

ALBERTA COLLEGE OF PHARMACISTS &  
ALBERTA PHARMACISTS' ASSOCIATION



# 2010

**APEX AWARDS**  
*Alberta Pharmacy Excellence*

## M.J. Huston Pharmacist of Distinction



### Dr. Christine Hughes

Associate Professor, U of A;  
Clinical Pharmacotherapy Practitioner,  
Northern Alberta HIV Program

*The M.J. Huston Pharmacist of Distinction award is presented to a college registrant who has demonstrated outstanding professional excellence in pharmacist practice.*

**W**hat fires me up?" Christine Hughes doesn't even pause. "Variety! I like lots of variety. I believe you should follow your passion. If you enjoy going to work every day and it involves something you're passionate about, you'll be successful."

Well, there is no shortage of variety, passion, or success in Christine's world. She divides her work days between clinic practice, teaching, and research and has received numerous accolades in each area.

"I work with amazing people – the faculty, the clinic staff, the students, the patients. The clinic work is intense and offers challenge. My teaching and research both keep me involved in the generation of new knowledge, in moving things along."

As an Associate Professor of Pharmacy and Chair of the Pharmacy Practice Division at the UofA Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Christine is a respected and effective teacher who can easily transpose bedside knowledge into the classroom setting. She has precepted numerous undergraduate, resident, and PharmD students on clinical rotation. She has also served as research preceptor for both undergraduates and residents. In 1999, she received the Bristol Myers Squibb Excellence in Teaching Award.

Christine reflects, "I think I've matured in my teaching. I'm less concerned now about students reciting detail and more concerned about them being able to do something with that knowledge. I want students to have a thoughtful process. It's hard for students to see how pharmacists can lead the planning for drug therapy decisions; I want to help them build that confidence."

As a clinical practitioner, Christine pioneered HIV pharmaceutical care in Edmonton and has become recognized nationally. "I always liked infectious diseases," states Christine. "I knew I wanted an ambulatory practice and I really saw a need [in HIV / AIDS] when I was studying in Vancouver."

Thanks to Christine's example, the medical personnel at the Northern Alberta HIV Program have become such strong advocates for the role of pharmacists in HIV care that this has spawned the creation of several new HIV pharmacist positions in the program.

"Dr. Hughes is a superb and caring clinical practitioner, an extremely knowledgeable and highly regarded expert in her rapidly evolving field, a well-respected teacher and a productive researcher," observes Dr. Stan Houston, Director of the Northern Alberta HIV

Program. "She has pioneered and developed the role of the HIV program pharmacist and established herself as an invaluable member of the HIV program team."

Christine's patients are just as effusive. "From the very first time I sat with Christine to discuss a new and frightening ARV treatment schedule I felt listened to," recalls Darren, a patient in the Northern Alberta HIV Program. "Compassion and understanding are most definitely in her toolbox. It's not uncommon today to hear continuous complaining about the low level of patient care in our hurting health care system. I would say these loud voices have obviously not been on Christine's caseload."

Another patient echoes Darren's tribute. "There is a kindness and gentle power that is obvious within minutes of meeting her. I see this in the way us patients feel and care about her. I see this in the way her peers care and respect her. I see this in the fact that the University of Alberta outpatient pharmacy is so outstanding. I suppose the best testimonial I can offer is that I truly know I'm ALIVE today because of the awesome care I receive from Dr. Hughes and everyone else on my team; it is above and beyond."

Somehow, on top of her teaching and practice schedule, Christine also finds time to conduct research and participate in professional organizations. She is currently researching adherence and examining the roles social factors, beliefs, and values play among different ethnicities. She is Past President of the Canadian College of Clinical Pharmacy, a reviewer for multiple journals, a member of seven professional organizations, and, in 2008, was conferred Fellows status by the Canadian Society of Hospital Pharmacists (National). The Fellows Program recognizes sustained and outstanding efforts in patient care, research, teaching and service to the profession. Another major success for Christine was to be among the first fifteen pharmacists in Alberta to receive prescribing privileges in 2008. She was also one of the first pharmacists to receive authorization to administer drugs by injection.

"She is a leader, a teacher and a role model for pharmacists," says colleague Terri Schindel.

"Christine's contributions to the profession of pharmacy are important because she is dedicated to excellence in all that she does, works to a high personal standard and is committed to giving back to the profession."

## W.L. Boddy Pharmacy Award



### Coleman Remedy'sRx Pharmacy

Stephen Little, Manager; Coleman, AB

*The W.L. Boddy Pharmacy award is presented to an Alberta pharmacy whose health professionals, by virtue of their practice, have had a positive impact on the health of their community.*

**M**y biggest success? That's easy – winning the hearts of my patients. It's amazing to see how loyal they are."

Stephen Little, manager of the Coleman Remedy'sRx Pharmacy, truly does seem amazed by his patients' loyalty to him, his staff, and his pharmacy. Stephen purchased the pharmacy in 2006 and has steadily built its reputation as the pharmacy of choice for many Crowsnest Pass residents. As he describes his business, it doesn't take long to see why his patients are so devoted.

In many ways, Remedy'sRx is what people imagine as the typical small town pharmacy. It is one of four pharmacies serving the 6,500 residents of the Crowsnest Pass. "We're open six days a week, but everyone in the community knows how to reach me when the pharmacy's not open," says Stephen. "Do we do home deliveries? Sure. And compounding? Of course. Every day is like a clinic day; we counsel and educate people whenever they need it. And we do vet pharmacy too."

What fuels such professional drive? "I figure it's my licence and my profession, so I should practise how I see fit." What Stephen and his staff see fit is offering exceptional patient care.

Stephen is the pharmacy's only full-time pharmacist. He is assisted by pharmacy technicians Terri Lyster and Florence Desaucy. From April to November, relief pharmacist Heather Fletcher lets Stephen have a little time off. But even then, he doesn't leave the pharmacy world far behind.

"I'm looking forward to Heather getting back (she spends the winters even farther south than Coleman). That will give me time to take the injections course and get the authorization [to administer drugs by injection]."

In the meantime, Stephen and his staff will continue to offer the high level of patient care that keeps people coming back. They collaborate with the area's Chinese medicine practitioners, the naturopath, and traditional medical professionals to exchange information and ensure they explore all options for patients. Blairmore physician Dr. Jacob Maritz appreciates the effort. "Stephen is an

essential part of the patient care team. His hard work and knowledge of new medications and pharmaceutical therapy is critical to our team approach to patient care."

All staff are encouraged to undertake continuing professional education and are tireless in their efforts to do research for patients. They are also sticklers on patient follow up.

"It's so important to flag non-responsiveness to therapy. We had a patient with a proton pump inhibitor [medication used to treat a gastrointestinal condition]. She'd been using it for several weeks and, when I asked her, said she hadn't noticed any change in her condition. We encouraged her to press her doctor to order a scope. It turned out that she had esophageal cancer. It got fixed and she's fine now, but we wouldn't have caught it without follow up. You just can't know if you don't ask."

With every facet of practice so firmly centred on the patient, it's not hard at all to see why Coleman Remedy'sRx patients are so loyal.

## Partners in Practice



*Team members (left to right):  
Gwen Berdan, occupational therapist; Dr. Marjan Abbasi, physician;  
Dr. Cheryl Sadowski, pharmacist; Lisa Robanske, administrative assistant;  
Elizabeth Sharma, nurse*

### Geriatric Assessment Team, Seniors Clinic

Misericordia Community  
Hospital; Edmonton, AB

*The Partners in Practice award is presented annually to recognize a collaborative effort between a pharmacist and one or more other health professionals to optimize patient care and/or safety.*

**T**he team is committed to improved patient care by comprehensive geriatric assessment," explains pharmacist Cheryl Sadowski. "Despite the challenges of working with this frail population, the team has ensured that the processes are efficient and effective in order to provide care to an often overlooked group. Older adults are our specialty and we take pride in the patient-centred care we provide."

This team should take tremendous pride in their work. They have raised the bar for interdisciplinary collaboration several notches. Not only do they provide exceptional patient care, they also mentor students, educate colleagues, liaise with community support organizations, and contribute to research.

The team, formed in 2006, is comprised of health professionals who were working in other capacities in geriatrics at the Misericordia Community Hospital.

The team's patient care starts at the time of referral. The nurse and administrative assistant gather as much information as possible from charts, documentation, the patient, the family, and caregivers. If needed, the nurse will conduct a home visit to ensure that urgent issues are addressed.

On the average clinic day, the team sees three new patients and provides follow-up care for up to three more. That may not sound like a lot – until you take into consideration the breadth of each assessment and the complexity each patient brings.

The team's primary focus is Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment. All domains of the patient are assessed: cognition, self-care activities, socialization, quality of life, social supports, functional ability, emotion/psychological health, medical concerns, medications, etc. It is impossible for a primary care clinic or family physician to provide this type of assessment in an office visit that lasts just a few minutes.

Each patient is assessed by each health professional on the team; almost every patient has 6-10 issues identified. The team members then have a brief discussion, prioritizing the problems uncovered in the assessment. Then the team decides on a plan, prioritizing areas of intervention required for that patient. The team meets with the patient and any caregivers or family who attend the appointment and presents the plan in full so that the patient and family can comment, make changes, or verify any concerns. The patient and caregivers are fully engaged in the

design of the plan, as the success depends on their partnership in implementing the plan. Once everyone is in agreement, the team makes suggestions to the family physician and/or Primary Care Network on how to implement the care plan for the patient.

"Teamwork does result in better patient care, but it's hard. We had all worked at other geriatric clinics, so we just assumed the same workflow would work for us," laughs Cheryl. "It did in the beginning, but then when we had to start taking on more and more patients, the gaps started to show. It was humbling; here we thought we were the experts in 'team' and ours wasn't working."

In 2009, the team conducted an extensive review to identify areas for improvement in workflow and process. One key activity was workshops on personality. By valuing each team member's unique way of contributing to the team, the team has moved ahead with an even greater appreciation of collaboration.

They are passing along their great teamwork skills to the many pharmacy, nursing, and medical students they train each year. Team members have also developed educational materials for patients, their caregivers, and community organizations. Research and scholarly work is also pursued. The team is compiling case studies and projects to describe patient experiences and improve care.

Given the benefit of 20/20 hindsight, what advice would Cheryl give to other interdisciplinary teams? "Discuss team expectations of roles. Having that clear at the beginning is really important. And think broadly about each role. Pharmacists tend to have too small a view of what they can do or be a part of; don't think so small. You can have a tremendous impact beyond drugs.

"And always remember that while establishing the team might be hard, the rewards are worth it. It's so much more interesting [to work] in a team. The whole team is on the same page from the beginning and it multiplies the benefits to the patient. "

# Wyeth Consumer Healthcare Bowl of Hygeia



## Igor Shaskin

Manager, Stafford Pharmacy & Home Healthcare;  
Lethbridge, AB

*The Wyeth Consumer Healthcare Bowl of Hygeia is awarded to a pharmacist who has compiled an outstanding record of community service which, apart from the recipient's specific identification as a pharmacist, reflects well on the profession.*

**I** do it [volunteer] because I'm part of a community. Pharmacy has always been part of the community. It's not enough just to be the drug therapy experts. Pharmacists have an important leadership role to play."

Igor Shaskin is a leader who inspires others by example. For the 25 years he has owned Stafford Pharmacy & Home Healthcare, he has built a sterling reputation not only as a pharmacist but as a community leader. "Being able to do meaningful work is what gives me the greatest satisfaction. I want to make an impact." Well, Igor needn't worry. Not only has he positively impacted the health of patients, he has improved the lives of countless others through his volunteer work.

As a Director of the Lethbridge Chamber of Commerce and the Lethbridge Better Business Bureau, he protected the interests of both fellow business owners and citizens. As a member of the Lethbridge Y's Men's Service Club and the Galbraith School Council, he has spoken on behalf of issues that affect both young and old. He has passed on his business knowledge as a Junior Achievement Business Mentor. As a member of the University of Lethbridge's Fundraising Committee, he helped make the new LINC Centre, a state-of-the-art library and reference center, a reality.

He works in the broader arena of healthcare too. He is just completing his fourth year on the hospital foundation. "I wanted to be certain that patients receive the best of care. This can only happen if we have what hospital staff and healthcare professionals need in the hospital to provide that care. I want a facility that is leading edge – that can offer innovative care. When you have that, care improves and you can attract the best people, and that too creates better care."

Igor also takes pharmacy education well beyond the doors of his pharmacy. He has spread his enthusiasm for the profession by being a guest speaker at many school presentations. He also presents talks to community groups, seniors associations, and other health professionals. His in-service presentation for Dacapo, a part of Lethbridge Family Services, is now mandatory for all new staff.

"It's a given that you have to be an educator. That's a criterion of being a good pharmacist. There is a public education program that is titled, 'Knowledge: Your Best Medicine.' I really believe that. I always try to figure out what will make it interesting for the audience. For the elementary school presentations, I would often take in a giant mortar and pestle. For younger groups, I take in Remington's and Martindale's [pharmacy reference texts]; they weigh almost as much as the kids! They can't believe all the information that pharmacists have to know. For seniors, I try to help them understand that medicine is not a commodity to simply consume; it's a tool – one that can do good things or do harm. It's important then to learn how best to use such a valuable tool. "

For all of this, Igor doesn't expect any payment but feels rewarded in other ways. "Don't misunderstand – I am a huge proponent for the payment of pharmacist services within the professional practice. Yet you learn so much just talking to people when taking the opportunity to meet them this way – outside of the pharmacy. As long as the audience is attentive and I can see the 'light go on' I'll keep doing it. The profession gives you everything: your skills, your living. For the profession to be sustainable, sometimes you have to give back. That giving starts at home."

He is also of the opinion that pharmacists have a very important leadership role to play within their community. "People within the community just naturally look to you as that leader. We shouldn't disappoint and, more importantly, we should grab on to the opportunity".

What wisdom can Igor pass along from his volunteer experience? "Try to find a way to contribute to your community in a meaningful, significant way. You should add to Maslow's hierarchy. Community participation is another way to do that meaningful work and leave your legacy within that community."

## Friend of Pharmacy



### Dr. Earle Waugh

Co-Director, Centre for the Cross-Cultural Study  
of Health and Healing, U of A

*The Friend of Pharmacy Award is presented to a  
non-pharmacist who has provided distinguished  
service to the profession of pharmacy.*

What's happening on the ground is what we should be training [pharmacists] for. Think of the patients they're serving. We know that reading comprehension drops three grade levels within two years of being out of school. Now apply that to a highly diverse ethnic culture. Many of those individuals are seldom able to read well in English and have little understanding of drugs to begin with. How can they understand medical terms? How can they get proper health care? Pharmacists are the only people who can really handle this. They need to be the mediators. Who else will do it?"

Who else indeed? If it were possible for just one person to affect sweeping change in the education of health professionals, it could well be Earle Waugh. Dr. Waugh lives, breathes, and celebrates the importance of understanding culture in his role as Co-Director of the Centre for the Cross-Cultural Study of Health and Healing at the University of Alberta. He brings a wide vision to the job, honed from a life of curiosity, exploration, and discovery.

Dr. Waugh began his career with a Ph.D. in Religious Studies from the University of Chicago. After teaching for four years in the U.S., he arrived at the University of Alberta in 1974. Today, his CV reveals not only his current titles of Emeritus Professor, Department of Religious Studies and Adjunct Professor, Department of Family Medicine, but that he has been the Chairman of the Canadian Studies Programme; Coordinator of Comparative Studies in Literature, Film and Religion; Acting Chair of Modern Languages and Comparative Studies; Director of the M.V. Dimic Research Institute; an adjunct professor in the Department of Music; and a prize-winning author, editor, and filmmaker. There seems to be nothing that Earle Waugh isn't curious about.

What he's passionate about though is culture and community. He has studied these elements through the lenses of religion and healthcare and inspires countless students with his storytelling, humanity, and view of the world as a community of people needing to care for and understand each other.

Cheryl Sadowski, UofA Associate Professor of Pharmacy, has been impressed by the lectures Dr. Waugh has given to her undergraduate students over the last five years. "He wants to ensure that those caring for others understand that humans have many perspectives and values, and these need to be recognized and respected."

Students appreciate Dr. Waugh's ability to address his topic with meaningful reverence, yet pepper his sessions with humor. "He expertly handles politically and socially charged topics and makes the experience fun and rewarding," observes Cheryl.

Dr. Waugh has turned his research and passion into rich tools for health professionals. He focuses on the importance of cultural sensitivity in the health system and how a lack of understanding or attention to ethnic attitudes or traditions can create barriers. The questionnaire he adapted for pharmacy allows individuals to self-assess their own biases and beliefs which may impact patient care. He and his colleagues in Family Medicine also developed a cultural competence manual for health care professionals. The content is designed for all members of a health care team and includes material of considerable relevance to pharmacists.

In May, he will celebrate the release of this work, *Cultural Competency Skills for Health Care Professionals: Community-based Modules (with eight videos)* at the World Conference of Family Doctors in Cancun, Mexico where he has been asked to provide a lengthy workshop. Four of the films were nominated for 2009 Alberta Motion Picture Industry Awards in the "Best Educational" category.

Even after such a full and varied career, Earle's curiosity shows no signs of slowing down. "Does pharmacists' training match the sophistication of drug systems?" he asks. "Could pharmacists be the mediators between traditional cures and new drugs? As pharmacists move more into the realm of prescribing, will they remove themselves from the discussion with patients of what the medication is for? Let's hope not."

We'll have to wait to find out the answers. In the meantime, we will celebrate the fact that pharmacy has such a supporter, educator, and inspiration. Earle Waugh is definitely a Friend of Pharmacy.

*The Centre for the Cross-Cultural Study of Health and Healing is a nonprofit organization established at the university in 1984 to study multicultural health issues. The Centre staff and research associates, who are a multidisciplinary team of academics, health care professionals, graduate students, and community members, share a commitment to the analysis of health and healing from a pluralist perspective. For more information, see the Centre's website at [www.familymed.med.ualberta.ca/Home/AboutUs/Focus/CCCSHH/](http://www.familymed.med.ualberta.ca/Home/AboutUs/Focus/CCCSHH/).*

alberta college of  
**pharmacists**

