my next term as your Atlantic Administrator.



Janet Paquet, Director (Hamilton, ON):

“Volunteerism” is one of the most selfless acts we can become involved in. Thank you to all the volunteers in our Chapters and Peer Support Groups. By working together, we can enrich the lives of new ostomates, offer support and ultimately erase the negative stigma of ostomy surgery.



Stephanie Grace, Director (Newmarket, ON):

As a new member of the Board of Directors, I am honoured and thrilled to be part of such an amazing organization. Being an industry partner and a product manager at Hollister Limited, the vision and mission of Ostomy Canada Society are aligned with what I wake up to do every morning – to make life more rewarding and dignified for people living with an ostomy so that they can enjoy living life to the fullest. I look forward to collaborating with my fellow board members to help raise awareness across Canada.



Troy Curtis, Director (Ottawa, ON):

We have had a busy start to the year with many webinars and initiatives, which has given me a chance to speak and interact with more Ostomy Canada supporters. Your attendance and participation over the past few months have been so appreciated not only by Ostomy Canada but our partners too. As we enter the second half of 2023, I wish you all the best and hope to count on your support in promoting this year’s Step Up for Ostomy.



Jayne Kerr, Director (Thornbury, ON):

All the best to our ostomy family across Canada. We applaud your dedication, and as a reminder, we (the Nominating/Succession Planning Committee) always welcome new participants. Contact me at Jayne.kerr@ostomycanada.ca if you are interested in volunteering.

**Jacqueline Bloom, Director (St. Thomas, ON):**

Friends, thank you so much for your generous support. It's folks like you that make our work possible. Your contributions enable us to accomplish our mission here at Ostomy Canada. We're excited that you've chosen to help us along our journey and hope for a long and fruitful relationship.

**Ian MacNeil, Director (Ottawa, ON):**

Ostomy Canada Society has made substantial progress in helping people with an ostomy live life to the fullest. In my mind, our website is becoming the "GO to Place to Go for Ostomy News, Information, and Social Interaction." Kudos to everyone who has redesigned our website and the Youth Camp organizing committee and volunteers. Bravo.

**Real Lamarche, Director (Granby, QC):**

Un petit mot pour les francophones du Quebec et de tous les autres regions du Canada. Profitons de l'e`te` pour se ressourcer et prendre soin de soi et de tous nos proches. L'automne nous am`enera de nombreuses activite`s diverses pour la communaute` des personnes stomise`es.

**Randy Hull, Director (Winnipeg, MB):**

Winnipeg Ostomy Association has just moved into its 51st year of providing support and information to ostomates and their families. We are changing our name to be more representative of all members and to start our next chapter. Ostomy Manitoba Association (OMA) will be a more inclusive representation of our members province-wide. We are both pleased and encouraged that we have maintained a healthy membership base and continued operations during very trying Covid times.

**Debra Carpentier, Director (Regina, SK):**

The "Prairie Province" tradition of cooperation and collaboration continues to support the community in good times and challenging times. I appreciate your support over the past year and look forward to your support in the coming year. It is in working together we gain strength.

**Andrea (Andy) Manson, Director (Parksville, BC):**

Greetings from the Pacific Region. Our Chapters and Support Groups meet in person, on Zoom or a combination. If you are visiting out west this summer, consider attending a meeting to hear what is happening in this part of the country. We are always looking to expand our support for people with an ostomy. Please let me know if you know anyone interested in facilitating a group in our area. A big thank you to all for their continued support of Ostomy Canada.

**AJ Leveille, Director (Langley, BC):**

This year has seen a lot of change at the Ostomy Canada Society, and collectively, we can reflect on a productive year and be proud of our accomplishments. As we ease into summer, it is my wish that everyone involved in this fantastic community can find some time to enjoy themselves, look up from the daily grind and enjoy all that life has to offer because, as we know, summer is short and another fall is just around the corner.

**Ann Durkee-Maclsaac, Chair of the Board of Directors (Hebron, NS):**

As Chair of the Board of Directors, I personally want to thank each of our directors for putting their heart and soul into the vision, values, and mission of Ostomy Canada. We all come alongside people living with an ostomy and interact with our supporters so that they know that we see and hear them. We're in this together; all of YOU and all of these Directors. We send all of YOU a special thank you. Be well, and prosper from all of us on the Ostomy Canada Society Board. ○

If you build it & advertise...

they will come!



Katherine & Lori

A new Support Group in Chatham/Kent, Ontario

By Millar Hill, February 16, 2023

Residents seeking support after an ostomy surgery now have a monthly support group in Chatham-Kent. "I felt very alone, very lost, and very scared," said Katherine Verrall, a Chatham resident who has been living with an ostomy for 25 years due to

Ulcerative Colitis. "It took me a long time to get past even leaving the house without fear of my ostomy breaking or having an accident."

Verrall said she received information from nurses after her surgery but wasn't aware of any additional support beyond that. "My husband was my saving grace," said Verrall. "He was everything to me."

She connected with Lori Zozzolto, a registered nurse working with ostomy patients, and shortly after, the two women formed the Chatham-Kent Ostomy Support Group. The group held its first meeting on December 12, 2022.

According to the Ostomy Canada Society, an ostomy is an opening made into the bowel or urinary tract through surgery for the purpose of diverting urine or stool from the body. Most people with an ostomy wear a discreet pouch to cover the stoma, which is the surgically created opening in the abdomen and collects body waste.

"I found myself [25 years ago] facing life with an ileostomy after having surgery for ulcerative colitis," said Verrall. "At the time, my ulcerative colitis progressed rather quickly, and in order to save my life, I required this surgery."

The group's purpose is to create a space where people, adults or children living with an ostomy, can meet and talk about their experiences, share tips, and connect with experts specializing in ostomies. "We want to make sure we're giving the best information that we can and offering the best support that we can," said Verrall. "We're also there to be there as a group."

The group will take June, July, and August off before starting back up in September.

Anyone who might benefit from this group can find more information by visiting the Chatham-Kent Ostomy Support Group's Facebook page or their contact information on Ostomy Canada's website. BTW – in their first meeting, they had three people and in their second, thirty-seven signed up – yes, thirty-seven! ○



love at first site

Becoming Aware Of The *Present Moment In Times of Stress*

Can't travel or get into the pool just yet? Try being present at your favorite destination or favorite beach by picturing yourself there now. Find a quiet place and sit back, without any distractions, and just imagine yourself there. Give yourself the license to daydream. Your "dream" vacation is just around the corner! Here are some simple mindfulness techniques which can help you stay focused and calm under pressure, become more present in the moments you enjoy, and help you identify what's important to you. These techniques help you create mindful habits, help you improve your well-being and peace of mind in the moment and bring a little calm into your daily life.

If you find it difficult to sit quietly, notice your surroundings, focus on one thing at a time (do not multitask), be grateful for what you have now, accept things as they are (not how you want them to be). Often, we struggle with the idea of "becoming aware of the present moment," which is at the heart of mindfulness practice.

Mindful Meditation teaches you to watch your breath and your thoughts. It creates acceptance and allows you to practice being in the present moment without any judgment. This practice is known to reduce anxiety and anxious thoughts. Stay connected to your breath: Falling asleep or drifting off with your thoughts? Stay with your breath and allow your inhales and your exhales to ground you in your practice. It is normal to have the mind wander. Use your breath to come back into the present moment. Set an intention: Often intentions can carry us through our practice. Before you start meditating, you can choose to set an intention for your practice. What is it that you want to cultivate, let go of, or manifest? Poses: The 'best' meditation pose is different for everybody. If you have tight hips or lower back pain, you may be more comfortable on a chair or on a meditation cushion. There are many poses that

you can practice while meditating. A good idea is to try a few postures before deciding on a few that feel great in your body.

Prayer Hands Put your hands together and gently press your palms together to touch. Spread your fingers slightly apart so that there is not too much tension, keeping your fingers together. Roll your

shoulders up, back, and down, and lightly rest your thumbs to your heart center.

Palms Up Resting your hands on your knees, flip your palms to face up toward the sky. Relax your fingers and your wrists and keep your chest open, spine straight, and shoulders relaxed.

V Arms Lift your arms up over your head and move them out into a V-shape. Spread your fingers wide, turn your palms to face each other,

and feel energy radiating out of your fingertips. The shoulders may come up toward the ears here, so be sure to soften your shoulders and keep your chest open. Take a deep slow breath here. Turn your attention to the inner sensations of your own body. Take a few moments to scan through your body from head to toe, becoming aware of any and all physical sensations throughout. Tingling, heat, tension, numbness. Take your time to move through each body group. Just noticing, being curious, just observing.

More activities to consider:

- <https://amaliahomecollection.com/20-ways-to-relax-in-less-than-5-minutes/> (It includes eating chocolate! Stressed spelled backwards is desserts.)
- <https://www.ostomy.org/yoga-for-every-body> (excerpts from <https://yogarove.com/author/mreyes/> and numerous viewings of other articles) ○

Source: by Sue Rizvi, Metro Maryland



Disability Tax Credit (DTC) Update

People living with an ostomy are considered to have a disability and are eligible for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) when a qualified medical practitioner certifies the DTC application and Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) approves the application. When approved for the credit an individual will be considered to have an accepted DTC certificate and will receive the credit when filling their income tax return.

The Disability Advisory Committee is composed of voluntary members including persons with disabilities, health providers and professionals from a variety of fields, such as tax professionals and lawyers. This committee (DAC) provides advice to the Minister of Finance

and the Canada Revenue (CRA) on improving the administration and interpretation of tax measures for Canadians living with disabilities. Their reports are submitted every two years with a summary of their work, the progress of previous recommendations, and provides new recommendation.

Ostomy Canada and NSWOC Canada continue to advocate for accessibility of an NSWOC Nurse to assist people living with ostomies to complete and certify their application. OCS also continues to make recommendations to the Disability Advisory Committee.

The last report prepared by the DAC presents the number of individuals with an "Accepted DTC Certificate." The total amount stated in this

report (2022) is 138,490 in Canada. Most individuals are in the province of Ontario with 63,020 and the least in the province of PEI with 750. This total number only includes the disability of "Eliminating."

Further information can be found on OCS's website, in our DTC brochure or you are encouraged to watch the DTC Webinar on our YouTube. (www.ostomycanada.ca/webinars/ostomy-canada-society-national-webinar-series-2023/disability-tax-credit-dtc-webinar/).

The CRA/DTC website is also informative:

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca>

Ann Durkee-Maclsaac, DTC Committee Chair:

ann.durkee@ostomycanada.ca 



THIS SPRING IN CANADA

Regina Ostomy Seminar - It's a Great Day for Education!

May 13, 2023 - Regina, SK

More info: www.reginaostomy.ca

Congrès provincial 2023 de l'AQPS

13 mai 2023 - Drummondville, QC

Pour information: www.aqps.org

Big Foot?

A man with a swollen foot goes to the doctor. After a careful examination, the doctor hands the man a pill big enough to choke a horse.

"I'll be right back with some water," the doctor tells him.

The doctor has been gone awhile and the man loses patience. He hobbles out to the drinking fountain, forces the pill down his throat and gobbles down water until the pill clears his throat. He hobbles back into the examining room.

Just then the doctor comes back with a bucket of warm water. "Ok, after the tablet dissolves, soak that foot for about 20 minutes."

Source: Stratford & District Ostomy News (Nov 2022)

OSTOMY VISITOR PROGRAM

online training goes live!

After months of writing, testing, tweaking, editing, re-shooting, updating, and working with some incredible people, Ostomy Canada's Society Visitor Training Program (VTP) is now available from the comfort of your home, office or in a group setting through your Chapter/Support Group. Why the journey and why the change?

- COVID accelerated the need to create a resource that could support what we have done for years in training in group sessions and "modernize" the delivery.
 - We assumed that since COVID, the majority of people needed to be recertified, or are new individuals who want to become a certified visitor.
 - By making the change, we were able to update graphics, bring in voice overs, and various learning styles into a simple and clean product.
 - Based on a generous donation from the Reciprocity Foundation in 2022, we worked alongside a leading Canadian company who specializes in this kind of transformation and conversion from a paper-based system to a more modern learning application. Hyperactive Studios (Ottawa), Learning Management Systems (Smith Falls) and Ostomy Canada worked together to build the end product.
 - It was tested multiple times by a number of people and yet a special thanks to the Regina Chapter for taking it through a road test. A huge thank you to Tiffany Shorson for her creative skills on updating the forms and correspondence.
 - Yes, you can still use the binder and materials for training your group. However, this tool will help advance the learning and people can do it individually online.
 - Online, group, binder, or individual sessions, Ostomy Canada will expect participants to provide data so that we can properly track Visitors on a national basis and provide insurance coverage. We all want to be covered.
 - For those that complete the training and provide the necessary information, and are a member of their local Group and/or a supporter of OCS, we will send a Letter of Congratulations, a Certificate of Completion, and a Visitor Training Card.
- A special thanks to those who agreed to be part of the video inserts (you will have to check these out).
 - Questions? A launch package including details on how to get started and what to do was distributed to Chapter/Support Group leadership and Visitor Coordinators that OCS had their names (to be honest – we may have missed a few as we don't always get updated information). The package was sent on March 28.
 - Using the Binder? Yes you can copy and replace the forms that are in the binder.
 - Need more information? Contact ann.durkee@ostomycanada.ca or deb.carpentier@ostomycanada.ca 

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celebrating 50 years of ostomy

SUPPORT IN ATLANTIC CANADA

Respectively Submitted with update and photos, Ed Tummers, Halifax (March 21, 2023)

The history of Ostomy Canada began in 1962 when representatives from over twenty ostomy support groups in the United States and Canada agreed to work together to support those individuals who had an ostomy. The first two Canadian groups were in Montreal, Quebec, and London, Ontario. From there, new ostomy support groups were formed from coast to coast.

In 1973, the first ostomy support group in Atlantic Canada was founded. The location was chosen to be close to the regional hospital where the majority of ostomy surgeries were performed. The original reason for forming the group was to provide a Visitor Program to in-patients from across the region. The group was originally incorporated as United Ostomy Association Inc Nova Scotia Chapter.

Historically, Chapters were assigned specific geographic areas of service from which to draw members. Those first charter members spread out across four Atlantic provinces and started recruiting individuals with ostomies to form groups to support people in their area closer to home.

In 1975, ostomy support groups were formed in three new communities in Nova Scotia. Because each Chapter was assigned a specific geographic area in the province of Nova Scotia, in 1976 the United Ostomy Association Inc Nova Scotia Chapter was split into four community-based groups: Metro Halifax Chapter, Cape Breton Chapter, Southwest Nova Scotia, and Annapolis Valley.

In the subsequent years, a team travelled widely to help organize and incorporate support groups throughout the region. Sixteen new groups were incorporated in the first decade. Ruth Kenney, ET of Dartmouth, NS is the last surviving member of this original team. Since the requirement to incorporate was dropped in 2016, it has become much easier for groups to meet in the smaller communities throughout the region.



Participants from throughout the region gathered for the 1978 Atlantic Ostomy Update. Shown L to R. Joan Trainor, Fredericton; Ruth Kenney ET, Halifax; Dr. Mort Marshall, Annapolis; Bette Yetman, President Atlantic UOA; Hazel Harris, PEI; Eileen Conry, Yarmouth.



**Get connected with a Chapter or Peer Support Group in your area!
Visit www.ostomycanada.ca for more information.**

Communities that hosted ostomy support groups :

1973 United Ostomy Association*
Inc Nova Scotia Chapter
(split in 1976 into 4 chapters)

1976 Annapolis Valley, NS
Cape Breton, NS
Metro Halifax, NS -
(now Ostomy Halifax)
Southwest Nova, (Yarmouth)

1977 Prince Edward Island
(Charlottetown)

1978 Truro, NS

1979 Fredericton, NB
Moncton, NB
St. John, NB
*Antigonish, NS
*Pictou County NS -
(New Glasgow)

1980 St. John's, NL
Lunenburg and Queens
County (Bridgewater,
re-organized as
Bridgewater Satellite)

1982 Bathurst, NB*
Edmundston, NB*

2000 Miramichi City Group, NB

2001 Gander, NL

2011 Revived South Shore Ostomy
Support Group in
Bridgewater.

2017 Woodstock, NB,

2018 Cumberland, NS.

2018 Clare, Saulnierville, NS

2019 Liverpool, NS,

2019 Grand Falls-Windsor, NL*

2021 Humber Valley, NL

(*No longer in existence)



Driving forces behind the new Bathurst Ostomy Association, from left: Bette Yetman, president of the Atlantic UOA; Jacqueline Ross, president of the Bathurst chapter; Eddie Boudreau, fund-raising; Ruth Kenney,

Enterostomal Therapist from Halifax; Sister Anita Blier, Steering Committee; and Catherine MacLeod, recording secretary, Halifax chapter. Next meeting is tonight, Wed. at 7:30 at the Maison St. Joseph on Munro Street.

1982 Bathurst Ostomites Now Meeting

Ostomy! What is ostomy? Ostomy results from a type of surgery that is required when a person has lost the normal bowel or bladder functions due to birth defects, disease, injury or malignancy. In some cases, the surgery is a life-saving procedure.

An ostomy makes it possible to expel body wastes through a surgical opening, called a stoma, on the abdominal wall. Ileostomates, urostomates and some colostomates wear a collecting device (pouch or appliance); other colostomates control their elimination by regulation or irrigation.

Those people who have had operations so that they become ostomates, now have an outlet here in Bathurst with the formation of a local Ostomy Association. The group is the 16th United Ostomy Association Maritime chapter and was formed

here in the fall of this year.

The Bathurst Chapter is a mutual aid colostomy, ileostomy, urostomy organization dedicated to the interest, rehabilitation and welfare of persons who have undergone ostomy surgery.

Members of the group cover the gamut of vocations and professions. They are of all races, religions, creeds and financial situations. Ostomy surgery is the great equalizer. The purpose of the organization is therefore to inform and rehabilitate persons who have had operations pertaining to this.

The primary concern of the ostomate is acquiring information on the physical, mechanical, emotional and social aspects of having an ostomy. The Ostomy Association is here to impart that information.

Meetings are open to all

interested persons, family and friends of ostomates. The next get-together for those interested will be held at the Maison St.-Joseph on Munro Street in Bathurst. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 25th.

Now that the group is under way and holding meetings, they would like to thank the following people who helped them to establish the organization and bring it into being: Bishop Godin, Father G. Martin, the IODE, Sisters of the Vallee Lourdes and Brunswick Mining and Smelting Ltd.

UOA HISTORY

In 1949, five ostomates met in Philadelphia to share their experiences and knowledge. Ostomates in other large cities followed suit and a pattern for the local ostomy association was formed. On Sept. 22, 1962, the United Ostomy Association

was formed in Cleveland Ohio. During that first year 26 local ostomy associations became affiliated as charter chapters.

By the start of 1978 there were more than 475 local chapters, with that figure constantly getting higher. The UOA is a charter member of the International Ostomy Association that was formed in April of 1975. At present there are 18 member associations representing 26 countries.

The UOA has directly or indirectly helped over 100,000 ostomates to continue the normal, active and productive lives they led before their illness and surgery. It is estimated that there are a million and a half ostomates in North America, with more than 100,000 new ostomy surgeries being performed every year on people in all age groups.

In upcoming issues of the Connects, we will highlight some of the major accomplishments in the Atlantic Region over the years which have done much to improve the level of support provided to people living with ostomies and continent diversions, and their families. ○

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Awareness.

Collaboration.

Support.



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