

## Memo of the President & CEO

---

**Date:** April 2, 2013

---

Late this past week we were informed that patients in Windsor, London and Oshawa, Ontario were affected by a medication error by a company that supplies one of our chemotherapy medications.

### ISSUE

Three regional cancer centre hospitals (London Health Sciences Centre, Lakeridge Health and Windsor Regional Hospital) have determined that stock IV solutions of cyclophosphamide and gemcitabine, compounded by a pharmaceutical company, have been prepared incorrectly.

In the compounding process, the company has not adjusted for the overfill present in IV bags and as a result the products are of a lower concentration than labeled. This has resulted in a 3-13% lower dosage being administered to almost 1,000 adult and pediatric patients.

For Windsor it directly impacted 290 adult patients going back to February 2012.

### CAUSE

It is believed that the pharmaceutical company, when manufacturing these two compounds, did not account for the standard volume overfill that is present in intravenous infusion bags. As a result, the actual concentration of the solution was suspected to be lower than the labeled concentration. All products from this company Cyclophosphamide and Gemcitabine were immediately quarantined pending investigation.

### IMPACT

Cyclophosphamide is one of the medications used in the treatment of breast cancer and lymphoma. Although combined with other medications, it is not considered to be the most important part of the treatment. We combine cyclophosphamide with other medications to increase the effectiveness of these medications. These other medications (Adriamycin,

Page 1 of 2

Taxotere or Taxol for breast cancer; Adriamycin and prednisone for lymphomas) are the more important medications in treating cancer, and everyone received the appropriate dose of these more important medications.

The impact will be patient specific.

## PLAN FORWARD

Windsor Regional Hospital's plans include:

1. Hand delivered letter to all affected patients commencing the morning of April 2, 2013;
2. Calls to each patient with an offer of an individual patient consultation with an oncologist commencing April 3, 2013; and
3. Dedicated phone line for patient inquiries commencing the morning of April 2, 2013 at [519-255-8698](tel:519-255-8698).

As always I appreciate the fact that if you are asked to support the response to this issue that you will step forward and provide support.

**If you are approached by a patient/family member that may have been directly impacted by this issue I would ask that you direct them to the call-in number (519-255-8698) for support.** Although I appreciate you want to help them and answer any questions they may have in order to ensure we are aware of their concerns, clinically someone is responding to them. To ensure there is no confusion in the answer; it is critical that you direct them to the call in number and a team of clinicians will respond.