

Good afternoon South Africa, Israel, Jordan and Switzerland

News release– June 22, 2005

At 8:00 a.m. EST on June 22, Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care hosted its largest ever international medical rounds bringing Israeli, Jordanian, Palestinian and South African medical colleagues together via a simultaneous videoconference link to review a complex patient case. The World Health Organization (WHO) also participated from Geneva, Switzerland.

Dr. David Conn, Baycrest's head of Psychiatry and medical director of Telehealth, opened the rounds by greeting participants from the different time zones around the world. There were friendly rounds of applause as each country was introduced.

Marking the telehealth event with the Middle East and other parts of the world just as the videoconference is about to get underway are, from left: Dr. Sandra Black, head of the Division of Neurology (Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre); Dr. Sarah Thompson, psychiatry resident at Baycrest and patient case presenter; Tim Patterson, Baycrest's telehealth coordinator; Dr. David Conn, head of Baycrest's Department of Psychiatry and medical director of Telehealth; Dr. Arnold Noyek, director of the Peter A. Silverman Centre for International Health at Mount Sinai Hospital and chair of CISEPO; Peter A. Silverman, Q.C., of the Peter A. Silverman Global eHealth Program; Dr. Brian Richards, Baycrest psychologist; and Dr. Morris Freedman, head of Division of Neurology at Baycrest.

"We are very excited as this is largest number of international sites that we've connected simultaneously," said Dr. Conn.

In all, six international sites participated in the historic telehealth videoconference, including Tel Aviv University ; Herzog Hospital in Jerusalem ; Jordan University of Science and Technology; the WHO; the Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine in Durban , South Africa ; and, representing Canada , Baycrest and St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital in Toronto .

The medical case involved a 70-year-old patient who was presenting with cognitive difficulties, personality changes, bipolar affective disorder and parkinsonism. Dr. Sarah Thompson, a psychiatry resident at Baycrest, presented the case study, followed by presentations on the neuropsychological and neuroimaging test results from Drs. Brian Richards (Baycrest) and Sandra Black (Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre), respectively. Dr. Morris Freedman (Baycrest) interviewed the patient and chaired the interactive discussion that followed with the medical audience from around the world.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to show how cooperation and the exchange of knowledge can bind people together," said Dr. Arnold Noyek, director of the Peter A. Silverman Centre for International Health at Mount Sinai Hospital and chair of the Canada International Scientific Exchange Program (CISEPO). He expressed satisfaction that the milestone eHealth event would clearly add a new cross border dimension and technical tool to the various ongoing academic exchanges in the Middle East between Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli medical communities, and further down the road contribute to improved healthcare education and delivery in developing countries around the world.

An important theme that is quietly gaining ground in medical and political circles is the belief that sharing medical knowledge via a vis international telehealth partnerships helps to build bridges of mutual trust and common cause (the betterment of humans within societies).

"This event is an important step for international partnerships using healthcare as a common language," said Tim Patterson, Baycrest's telehealth coordinator.

The initiative was part of City-Wide Behavioral Neurology Rounds, Division of Neurology, University of Toronto , and was held in collaboration with Baycrest's Department of Psychiatry and the Division of Geriatric Psychiatry, U of T. It was organized by Baycrest and the university and is part of CISEPO (please see: <http://www.cisepo.ca/>) and the Peter A. Silverman Global eHealth Program



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