

# Benefit Exchange

*A newsletter of Medical Physics for World Benefit*



[www.MPWB.org](http://www.MPWB.org)

*Working together for effective patient care*

## Inside This Issue

- 1 Introduction
- 2 MPWB COVID-19 Webinars
- 3 Annual Membership/Information Meeting
- 4 Membership Renewal
- 5 Dosimetry Systems Delivery and Training
- 6 Open Syllabus
- 7 Call for Nominations
- 8 Mentoring Partnerships
- 9 Newsletter Editor
- 10 ICARO-3
- 11 Some Statistics on MPWB's First COVID-19 Webinar
- 12 Call for Volunteers

### Several volunteer positions/activities available:

1. Webinar Working Group
2. Open Syllabus Content
3. Mentorship Working Group
4. Newsletter Editor
- 5.

## Introduction

As we produce this issue of *Benefit Exchange*, the world continues to experience various levels of lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic with some places having a significant decrease in incidence while others having the opposite. Many of our major professional meetings have become 'virtual' and we all seem to be experiencing more on-line meetings via various providers such as Zoom, Skype, etc. Of course, in view of the limitations in travel in the present circumstances, there is a major impact on activities related volunteer organizations such as MPWB. MPWB has adapted some of its activities accordingly. The following highlights some recent activities as well as introducing some planned undertakings for the near future. Note the summary call for volunteers on the last page.

## MPWB-sponsored COVID-19 Webinars

In view of COVID-19 rapid rate of transmission and the resulting possible health consequences, COVID-19 has created havoc with the operations of cancer therapy and diagnostic imaging programs around the world. This had a major and unprecedented impact on the mode of operation of Medical Physicists working in clinical environments. In order to provide guidance to the international medical physics community, the Board of MPWB decided to host a webinar on 15 April 2020 entitled "*COVID-19-Related Issues: A Medical Physics Perspective from Italy*". As you know, at that time Milan was one of the cities which was very heavily affected with a high incidence of COVID cases. The webinar was presented by Antonella del Vecchio from the Department of Medical Physics, San Raffaele Scientific Institute, Milan, Italy. The webinar was extremely well received with nearly 700 attendees. The video recording remains available through [www.mpwb.org](http://www.mpwb.org). In the post-webinar survey, 95% of the respondents indicated that they would be interested in a follow-up webinar. To this end, MPWB hosted a second webinar on 30 April 2020 entitled "*International Medical Physics Guidelines for COVID-19*." The Asia-Oceania Federation of Organizations for Medical Physics (AFOMP) had developed guidelines on Radiation Oncology Operation during COVID-19. These can be found here: <http://afomp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/AFOMP-RT-guideline-COVID-April4.pdf>. Also, the Australasians had developed guidelines that can be found here: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13246-020-00869-0>. Two main contributors to these reports presented an overview of Medical Physics considerations for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic: (1) Dr. Xiance Jin, PhD, Chief Physicist and Vice Director, Wenzhou Medical University First Hospital, Wenzhou, China, and (2) Tomas Kron, PhD, Director of Physical

Sciences, Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute, Melbourne, Australia. Both sessions were moderated by Parminder Basran, Director of Communications for *MPWB*. With time zone considerations, the time for the second webinar was more friendly towards the eastern world. There were approximately 100 people in attendance. It is clear that there is an appetite by medical physicists for this type of guidance via the webinar format. In view of this interest, the board of *MPWB* is contemplating further webinars for our community of interest. We recognize that webinars have become a common occurrence by many organizations and, therefore, there is a concern about 'supersaturation'. **We welcome your suggestions for topics that are uniquely relevant to our international community.** In addition, we are also looking to develop a **Webinar Working Group**. Thus, **anyone interested in participating in such a Working Group, please contact [medphyswb@gmail.com](mailto:medphyswb@gmail.com).**

## Annual Membership/Information Meeting

In the last few years, we held our annual membership and information meetings at the Annual Meeting of the AAPM. The original intent was to do the same this year at the joint AAPM/COMP meeting in Vancouver; however, this meeting has become a virtual meeting. As a result, we are following suit with a virtual membership and information meeting planned for 26 August 2020. In view of time zone considerations, we are hosting two meetings, one at 10 am EDT (2:00 pm GMT) and another at 6:00 pm EDT (10:00 pm GMT). You can use the following link to see what time this corresponds to in your time zone: <https://greenwichmeantime.com/time-gadgets/time-zone-converter/>. **Both members and all those wishing to learn more about *MPWB* are welcome to attend.** Stay tuned for Zoom link information.

## Membership Renewal

While the 2020 membership renewal notice was sent out some time ago, we do want to remind those of you who have missed it to update your membership accordingly. Instructions for membership renewals can be found here:

<https://mpwb.org/resources/Documents/Steps%20to%20renew%20your%20MPWB%20membership%20dues.pdf>.

Membership fees are modest and are intended to demonstrate that members are serious about the vision, mission and objectives of *MPWB*.

Benefits for being a member include:

- receiving our newsletter which describes the activities of *MPWB*,
- opportunities to become involved in *MPWB* initiatives, activities, projects and governance,
- knowing your dues are going towards 'making a difference'!
- a tax deduction from either Canada or the USA.

We are fortunate and thankful that the Canadian Organization of Medical Physicists (COMP) has included an option for *MPWB* membership renewal in its annual renewal process.

## Dosimetry Systems Delivery and Training

This project was described in the last *Benefit Exchange*; however, it remains on hold in view of the travel constraints due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Open Syllabus

The goal of the Open Syllabus project is to provide on-line resources to medical physics trainees through the *MPWB* website. We are using Appendix IV (pages 53-112) of the IAEA clinical training document for Radiation Oncology Medical Physicists as the syllabus guide. The IAEA document can be found here: [https://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Publications/PDF/TCS-37\\_web.pdf](https://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/Publications/PDF/TCS-37_web.pdf).

We are in full swing seeking the best on-line resources and linking those with the syllabus contents. Since the IAEA syllabus was published over 10 years ago, we are also considering updates as appropriate. Presently, the Open Syllabus leadership team meets every two weeks. For volunteers who are interested in participating in this project, please use the *MPWB* e-mail address to indicate your interest ([medphyswb@gmail.com](mailto:medphyswb@gmail.com)). The goal is to have this project functional by the end of 2020. We then hope to embark on the other areas of medical physics sub-specialization. **Finally, if you are aware of useful medical physics educational content, please send a link or that content to [medphyswb@gmail.com](mailto:medphyswb@gmail.com).**

## Call for Nominations

At the end of 2020, two Board members will be finishing their terms of office: Jake Van Dyk, as Past-President and Robert Jeraj as Director of Fund Raising. On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the Board of *MPWB* is putting forward the following two nominations for the vacant positions:

**For President-Elect: Tomas Kron, Ph.D.** Professor and Director, Department of Physical Sciences, Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute, Melbourne, Australia. Tomas has had much international involvement with multiple activities especially with the IOMP and the IAEA.

**For Director of Fund Raising: Eduard Gershkevitch, Ph.D.** Chief Medical Physicist, North Estonia Regional Hospital, Tallinn, Estonia. Eduard has participated in multiple working groups and teaching courses for the IAEA.

According to *MPWB's* policies and procedures, we also need to post a public call for nominations for our membership. Thus, **this announcement formalizes the request for further nominations with a deadline of 31 July 2020.**

## Mentoring Partnerships

*MPWB* would like to formalize a mentoring partnership program by which both potential mentors and mentees can submit their wishes to be involved in such a mentorship program. The idea would be for potential mentors to fill in a questionnaire to provide relevant data on experience, expertise, language(s) spoken, time available, etc. Similarly, potential mentees could also submit their information especially in terms of their circumstances vis-à-vis specialty and technologies available, experience, language, etc. *MPWB* would then match the appropriate mentors and mentees. To develop this program in more detail, we would like to set-up a **Mentorship Working Group**. Hence, **anyone wishing to participate in such a Working Group, please submit their interests to [medphyswb@gmail.com](mailto:medphyswb@gmail.com).**

## Newsletter Editor

As part of upgrading our communications strategy, **we are looking for a Newsletter Editor**. The task would involve connecting with the various individuals involved in *MPWB* projects to provide updates for our readership. **Anyone wishing to take on the Newsletter Editor role, please contact [medphyswb@gmail.com](mailto:medphyswb@gmail.com).**

## ICARO-3

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has announced the International Conference on Advances in Radiation Oncology (ICARO-3) (<https://www.iaea.org/events/icaro-3>), which is planned for 16 to 19 February 2021. "The conference will give health care professionals an opportunity to review

the current developments in clinical applications in the fields of radiation oncology, radiation biology and medical physics, with a view to addressing the challenges of appropriate cancer management in Member States.

It will also critically examine the pivotal role of emerging radiotherapy techniques in tackling the health challenges common to many Member States." *MPWB* is listed as one of the "invited organizations". Applicants who are members of *MPWB* wishing to attend the meeting can be represented by *MPWB*. Please contact us through [medphyswb@gmail.com](mailto:medphyswb@gmail.com) if you would like us to forward your application.

Three abstracts have been submitted to ICARO-3 by members of the *MPWB* Board:

1. *Virtual Mentoring: The Creation of a Survey to Advance Sustainable Mentoring of Medical Physicists*. Authors: Jacob Van Dyk, Robert Jeraj, L. John Schreiner
2. *The "Open Syllabus" project – improving global access to radiation oncology medical physicist residency training content*. Authors: Parminder S. Basran, Kathy Mah, Tomi Nano, Jake Van Dyk, Yakov Pipman, Indra Das
3. *A view of the Radiotherapy Physics Doctoral CRPs in South America - thoughts upon its second generation*. Authors: Yakov Pipman, Daniel Venencia

## Some Statistics on *MPWB's* First COVID-19 Webinar

- > 1000 registrants
- > 679 attendees
- 78 questions posed
- 56 countries registered and/or attended
- 95% of the 153 who responded to the post webinar survey were interested in another webinar

## Call for Volunteers

This *Benefit Exchange* has described various projects in progress and the need for additional help with these activities. The following summarizes a request for volunteers in these projects.

1. Webinar Working Group
2. Mentorship Working Group
3. Newsletter Editor

Please contact [medphyswb@gmail.com](mailto:medphyswb@gmail.com) if you have an interest in any one of these activities.