SOGC Publishes Consensus Document on Intimate Partner Violence

The SOGC has identified violence as an important determinant of women’s health and is committed to supporting its members in their care of abused women. The SOGC is proud to announce the recent publication of its Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Consensus Statement in the April Edition of the Journal of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada.

For the full document, please read your JOGC whereby the authors have developed a suite of recommendations touching on the issues of intervention, reporting and roles and responsibilities of the healthcare professional and much more. Many thanks to all the SOGC members and partners who worked diligently on this document.

Here are some highlights from this important consensus:

• Canadian surveys of IPV, the most common form of violence experienced by women, have found an annual prevalence between 6% to 8%; this is considered a conservative estimate due to under-reporting.

(Continued on page 3)

Learning Modules for the Assessment and Treatment of Male and Female Sexual Dysfunction in Primary Care

Two comprehensive learning modules for the assessment and treatment of sexual dysfunction in primary care are now available on the Health Professionals section of sexualityandu.ca. One module focuses on female sexual dysfunction and the other on male sexual dysfunction. Each module consists of a pre-test/post-test, learning objectives, quick reference, core content, and case studies with follow-up questions.

The modules contain sections on the physician’s role in addressing the sexual function of primary care patients, the classification and etiologies of sexual dysfunction, tips for inquiring about sexuality issues, general and specific screening questions, meeting patient concerns with information and practical suggestions, and treatment strategies.

The module on female sexual dysfunction includes discussion of the impact of reproductive life events (i.e.: pregnancy/childbirth, menopause, hysterectomy/oophorectomy, breast cancer) on sexual function. Sug-
COUNCIL 2004-2005

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Canadian Medical Protective Association on the Speciality of Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Guest Editor: Dr. Bill Beilby

This is a summary of material that was presented to the Council of the SOGC during the 18th ICME Programme in March 2005 by Dr. Bill Beilby, Associate Executive Director and Managing Director, Risk Management Services of the Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA).

CMPA data show that over the last 10 years (1995-2004) the number of new legal actions commenced each year against obstetricians/gynaecologists has decreased by 38%. The decrease is significant and is a testament to the increased efforts of CMPA, SOGC and practitioners in risk management. Even with this substantial decrease, the annual risk of being sued remains high with one new legal action for every twelve obstetricians/gynaecologists in 2004.

In spite of the above during the same 10-year period the total annual costs for the ob/gyn cases has continued to increase. Obstetrical cases account for 42% of the legal actions faced by obstetrician/gynaecologists while the remainder (58%) are related to gynaecology. However, the obstetrical cases account for 80% of the total cost.

The impact of litigation is one of the factors that are having an effect on the access to obstetrical care. Fewer medical students are choosing obstetrics; there is increased evidence of defensive medicine with c-section rates climbing and VBAC rates plunging. The fear of litigation is leading to calls from practitioners for “cookbook” medicine rather than reliance on clinical judgment.

There has been a shift in the provision of obstetrical care with less being provided by family physicians and more by obstetricians. Statistics Canada data show that fewer deliveries are being done by family physicians while obstetricians are doing a greater percentage of vaginal deliveries, c-sections and multiple births.

Over the last 10 years the number of Ob/Gyn members of CMPA has grown by 5%. During the same time, the number of family physician members doing obstetrics has decreased by 42%.

CONCLUSIONS

- The CMPA, SOGC and obstetrical practitioners need to continue to work together to decrease the incidence of adverse events and mitigate the consequences of them.
- The medical profession must continue to reinforce evidence-based practice.
- Experts need to present to the courts reasonable standards and without the benefit of hindsight.
- Causation arguments need to be supported by more objective evidence.
sexualityandu.ca visitors increase 33%

By Daniel Morier, Project Manager, Contraception Awareness Project

With 1.2 million visits registered in 2004, a growing number of Canadians are turning to www.sexualityandu.ca for up-to-date and credible sexual health information.

Developed by a team of over 60 interdisciplinary Canadian healthcare professionals, the site caters to the general public and healthcare professionals by providing prepared and linked texts, interactive learning and referrals to preventive or treatment support/services. The content of the five separate modules serving teens, adults, parents, educators and healthcare professionals, is based on a thorough analysis of the information and professional learning needs of different segments of those audiences based on research on their practices and focus groups. The site emphasizes Canadian sources, medical accuracy and practical suggestions and actions.

What’s New

- Recent contraceptive methods and updates: contraceptive patch (Evra), vaginal ring (NuvaRing), intrauterine system (Mirena), injectable contraceptive (Depo Provera)
- Sex Health News: This bulletin focuses on dispelling contraception myths, contraception updates, news briefs on sexuality as well as FAQs related to contraception and sexual well-being
- Sex-Fu Challenge: An interactive game for teenagers which quizzes players on contraception and STI knowledge

Sexual Dysfunction (Continued from page 1)

gestions for education/brief therapy around these issues are provided. Separate sections focus on the prevalence, etiology and treatment of Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder, Sexual Aversion Disorder, Sexual Arousal Disorder, Orgasmic Disorder, Dyspareunia, and Vaginismus.

The module on male sexual dysfunction focuses on the prevalence, etiology and treatment of Erectile Dysfunction, Premature Ejaculation, and Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder. Discussion of the importance of integrating biomedical treatments and psychosexual counseling in the management of erectile dysfunction, the treatment of psychogenic erectile dysfunction, and erectile dysfunction and the cardiac patient is included. Practical advice the physician can give to men concerned about premature ejaculation is provided. The various factors that may be associated with low desire among men are also discussed.

These learning modules provide a comprehensive introduction to the assessment and treatment of female and male sexual dysfunction in primary care and are essential for the physician or other primary health care provider looking for a sound knowledge base and basic skill set in this vitally important aspect of health and well-being. Sexualityandu.ca provides current, and accurate information for healthcare providers, parents, adults and teens, make sure to share this website with your patients!

IPV (Continued from page 1)

- Prevalence rates among pregnant and adolescent women appear to be greater
- All women, regardless of socio-economic status, race, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, health status and presence or absence of current partner are at risk for IPV
- Violence is a significant cause of morbidity and mortality for women
- Women experiencing violence have an increased risk for substance abuse, mental disorders, chronic physical disorders and sexual health complaints
- Women abused during pregnancy are more likely to be depressed, suicidal, experience pregnancy complications and poor outcomes, including maternal and fetal death
- Women who are immigrants or refugees, lesbians, women of colour, Aboriginal women, and women with disabilities may experience forms of IPV, may experience IPV differently, and may have more barriers to disclosure, than mainstream women
- For pregnant women, clinical interventions that included counselling to increase safety behaviours, resulted in the adoption of these practices and reductions in abusive incidents

For the full suite of recommendations, read the JOGC April Edition. Watch for news of our public launch on IPV on our website at www.sogc.org.

CAP – More than a website:

- Millennium Fellowships: Last month’s edition of the SOGC News highlighted last year’s Millennium Fellowship recipients. In total, six physicians, nurses and junior members were awarded traineeship grants in 2004 permitting them to acquire further technical knowledge or skills in the areas of obstetrics/gynaecology and/or sexual and reproductive health. The next application deadline is November 15, 2005.
- College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) Fellowships in Women’s Health: The SOGC has committed funding for the 2005 CFPC Scholarships in Women’s Health. The purpose of these scholarships is to support family physicians (CFPC members) who would like to develop their knowledge or skills in women’s health to meet the needs of their community. Eligible areas include sexual and reproductive health appropriate to different ages, sexually transmitted diseases, breast health, prevention and screening of gynaecological diseases, and menopause. Criteria and submission deadlines are available on www.cfpca.org/awards
- The Canadian Foundation for Women’s Health (CWPH): Our contributions enabled the CFPH to distribute funds for research projects in women’s health across Canada. The recipients include researchers from across the country and the results of these research projects will make significant contributions to women’s health at various stages of their lives in Canada and in developing countries.
- Compassionate Contraceptive Assistance Program: The Compassionate Contraceptive Assistance Program has been very successful in providing necessary samples to Canadian women who cannot afford contraception. Over 3,100 requests were processed in 2004. Contact the SOGC at (800) 561-2416 ext. 329 for application forms.

More than 11,000 game completions
There have been many changes in the pharmaceutical industry in the last two months. We would like to make our members aware of these changes.

**Wyeth Pharmaceuticals:**
Terry Davidson has left as the Group Product Manager and is now Regional Manager for Ontario and the Maritimes. Terry has worked for many years with the SOGC and was instrumental in the signing of the first Contraception Awareness Project (CAP) agreement. He has been involved with women’s health for over 12 years now and he will certainly be missed at some of the Regional Meetings.

David Rendimonti, Director of Marketing is now the main contact for the SOGC’s CAP initiative. Angela Hrincu and Sandra Wilson are the Product Managers that interact with the SOGC.

**Organon Canada:**
Robin Jinchereau has left the company after an association of more than 20 years. Robin was also part of the original group that worked with Dr. Lalonde to elaborate the CAP initiative. He has been involved with women’s health for over 12 years now and he will certainly be missed at some of the Regional Meetings.

David Rendimonti, Director of Marketing is now the main contact for the SOGC’s CAP initiative. Angela Hrincu and Sandra Wilson are the Product Managers that interact with the SOGC.

**Berlex:**
Jean-Robert Marcotte has relinquished his position and is now a Consultant for Berlex. Mr. Marcotte was honored by the SOGC at the recent ICME meeting for over 20 years of continuous support to medical education and to the SOGC Executive and Council. He continues to be active and we wish him well in his new endeavors.

Andre Mumme has taken over the portfolio responsibility for women’s health at Berlex as Director, Therapeutic Area Gynecology and Andrology.

**GlaxoSmithKline:**
Melanie DeWildt was our main contact with GlaxoSmithKline and she has moved to another division in the Company. Mr. Chris Costantino, Product Manager, Valtrex has replaced Ms. Dewildt in her functions.
We would also like to welcome Mr. Andrew Farrow who has recently taken over the psychiatry portfolio as Sr. Product Manager at GlaxoSmithKline.

All these changes have happened in the last few months and we welcome the new company representatives. The SOGC is committed in working with the industry to follow the RX&D guidelines and to partner for the development of quality educational program in all our meetings.

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**SOGC Annual General Business Meeting**

Tuesday, June 21, 2005 from 7:00 am to 8:00 am at the Hilton Hotel, Quebec City. Room location to be advised on site. All voting ob/gyn and life members are expected to attend. A hot breakfast will be served.
University of Alberta Newsletter Update

By Jillian Coolen, Junior Member

It’s been a busy year at the University of Alberta. In July, we welcomed five new first year residents: Charlotte Ballermann (Alberta), Shannon Dunlop (Western), Beth Gunn (Alberta), Nadia Jilwah (Queen’s) and Carmen Young (Alberta). Although each of them has been on-service with us at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, we look forward to getting to know them better next year upon completion of their core surgical training year.

Resident education was at the forefront this year. Our academic half-day schedule included an anatomy course with both didactic lectures and laboratory dissection and a resident lead laparoscopy course including didactic lectures and laparoscopy and hysteroscopy simulation. The residents found the simulators so beneficial that the department is in the process of purchasing a laparoscopic trainer and an OB simulator.

In January, we traveled by bus to beautiful Kananaskis Country where we had our third annual resident retreat at the Delta Kananaskis. This year’s curriculum highlighted the role of the educator. The visiting lecturer, Dr. David Cook from the University of Alberta’s Department of Medical Education, captivated residents and faculty as he demonstrated different teaching modalities especially appropriate for medical education. As a result, we all left as better educators.

Other highlights of the year included an accreditation and research day. The University of Alberta underwent accreditation in February and we are happy to report that the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology received full approval. Both residents and faculty are busy preparing for our 18th Annual Department Research Day to be held May 6, 2005. Our visiting professor is Dr. Laurie Elit, a Gynecologic Oncologist from McMaster University.

After a difficult and competitive CaRMS selection process, the University of Alberta is proud to welcome five new PGY1s set to join our program this July: Christina Demianczuk (Alberta), Lua Eiriksson (Dalhousie), Katarzyna Kycia (Alberta), Priya Sadacharan (Alberta) and Andrea Skorenki (Calgary). At the same time we say good-bye to our chief residents: Drew Barreth, Colleen Dy and Sarah Hallerhan. We wish them good luck on their Royal College examinations and in their future endeavors.

Membership Renewal Time for All Junior Members!

A friendly reminder to all medical students, junior and junior family practice residents that your 2005/2006 renewal fees are due. Look for your renewal notices and change of status forms in the mail or for your convenience, please visit our website www.sogc.org and renew online. Thank you to those of you who have already submitted payment.

Congratulations

Congratulations to the following individuals who were awarded Elective Grants

The next deadline will be November 15, 2005.

Junior Member Elective Fellowship Grants - February 15, 2005:
- Janssen Ortho: Dr. Ari Y. Baratz
- Duchesnay Inc.: Dr. Patricia Nascu
- Berlex Canada Inc.: Dr. Brian Harrington

Junior Member Elective Grant in International Women’s Health:
- Berlex Canada Inc., Janssen Ortho, Organon Canada Ltd., Wyeth Pharmaceuticals: Dr. Lisa Avery

The Junior Member News section of SOGC News is funded by a grant from Wyeth Pharmaceuticals

Upcoming Guidelines in the JOGC

Watch for these important clinical guidelines in Canada’s most read OB/GYN medical journal!

- Choice of Primary Surgery for Stress Incontinence -
- Chronic Pelvic Pain -
- Present Role of Stem Cells for Fetal Genetic Therapy -
- Ultrasound Evaluations of First Trimester Pregnancy Complications -
- Dysmenorrhea Study -
- Amended Canadian Guidelines for Prenatal Diagnosis Techniques -

Congratulations to Dr. Elaine Jolly, an SOGC member, who has received the 2004 Award for Women’s Health Education at the University of Ottawa!
Register soon!

By completing the registration form available on the SOGC website at www.sogc.org or the one that was sent with the preliminary programme by mail. For more details, please contact the SOGC at 1-800-561-2416 or 613-730-4192.

Québec: A City to Discover

Indulge your fine palate

Go on the dining out experience on June 17. Six restaurants are looking forward to welcoming you: the St-Amour, the Laurie Raphael, the 47e parallèle, the Crémaillère, the Ardoise and the Mistral gagnant (please refer to the preliminary programme for more details or visit the SOGC website at www.sogc.org).

Share your passion for art

After 10 years of success with “Elvis Story”, “GÉNÉRATION MOTOWN” is now the new 2005 summer production at the Capitole de Québec. Don’t miss this energetic show that will bring back fond memories! Reservations: 418-694-4444 or 1-800-261-9903; Website: www.lecapitole.com

Go back in time

With the “Six associés”, who will take you on a unique tour of the local and provincial history of the Québec population on the afternoon of June 19.

The permanent exhibit at the Musée des Ursulines de Québec, entirely renewed, brings out the richness of the Ursulines’ history through the exceptional personality of their founder, Marie de l’Incarnation, and treats its visitors to one of the richest ethnographic and artistic collections in North America. Website: www.meseocapitale.qc.ca

Enjoy the outdoors

On June 19, take part in activities that will allow you to enjoy Québec’s natural side (please refer to the preliminary programme for more details or visit the SOGC website at www.sogc.org).

• Boat tour on the St.Lawrence River
• Montmorency Falls
• Island of Orléans and its savours

For the golfer in you, here are some suggestions:

• Grand Vallon, in Beaupré; Tel.: 418-827-4653; Website: www.legrandvallon.com
• Golf Alpin, in Sainte-Brigitte-de-laval; Tel.: 418-825-3108; Website: alpin.dyndns.org:8080

Discover a spectacular natural environment at the Sept Chutes, featuring breathtaking scenery. While in these impressive surroundings, visit one of the oldest hydro-electric plants in Québec, which went back into operation in spring 1999. Website: www.septchutes.com

Meeting place of history, nature, culture and leisure, the Parc des champs de batailles is one of the most prestigious parks in the world. It is also known as the Planes d'Abraham. Website: www.ccbn-nbc.gc.ca

Don’t miss the carriage tour during your visit in Québec!

Tourist Attractions

The Jardin zoologique du Québec is a magical place, especially the verrière, where several species of exotic birds and welcoming guides await you. Tel.: 418-622-0312 or 1-888-622-0312; Website: www.jardinzoologique.ca

At the Parc aquarium du Québec, walk under a 350,000-litre ocean, observe more than 3500 specimens, visit the Artic Region and discover much, much more... Website: www.parcaquarium.ca

Do a tour of all the museums: Musée national des beaux-arts, Musée de l’Amérique française, Musée de la civilisation and much more...

We look forward to welcoming you in Québec, June 16-21!

The SOGC gratefully acknowledges the following sponsors for their generous support in the form of unrestricted educational grants:

Platinum:
• Berlex Canada Inc. • GlaxoSmithKline Inc.
• Janssen-Ortho • Merck Frost Canada Ltd.
• Organon Canada Ltd. • Procter & Gamble Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc.
• Wyeth Pharmaceuticals

Gold:
• Duchesnay Inc. • Pfizer Canada Inc.
Saturday, June 18th, 2005 at the Delta Québec (Subject to Change) in Québec City, QC.

08:00 - 10:00  Board of Directors Meeting
10:00 - 10:30  Coffee Break
10:30 - 11:30  Simulation in Ob/Gyn (Speaker: Dr. Ernie Lockrow)
11:30 - 12:00  Lunch
12:00 - 13:30  Business Meeting

Please visit the Event Calendar on the APOG website at www.apog.ca for updates and additional information.

Canadian Foundation for Women’s Health

June 19th - A Québécois Evening!!

Don't forget to register for the Foundation’s 5th Annual Fundraising Dinner. Sign up today - simply include the number of tickets you would like for the dinner when registering for SOGC/AOGQ Conference in Québec City. You will have a memorable evening, while helping to support women’s health research.

Please mark Sunday, June 19th at 6:30 pm on your calendar for an evening filled with great food, lively music by the well known Québécois Quartet the Painchaud Family and lots of laughter.

For more information, contact the Canadian Foundation for Women’s Health at 1-800-561-2416 or (613) 730-4192 extension 238 or e-mail at kmacgowan@sogc.com.

Hope to see you there!!
New Conference!

SOGC/AOGQ/SOLAMER CME
October 6-8, Loews Le Concorde, Québec, QC

Programme offered in French and Spanish

Come take part in a rewarding international dialogue between Latin countries!

A post-graduate education event organized jointly by:
- The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC)
- The Association des obstétriciens et gynécologues du Québec (AOGQ)
- The Société latine de médecine de la reproduction (SOLAMER)
- The Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Laval University

Scientific Programme:
The scientific programme has been developed in order to fill the needs of specialists, family physicians, nurses and midwives providing health services to women. The topics that will be presented cover obstetrics, cancer, menopause, hysterectomy and alternatives, and infertility.

This description will also be available in June on the SOGC’s website, at www.sogc.org.

For reservations:
Loews Le Concorde
1225, cour du général de Montcalm
Québec (Québec) G1R 4W6
Tel.: 1-800-463-5256 or 418-647-2222
Groupe code: SOG 105
Group price: $195 single/double

Deadline for reservations: August 26, 2005

Be sure to check your mail this June for the official programme and mark those dates on your calendar!

For conference information:
SOGC, 780 Echo Dr., Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5R7
Tel: 1-800-561-2416 or (613) 730-4192, Fax: (613) 730-4314
www.sogc.org
For another consecutive year, the SOGC had the pleasure to host the 15th West Central CME Programme at the Rimrock Resort Hotel in Banff, Alberta from April 7-9, 2005. The month of April once again proved to be an ideal month to hold this CME. Participants were not only able to indulge themselves in the breathtaking view of the mountains and Banff scenery but enjoyed the beautiful spring weather. Delegates were impressed with the excellent presenters, the well-planned Scientific Programme and the networking opportunities with the sponsors. These factors played a tremendous role in the success of the conference.

We would like to take this opportunity to personally thank Dr. William Ehman for volunteering to take pictures throughout the entire conference. Some pictures can be seen in this article, others can be viewed on our website at www.sogc.org.

We would like to congratulate the winners of the Exhibit Passport System which were: 1st place: Ruth Brighouse from Salmon Arm, BC; 2nd place José Goncalves from Penticton, BC.

We have received great comments and suggestions for exciting and relevant new topics from this year’s participants, which we plan to implement for the West Central CME in 2006.

The SOGC would like to thank the West & Central Regional Committee Members, the Faculty Members, the Sponsors and Delegates for their on-going support of the CME programmes. We invite you to join us next year for the 16th West Central CME to continue to exercise your mind and tantalize all your senses in an outstanding Western location!

Please continue to visit our website at www.sogc.org, for updates on our CME events!

The SOGC hosted for the first time the New Gynaecology Ontario CME Programme which took place on April 15-16, 2005 at the Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre. This Gynaecology Conference was developed to answer to the growing demand from our membership and focused on the generalist Ob/Gyn and the family doctor providing women’s healthcare. Topics such as Updates in Out-Patient Emergency Gynaecological Care Requiring Medical Therapy, Contraception Troubleshooting, Managing Menopause after WHI and Screening for Cancer just to name a few were presented during this conference.

We would like to congratulate the winners of the Exhibit Passport System which were: 1st place: Carol McDowell from Sault Ste-Marie, ON; 2nd place Manik Devane from Niagara Falls, ON.

The SOGC wishes to extend their sincere gratitude to the Ontario Regional Committee Members, Faculty Members, Sponsors and Delegates for their continued support and contributions to the success and excellence of our CME Programmes.

Remember to mark your calendars for the 24th Ontario CME Programme which will be held at the Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre on November 24-26, 2005.

Please visit our website, www.sogc.org, for updates on all of our CME events.

SOGC, serving its members with excellence!
Make Every Women and Child Count

By Liette Perron, Director, International Women’s Health SOGC

Every year, World Health Day (WHD) is celebrated on April 7th. The theme of this year’s WHD was “Make Every Mother and Child Count”, highlighting the invisible health crisis of maternal and child health, striking mainly low-income countries. The messages were strong and simple:

• Too many mothers and children are suffering and dying each year.
• Healthy mothers and children are the real wealth of societies.
• Millions of lives could be saved using knowledge we have today.
• In order to make a difference, we must all join forces and act. Together we can do it. Each one of us has a role to play.

SOGC – in collaboration with a coalition of Canadian NGOs involved internationally in maternal and child health – organized throughout the week of April 4th several activities in recognition of the WHD.

Coalition members included:
• Action Canada for Population and Development
• Canadian Society for International Health
• CARE Canada
• Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada
• Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

The week’s activities included:
• NGO forum hosted by the Canadian Council for International Cooperation, a panel discussion held at Parliament Hill
• Newsmaker Breakfast at the National Press Club
• A seminar at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for program officers and others was attended by Professor Florence Mirembe, Head of Department, Ob/Gyn Department of Mulago Hospital and the Faculty of Medicine, Makerere University
• Dr. Gerald Stanimir, President of the SOGC participated on April 6th in a panel discussion in recognition of World Health Day on Parliament Hill. This activity was hosted by Honorable Members of Parliament Ramonde Folco, Chair of the Canadian Association of Parliamentarians for Population and Development and Anita Neville, Chair of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. Dr. André B. Lalonde, EVP of the SOGC facilitated the April 7th Newsmaker’s Breakfast which provided an opportunity to Honorable Members Aileen Carroll, Minister of International Cooperation, Senator Lucie Pepin and Professor Florence Mirembe to speak.

“Unfortunately, safe motherhood – that is a woman’s ability to experience a healthy and safe pregnancy, and when obstetrical complications arise, to access the life saving services needed to prevent death and injury – is not a guaranteed right for thousands of women of the world, especially poor women in the developing world. “

Dr. Gerald Stanimir, President, Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada

“If we are going to look in the future which lies in the children of today, whose health is highly dependent on their mothers’, we need to ensure the health of girls and women before they become pregnant, while they are pregnant and during childbirth.”

Professor Florence Mirembe, Director, Obstetrics and Gynaecology for the Faculty of Medicine, Makerere, Uganda.

Group of panelists (L. to R.): Adrienne Coddett, Educator, Professor Florence Mirembe, Dr. Gerald Stanimir, SOGC President and Felicite Murangira, HIV/AIDS Educator

(L. to R.) The Honourable Aileen Carroll, Minister of International Cooperation, Professor Florence Mirembe and Senator Lucie Pépin

Front-right: The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of State (Public Health)
The SOGC’s Response to the Report on Maternal and Child Health in Canada 2005

As women’s health advocate and in recognition of the Report on Maternal and Child Health in Canada and the World Health Day 2005 theme of Make Every Women and Child Count, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) would like to highlight the domestic challenges Canada still faces in women’s health and the urgency for Canadian action on the global stage.

For the past 61 years the SOGC has worked diligently to improve women’s health in Canada. Furthermore, it has recognized its responsibility to women’s health around the world. It is today one of the only medical societies delivering, funding and providing expert volunteers to an international risk reduction program for mothers and newborns. Our internationally recognized ALARM International Program is a collaborative program that saves lives and allows developing countries to establish a body of expertise to continue expert training domestically.

The SOGC and its partners urge the government of Canada to increase funding to Canadian organizations delivering comprehensive and proven programs in developing countries. All too often this funding is given to international organizations and our Canadian expertise is grounded due to lack of support. Meanwhile, more than half a million women continue to die worldwide from pregnancy related causes every year.

Domestically, the health of mothers and children is amongst the best in the world. However, as stated in the report on Maternal and Child Health in Canada, we still have vulnerable communities in Canada. The low-income single parent families and our Aboriginal communities do not enjoy the same standard of health as the rest of the nation. The SOGC, through its professional development program, public education campaigns, Aboriginal health committee and clinical guidelines, is committed to addressing the needs of these Canadians and the social issues affecting the health of these communities. In a country as diverse and rich as Canada, making every mother and child count should be guaranteed.

As Canadians, physicians and healthcare providers we must increase our efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals for women’s health. It is our duty.

Call for Nominations

The following nominations were proposed and accepted at both the Nomination Committee meeting of March 7, 2005 as well as the Executive and Council meetings.

Position ................................................. Nominee

President Elect – Western Region ......................... Donald Davis
Vice President – Atlantic Region ........................ Scott Farrell
Chair – Central Region MB ................................. Margaret Burnett
Alternate Chair – Central Region SK ..................... Annette Epp
Chair – Atlantic Region ................................. T. O’Grady
Alternate Chair – Atlantic Region ........................ Ward Murdock
Associate Member Category, RN ......................... Ms. Sandra Christie
Associate Member Category, Public Rep. ................ Jane Caskey (Renewed 2 years)
Finance Committee ................................................. M. Heywood
Alt. Chair QC ............................................. Based on AOGQ Executive

Call for other nominations is now in progress. If you wish to make other nominations or know of someone wishing to put their name forward, forms are available on the SOGC website at www.sogc.org/sogc-net/sogc_docs/private/sogc_e.shtml

Deadline for submissions of additional nominations will be May 4, 2005

Canada – Japan Exchange

The 57th Annual Scientific Meeting of Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology, April 1-5, 2005, Kyoto International Conference Hall.

First row from left to right: Dr. Sukhbir Singh, Dr. Manda Ghahremani, Dr. André B. Lalonde, Dr. Shingo Fuji, Mr. Mark McGonnell
Second row from left to right: Ms. Viola Mueling Hoo, Ms. Lise Vincent Lalonde, Ms. Yoko Fujii, Dr. Lynne McLeod

The first Canada-Japan exchange took place in Kyoto, Japan April 1-5, 2005. Dr. Shingo Fuji, President of the Japan Obstetrics and Gynecology Society (JOGS) and his wife Ms. Yoko Fujii were our host. Lectures, debates and exchanges were complemented with visit to Kyoto historical sites and famous ‘Cherry Tree Blossoms Festival’. The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) will host the Japan delegation at the Annual Clinical Meeting (ACM) in Québec City, June 16-21, 2005.
The SOGC: Pioneers in the Struggle for Emergency Contraception Access

The recent SOGC News Releases (visit www.sogc.org) in response to the April 19th Health Canada announcement stating Canadian women will have access to emergency contraception (EC) without a physician’s prescription generated extensive national and international coverage for the Society. The SOGC would like to reiterate its position on this topic and its past advocacy work. The SOGC recognizes our dedicated members for their tireless commitment and dedication to improving women’s healthcare in Canada.

The SOGC played an integral role in the struggle to give women access to EC without a doctor’s prescription. Work began on this initiative when the Society adopted a motion to develop a strategy to ensure access to EC for Canadian women in November, 1988. The SOGC has worked closely with the Canadian Pharmacists Association to educate and advocate officials in Health Canada on this important topic through the formation of the Emergency Contraception Advisory Board. The SOGC strongly encouraged a timely review of the submission by the Therapeutics Products Directorate at Health Canada. In November 2001, the National Drug Scheduling Advisory Committee agreed that Plan B meets the requirements for pharmacist-only (behind-the-counter) status.

Many delays and stumbling blocks made the road to success a long one. Today, the SOGC is pleased the work of several dedicated women’s health advocates has resulted in better EC access for Canadian women.