Lymphedema Matters
Association of Ontario

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President's Message

Hello everyone!

On October 23rd, we held our Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Fundraising Walk at Swansea Town Hall in Toronto; what a great day it was!

We would like to thank each and every one of you who was able to attend in person, or online. Whether you were a volunteer, a fundraiser, a sponsor, or an exhibitor, without your generous support or effort, this day would not have been possible - so thank you to all of you! It was also great to personally meet the family and friends of my fellow board members; we are an excited group of people and we are surely becoming more like a family!

At the AGM, I was lucky enough to share my experiences at the 12th International Lymphedema Conference in Dallas, Texas this past August. I attended several important lectures that I was very much looking forward to sharing with Ontarians. I met some great physicians, researchers, and leaders that have shown me that the future of lymphedema is bright! Details on my trek to Dallas are highlighted on page 3 of this newsletter.

During our AGM, we announced that one of our long-time board members, Barb Foster, has stepped down from the LAO due to an illness. I wish to thank her for all her of work over the past four years. Her continuous effort, years of dedication, and her constant passion has helped the LAO grow to what it is today, and I'm sure that you will all join me in wishing Barb all the best!

In our inaugural year with new board members assembled, it has been an exciting year; exciting, yet challenging! We have done a lot in the short period of time that we've been together; we are up to date in our financial matters as an organization, we have developed our positions on the board and continue to find new ways to make a difference in Ontario! We also shared our first event together, hosting the October 23rd AGM and Walk, which raised over $11,000! So far, 2016 has been an exciting year of events!

So what's next? We are coming to a successful year end, but what's next on the agenda? The focus of our board is developing a strategy to remain a viable organization. I would like to assure you that our primary goal is assisting our members across the province when it comes to lymphedema. Every patient with lymphedema deserves a voice, and we are cumulatively working hard to help you take control of your lymphedema! I would like to use this opportunity to also invite you to help the LAO become stronger. Share with us your feedback, what you would like to see happen within the LAO or the Province; we are always looking for ways to be a stronger association for you!

How can you get involved? Do you feel like you can be of help to your lymphedema community? Reach out to us! If you are a healthcare provider, email me, and we will work together to help patients access the right tools and resources to improve their lymphedema! We cannot succeed unless we work together, so if you are a nurse, therapist, physician, or caregiver with history in lymphedema, help us become a strong voice for patients with lymphedema!

I want to thank everyone for your time, without your support and continuous donations, we would not be here today! Thank you to all our members who continue to support the LAO, we will not let you down!■

Andrew Matta, LAO President
president@lymphontario.ca

UPDATE: **Annual General Meeting**

On Sunday, October 23rd, 2016 we were thrilled to gather LAO members and professionals together in person at Swansea Hall in Toronto, and by phone for our 2016 Annual General Meeting.

Thank you to all who were able to attend in person or virtually by phone!

Liisa Morley, LAO Vice President & Communications Officer

Cindy DeGraaff, LAO Secretary & Information/Education Line Coordinator, and Ben Ciallella, LAO Treasurer

In case you missed it, here is a summary of highlights from the meeting:

- The LAO's 2015-2016 financials were approved as presented by LAO Board Member Ben Ciallella and independent auditor Melissa Coulson
- Melissa Coulson was appointed the Auditor for the LAO's 2016-2017 statements
- The LAO regretfully announced the resignation of long-time LAO Board Member Barbara Foster due to illness

Following the business portion of the meeting, presentations were delivered by Charlotte Schultz and Andrew Matta, focused on a letter recently submitted on behalf of the LAO to the Assistive Devices Program of Ontario and Andrew's recent attendance at the International Lymphedema Conference in Dallas, Texas.

LAO Advocacy Update Presentation

This past summer, the LAO learned that the provincial Assistive Devices Program (ADP) of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care was holding a review of best practice guidelines supporting compression treatment for lymphedema with an invited resource group as they update and review their criteria for financial reimbursement of compression garments for lymphedema.

Currently, ADP provides funding

Charlotte Schultz, LAO Director, Advocacy Commitee assistance at 75% of approved cost for compression garments for chronic lymphedema management, as well as sequential extremity pumps for primary lymphedema management. Any resident of Ontario with a valid Ontario health card is eligible to apply to this program. For more information about the program, please consult our website under www.lymphontario.ca/Ontario-Resources.

To support the work of our advocacy committee, and as affected individuals living with lymphedema ourselves, we reached out to the Province's ADP representative regarding this initiative, and learned that future ADP reimbursement may not include the allowance for patients to request a variation in their garments.

We were subsequently invited to submit a letter to ADP to help inform them of patient experiences during their review, most notably the need for a variation in compression garment for patients to physiologically control their lymphedema and maintain good skin health during shorter periods of high heat and humidity and in the case of acute skin injury.

We understand that other excellent resource materials were brought to the meeting by the assembled resource group to more fully describe the multiple dimensions of compression treatment. At this time, the ADP review is ongoing. We remain committed to advocating for our members and patients living with lymphedema across the Province of Ontario.

To request a copy of the letter, or to learn more about the work of the LAO's Advocacy Committee, please contact Debbie Ciotti-Bowman at advocacy@lymphontario.ca or Charlotte Schultz at advocacy2@lymphontario.ca.

Key Note Presentation: **Andrew's Trek to Dallas**

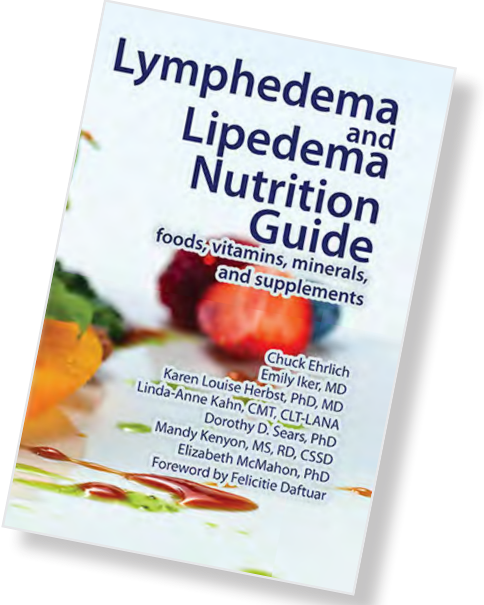
Dr. Stanley Rockson and Andrew Matta, LAO President

Recently, LAO President Andrew Matta attended the 12th International Lymphedema Conference in Dallas, Texas. Entitled *Shaping The Future Through Commitment*, Evidence, And New Frontiers, the conference was hosted by The National Lymphedema Network.

Andrew Matta with Dr. Karen Herbst and therapist Linda Kahn

Andrew shared his conference experience via live Facebook updates, and also shared an overview of his experience as our Key Note presentation at the AGM.

If you missed his updates, don't fret! We've posted a video of his engaging presentation on our social media channels. In it, he details the lectures that he attended to share this information with our lymphedema community here in Ontario. This includes cameos of many influential physicians, researchers, and leaders that are pioneering the future of lymphedema research and care. Please check it out, and if you're not already, follow us on Facebook @ Lymphedema Association of Ontario and Twitter @ lymphontario!



Lymphedema and Lipedema Nutrition Guide

foods, vitamins, minerals, and supplements

Chuck Ehrlich
Emily Iker, MD
Karen Louise Herbst, PhD, MD
Linda-Anne Kahn, CMT, CLT-LANA
Dorothy D. Sears, PhD
Mandy Kenyon, MS, RD, CSSD
Elizabeth McMahon, PhD
Foreword by Felicitie Daftuar

As promised at the meeting, we also wanted to share information on the book that Andrew referenced that delves into how nutrition can play an important factor in taking care of your lymphedema. Remember, if you take care of your body, your body takes care of you! It is widely available via Amazon.ca.■

Charlotte Schultz, LAO Director, Advocacy Commitee

THANK YOU! We Couldn't Do It Without You!

We can't fully describe in words how thankful we are to everyone who donated, volunteered, sponsored, exhibited, attended, or somehow showed support for our recent AGM and LE Awareness Walk Event.

We are thrilled to announce that supporters of the LAO raised $11,313 for our 2016 LE Awareness Walk! This is incredible and will surely enable us to continue on our mission of connecting patients and health professionals to lymphedema resources in Ontario.

Top Fundraisers to-date!

Priya Sood	$4,115
Glen and Margaret Gagan	$1,500
Ben Ciallella	$900
Debbie Ciotti-Bowman	$875
Charlotte Schultz	$525
Liisa Morley	$345
Natalie Paul	$195

Team Kitchener/Waterloo raised $1,443 this year!

Special thank you to Catharine Burt, Melody Southgate and Elaine Bladon for organizing their walk which took place on Saturday, October 15th.

THANK YOU to our Exhibitors!

- Juzo
- Sigvaris
- Bisa Dobson RMT
- Custom Comfort


THANK YOU to our Walkers!

Our Raffle Sponsors:

- Andrew Matta: 40" Samsung TV
- Ann Di Menna of Markham Lymphatic Centre: Two sets of Nordic walking poles
- Sigvaris: Two pairs of compression stockings
- Custom Comfort: Two $100 certificates
- David's Tea: gift bag
- Shopper's Drug Mart Markham
- The Second Cup: gift cards
- Juzo: Four pairs of Silver Sole socks
- Cineplex: Movie pass

Our Volunteers:

- Our entire LAO Board of Directors
- High School Students—Ethan Barrie, Michael Miller
- Photographer—Marley Raditz ■

THANK YOU to our 2016 AGM&Walk Event Sponsors

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