

# Diabetes Care Program of Nova Scotia (DCPNS) 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations

**T**he day was Thursday, April 28, 2011. The food was fabulous, the venue festive, the mood uplifting, the audience inspiring, and the awards program flawless.

During the DCPNS 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, a number of individuals were introduced and acknowledged for their contributions to the DCPNS and to improving diabetes care in the province through the presentation of the DCPNS Recognition Awards. Former DCPNS Medical Directors, Dr. Meng Tan and Dr. Sonia Salisbury, seized the opportunity to recognize and thank the audience for their contributions and poignantly reminded us that the celebration was about the successes – successes that would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of many. The award nominees and successful award recipients demonstrate the true fortunes of the province – individuals and organizations who are committed and passionate about diabetes and who are making a difference.



*DCPNS Staff from left to right:* Brenda Cook, Diabetes Consultant; Alice Veinotte-Metivier, Administrative Secretary; Jennifer Payne, Epidemiologist; Barb Patterson, Coordinator of Administrative Services and DCPNS Commitment to Service recipient; Peggy Dunbar, Program Manager; Zlatko Karlovic, Director Diabetes Surveillance; Pam Talbot, Diabetes Surveillance/Project Consultant; Karen Norris, Data Entry Clerk; Robin Read, Data/Surveillance Consultant; Ian MacInnis, Research Analyst; Don Jean-Louis, Data/Surveillance Consultant



Kevin MacDonald, CEO Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority (GASHA), and Chair DCPNS Advisory Council, presented the DCPNS Special Acknowledgement Awards on behalf of the Program.

In addition to the DCPNS Recognition Awards, three DCPNS Special Acknowledgement Awards were presented – Lifetime Achievement, Dedicated Service, and Commitment to Service. The DCPNS Special Acknowledgement Awards were presented internally to individuals who have given tirelessly to the DCPNS and diabetes through commitments such as the DCPNS Board/Advisory Council work and committee/working group memberships. These contributions have ensured that the work of the DCPNS is grounded in reality, informed by best practice, and reflective of the Nova Scotia context. It is through these awards, we recognize leadership, commitment, and passion for improving the lives of those living with, affected by, or at risk of developing diabetes.



A special tribute was made to Peggy Dunbar, DCPNS Provincial Program Manager, to acknowledge her 20 years of leadership and dedication to the Program and to improving diabetes care in Nova Scotia. Accolades poured in from across the country, recognizing Peggy's exceptional insight, wise counsel, passion, commitment, and immeasurable contribution to diabetes care in Nova Scotia and beyond.

# DCPNS 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY RECOGNITION AWARDS

**The Dr. Allan Shlossberg Award was presented to Dr. Beth Cummings** by Dr. Meng Tan, former DCPNS Medical Director.

The award recognizes high quality, patient-centered, and team-based diabetes care provided by a family or specialist physician practicing in Nova Scotia. The recipient of this award has demonstrated a patient-centered, team based approach to the provision of diabetes care, improved diabetes care at the community level, demonstrated leadership in the diabetes community, and acted as a role model/mentor to diabetes care providers (e.g., physicians, other health professionals, students, etc.).

**The Outstanding Service Award was presented to Dr. Raj Parkash** by Dr. Sonia Salisbury, former DCPNS Medical Director.

This award recognizes long-standing excellence in practice and significant DCPNS-related volunteer contributions that have impacted diabetes care and the lives of people with diabetes. The recipient of this award has a minimum of 15 years of service advancing diabetes care in Nova Scotia, making an outstanding contribution to improving diabetes care and the quality of life for those living with diabetes. This individual is a recognized leader within the diabetes professional community, a role model/mentor for diabetes professionals, an advocate for improving diabetes care in Nova Scotia, and a volunteer on DCPNS-related activities, including the DCPNS Advisory Board/Council, committees, and/or working groups.

**The Excellence in Community Reach and Partnership Award was presented to Janice Knapp, BN RN CDE,** by Dr. Beth Cummings, DCPNS Medical Advisor.

This award recognizes significant contributions of an individual or team working in partnership with community to improve diabetes care at the local level. The recipient of this award has involved the local community in shaping diabetes programs, impacted diabetes at the community level, established effective partnerships, demonstrated leadership in community, and left a legacy of achievement in diabetes at the community level (and beyond).



*From left to right:* Dr. Sonia Salisbury, former DCPNS Medical Director, and DCPNS Lifetime Achievement recipient; Dr. Beth Cummings, DCPNS Medical Advisor, and winner of the Dr. Allan Shlossberg Award; Dr. Murdock Smith, DCPNS Advisory Council member; Dr. Meng Tan, former DCPNS Medical Director, and DCPNS Lifetime Achievement recipient; Dr. Raj Parkash, winner of the Outstanding Service Award; Dr. Lynne Harrigan, DCPNS Medical Advisor



*From left to right:* Dr. Beth Cummings, DCPNS Medical Advisor, and DCPNS Commitment to Service recipient; Dr. Murdock Smith, DCPNS Advisory Council member, and DCPNS Dedicated Service recipient; Dr. Lynne Harrigan, DCPNS Medical Advisor, and DCPNS Commitment to Service recipient

**The Diabetes Educator of the Year Award was presented to Sheilagh Crowley, BN RN CDE, by Dr. Lynne Harrigan, Medical Advisor, DCPNS.**

This award recognizes excellence in practice by a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) or CDE team in Nova Scotia. The recipient of this award has impacted patient care, developed innovative diabetes education program(s)/service(s), demonstrated leadership in educating health professionals, advocated for best clinical practice, and acted as a role model/mentor for diabetes team members/community partners.



*From left to right:*  
Dr. Beth Cummings, DCPNS Medical Advisor; Sheilagh Crowley, BN RN CDE, Pediatric Diabetes Program, IWK Health Centre, winner of the Diabetes Educator of the Year Award; Dr. Sonia Salisbury, former DCPNS Medical Director

*From left to right:*  
Audrey Sanson, BN RN CDE; Bev Harris, PDt CDE; Anne McLaughlin, PDt CDE; and Janice Knapp, BN RN CDE; Valley Regional Hospital Diabetes Centre Team and winners of the Excellence in Innovation Award.



**The Excellence in Innovation Award was presented to the Valley Regional Hospital Diabetes Centre team by Zlatko Karlovic, DCPNS Director of Diabetes Surveillance.**

This award recognizes the innovative use of DCPNS Registry data by an individual or team to impact diabetes care. The recipient of this award has used DCPNS Registry data to identify a need within the local population, developed an innovative strategy/program to address the need, used DCPNS Registry data to evaluate the strategy/program, and impacted diabetes care at the local, regional, and/or provincial level.



#### **LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT**

Presented to those who provide strong and vibrant vision and guidance early and throughout the life of the DCPNS.

**Recipients: Dr. Sonia Salisbury and Dr. Meng Tan, former DCPNS Medical Directors**

#### **DEDICATED SERVICE**

Presented to those who provide significant years of service and support in an advisory role to the DCPNS.

**Recipient: Dr. Murdock Smith**

#### **COMMITMENT TO SERVICE**

Presented to those who help to actively shape current and future directions, provide a strong voice for the program, and provide support in operational decisions and through ongoing commitments.

**Recipients: Drs. Lynne Harrigan and Beth Cummings, current DCPNS Medical Advisors; Maureen Topley, RN CDE and Susan Butts PDt CDE, former Board/Council members; Barb Patterson, DCPNS Coordinator Administrative Services**



*From left to right:* Susan Butts, PDt CDE, DCPNS Commitment to Service recipient; Maureen Topley, BN RN CDE, DCPNS Commitment to Service recipient; Janice Knapp, BN RN CDE, winner of the Excellence in Community Reach Award

*The following are excerpts from the comments made by the Provincial Program Manager, Peggy Dunbar, during the awards ceremony.*

**T**ogether we have made a difference!

From the earliest days of this program when Dr. Tan, Neala Gill, and I travelled to every corner of the province to meet with diabetes care providers, and to understand the issues they were facing, to the present (20 years later), it is evident that this Program and those that support it, have made a difference. Our partners, funders, and friends have made not just a small difference but a big, big difference—a significant difference.

To demonstrate this change, let's look at the DCPNS in three time-periods.

**EARLY DAYS**—It was about building relationships, gaining trust, and moving toward quality through standardization. As program staff, we held our first meetings with diabetes educators and then physicians from across Nova Scotia and these helped plot our course for the years to come. We heard “We want to be able to compare apples to apples, we want to know we are making a difference, and we want to be assured that we are providing care the best we can and in similar ways across this province. We want to reassure our patients and their families that the diabetes care they receive anywhere will be the same—the best.”

So... we built forms and data capture tools (with lots of input—version 64 we always say), we collected statistics, we started a registry, and we produced 8 guideline papers to standardize and guide our work (all with the support and input of the Divisions of Endocrinology, front line care providers and senior leaders). The guidelines are still relevant today, including the need for standardized/routine blood work; routine foot inspections; regular blood pressure measurements; promotion of

group modular instruction; adoption and promotion of group modular instruction; implementation of strategies to promote self-care practices; and promotion of trained mental health therapists.

Our first pregnancy management guidelines were released in 1993, followed by the pediatric guidelines in 1995.

**MIDDLE YEARS**—We built and grew our Registry and its capabilities with dedicated staff that were hired and supported to do this work. We conducted surveys, audited practice, and made recommendations. With the release of our *Surveying and Preventing Diabetes Complications* document (1997), we moved forward with public and provider awareness. Remember *Eyes and Feet Can Last a Lifetime* (1998) and *Preventing Kidney and Nerve Disease... Don't Wait Until It's too Late* (2000)? There were town hall and regional meetings; there was travel and community dialogue. We contributed to the National Diabetes Surveillance System and the province continues to benefit. We built our website, we networked, and we helped to transfer new knowledge through the newsletter and annotated bibliographies to influence practice.

**NOW**—In these last 5 to 7 years, we continue all that was started in the first 12-15 years; however, we are now producing guidelines, tools, and resources for an array of providers (beyond Diabetes Centres to Primary Care and Continuing Care/Long-Term Care). Diabetes educators are adjusting insulin; standard foot assessment forms are being used across provider groups (now introduced and taught in Dalhousie's Medical School); physical activity and exercise tools are being embedded as a standard of quality care; and we are working interprofessionally - physicians, pharmacists, diabetes educators, Family Practice nurses, nurse practitioners, and many others - to approach self-monitoring of blood glucose for those with

non-insulin managed type 2 diabetes in a more consistent reasoned way.

We are informing policy. We are building partnerships around chronic disease prevention and management as well as risk factor reduction. We are increasing our reach through and with these new partners. We are providing grants, encouraging partnerships, and producing ever-valued information from the DCPNS Registry data with many new reports. An epidemiologist and other data experts have joined our ranks and there is much value-added.

And over all these years, we hired fantastic staff, and many are with us still—every one of them dedicated to you and the work they do for you—Barb in 1994, Zlatko in 1998, Brenda in 2002, followed shortly by Karen, Alice, and Robin; then Bev, Pam, Don, Jennifer, and Ian (our newest).

While many things have changed, including the increasing numbers of people diagnosed and living well with diabetes, others have remained constant - your desire to improve the health of Nova Scotians; to help people with diabetes live long, healthy, and productive lives; and to ensure people receive the best possible care where they live, work, and play. These mantras are not different. We have all helped and strived to level the playing field.

It is daunting to acknowledge and mention the various individuals that have contributed to the many successes throughout the province. You are all important! There are not many opportunities to say thank you—so this is for you... Thank you! You should be very proud... because we are very proud of you!

So remember going forward, together we have made a difference and partnerships, innovation, and creativity have been key.

