

Subject: **Plastic Surgery News**

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Plastic Surgery News

Information from the Chair's Office

Division of Plastic Surgery, University of Toronto

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Introduction

Welcome to the first issue of **Plastic Surgery News** - an e-newsletter for the Division of Plastic Surgery that will help enhance communication within the division. This communication tool will also be an ideal vehicle to provide news of various happenings within the division, views, aspirations and achievements.

Please participate in making **Plastic Surgery News** a successful initiative.

1. Message from the Chair

Dear Colleague,

I'd like to take this opportunity to update you on progress we have made in the last 3 months. With your support, it has been my intention to focus on a strategic agenda for the Division that includes the following goals:

- (1) improving the Division's structure and function;
- (2) focusing on faculty recruitment and retention;
- (3) managing our relationships;
- (4) expanding our IT capabilities;
- (5) exploring curriculum development, and
- (6) preparing for the Division's strategic planning day on April 25, 2007.

1. Division Structure and Function

Banting Division Office

After 3 months of planning and renovating, we now have a fully operational divisional office at the Banting. For the first time in our 80-year history, the Division of Plastic Surgery now has a physical presence at the University.

Program and Research Directors

Both Dr. Ron Levine and Dr. John Semple have agreed to continue in their respective roles until new Directors are appointed. I meet with both Ron and John regularly to discuss issues related to education and research. One of my goals has been to ensure that the positions of Program Director and Research Director are appropriately remunerated in recognition of the important role that they play and the significant time commitment these positions require. To date, we have successfully negotiated new salary support for the Program Director position. Additional salary support is still required for both positions and we will need to realign our current finances and fundraising efforts in this regard. Realigning the Division's finances will be an important topic of discuss at our April retreat.

2. Recruitment and Retention

One of our first steps was to develop an up-to-date list of active faculty across all our teaching hospitals. The master list of active faculty is maintained by the Department of Surgery. With some effort, we now have updated this list for the Division. Currently, this includes a total of 37 active faculty across the 8 teaching hospitals and also all cross-appointed faculty and active Emeritus Professors.

3. Managing our Relationships

As you know, the Division has 37 active faculty spread across 8 teaching hospitals. Each of us has diverse clinical interests and areas of expertise, but common to us all is that we are all plastic surgeons first and foremost, with a shared clinical goal to restore form and function in the patients we serve.

Journal Club is a great example of how we can still come together from diverse clinical interests, discuss very different areas of plastic surgery and still have a good time together. I thank Dr. Melinda Musgrave for all her work in revitalizing Journal Club. I also thank all of you for participating in and making Journal Club an important academic and social event.

Professors' Rounds continue to have great attendance. We need to continue to support city-wide Plastic Surgery rounds because each member's presence and participation sends a powerful message of our common commitment to each other and to our residents and students.

4. Expanding our IT Capabilities

Creating a web-based platform through which the entire plastic surgery community can be connected is a strategic priority. Under Dr. Peter Bray's valuable leadership, the Web committee has met and is moving forward with the development and design of our website. We are confident that this portal for plastic surgery will grow into an important resource for plastic surgeons, students, alumni, and patients. In addition, we hope to see it play a significant role in pulling together our education, research, fundraising and alumni activities.

5. Exploring Curriculum Development

The idea of reforming our plastic surgery curriculum predates my appointment. While I recognize that there are challenges and different points of view associated with reforming the curriculum, I believe that engaging in curriculum development would serve to differentiate our Division as a leader in plastic surgery education. Curriculum reform is a huge undertaking and doing it successfully will require significant commitment of time and effort. The major concern for many of us has been that our Division has a number of issues that we need to address, including first and foremost, issues of recruitment and retention, and a diffuse sense of disengagement across the Division.

With this in mind, the Assembly has agreed to consider moving forward in a two-phased fashion conditional on certain criteria being met prior. A document outlining what the Division's preconditions has been sent to the Department of Surgery for its consideration. We are expecting to hear from the Department by late-January and I will report to the Division at February's Assembly meeting.

6. Strategic Planning Day

Just a short note on the Strategic Planning day scheduled for Wednesday April 25, 2007. Dr. Howard Clarke and Dr. Mitchell Brown have agreed to help me prepare for the day. Others who are interested in helping out are welcome – just send me an e-mail. We will finalize the exact timing of the day in the very near future. This day will be our Divisions' first attempt at long term planning and goal setting – I expect it will be an exciting and valuable event.

Finally, I want to thank you for making the first three months as Chair a truly positive experience. I have been overwhelmed with the support and words of encouragement and, most importantly, the generous offers of assistance from many of our Division members. I consider it an honour and my privilege to serve this Division and thereby influence the discipline of plastic surgery.

Wish you a prosperous new year.

Dimitri

2. Hospitals Update

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre (SHSC)

Over the past three months, I have had the opportunity to work closely with the plastic surgeons at Sunnybrook. Along with their Surgeon-in-chief, Dr. Robin Richards, and the acting Chief of Plastic Surgery, Dr. Paul Binhammer, we have worked collaboratively to secure the necessary resources to help grow and redevelop the Division, which has been affected by the merger and de-merger of Sunnybrook/Women's. Together, we continue to work on the specific challenges identified in the recent external review by Dr. Doug Ross from the University of Western Ontario.

The hospital's senior management team recognizes the importance of a stable and robust Division of Plastic Surgery as an integral partner in the trauma and oncology programs. We have successfully negotiated and have secured approved resources for one position (i.e. a new Chief) and a commitment to find additional resources for a second plastic surgeon with expertise in oncology reconstruction. The Division's future at Sunnybrook looks promising and we look forward to moving forward with recruitment.

Ross Tilley Burn Centre (RTBC)

As many of you know, Dr. Joel Fish, along with his wife Val and their children will be leaving for New Zealand in the New Year for an 8-month sabbatical. This is a great opportunity for Joel and his family as he works with the New Zealand government to develop a national burn program. We wish Joel and his family a safe and productive sabbatical.

Dr. Rob Cartotto is the acting Medical Director of the RTBC and is working hard to ensure on-going staffing of the RTBC. Rob has secured additional staff coverage by partnering with burn surgeons from Kingston and Montreal. I will be meeting with Rob in the near future to discuss ways in which the Division can further support the RTBC.

University Health Network (UHN) - Toronto General Hospital (TGH)

As many of you know, Dr. Peter Neligan will be leaving UHN and the University for an exciting new position in Seattle. Along with his wife, Dr. Gabrielle Kane, they will have many new opportunities and we wish them great success and happiness in their new positions. Peter plans to close his clinical practice at the end of May.

Peter has been actively working with Dr. Bryce Taylor, Surgeon-in-Chief at UHN, to identify potential senior plastic surgeons with expertise in head and neck reconstruction. Being able to offer the Wharton Chair in Plastic Reconstructive Surgery will certainly facilitate the hospital's recruitment efforts. The Wharton Chair is a joint hospital/University Chair and, as such, a formal search committee will be established with both UHN and university representation. I will represent the Division's interests in this important search process. Of note, both UHN and Mount Sinai Hospital (MSH) have committed resources to fund a total of four plastic surgeons for surgical oncology to be run as one Division with three surgeons at TGH and one at MSH.

Toronto East General Hospital (TEGH)

In November, I met with TEGH Surgeon-in-Chief Dr. Laura Tate and on a tour of the hospital also met many of the plastic surgery staff. TEGH once had a very large and influential Division of Plastic Surgery and was a major centre for hand surgery under the leadership of Dr. James Murray. Both Laura and I have agreed to work together to strengthen and develop TEGH as a future site for plastic surgery training.

3. Achievements

- Congratulations Dr. **Zuker** for being elected as an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Scotland.
- Congratulations to Drs. **Dvali** and **Graham** on their PSI grant entitled "*Development of an injury severity score for hand trauma.*"
- Congratulations to **Karen Cross** for being awarded the 2006 PSI Resident Research Award. Her paper is entitled, "*Clinical Utilization of Near Infrared Spectroscopy Devices for Burn Depth Assessment*".
- Congratulations to **Laura Snell** and **Kannin Osei-Tutu** who won the first and second prize, respectively for the "Quotes Competition." Our special thanks to Mentor Canada for sponsoring the prizes.

4. Important events

- Assembly Meeting - Monday, February 5, 2007
- CaRMS Dinner for candidates and Residency Program Committee members – Thursday, February 8, 2007
- CaRMS Interviews – Friday, February 9, 2007
- Royal College External Review – Tuesday, April 17, 2007
- Strategic Planning Session – Friday, April 25, 2007

If you have a news item for **Plastic Surgery News**, please forward it by e-mail to Shibu Thomas at shibu.thomas@uhn.on.ca

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