



Osteoporosis Canada

Ostéoporose Canada



COPING
**The E-newsletter of the
Canadian Osteoporosis Patient Network (COPN)**

November, 2006

November 3, 2006

This past July COPN sent out a short survey to examine what you, COPN Members, thought about the newsletter and where COPN intends to go on your behalf. This first note addresses the raw data. Next week a more in-depth analysis will be published.

A large percentage of our 600+ members receive the weekly newsletter by email. But a significant number (approximately 200) do not have access or regular use of email. We are trying to address this in a manner that does not overwhelm either the readers or the staff.

We received a total 93 responses to the survey both electronically and via regular mail.

Of these respondents, 78 - which is 84% - said they read the newsletter as it appears in their Inbox.

We learned that 65% of respondents have access and/or use email regularly with 30% without access or regular usage.

Sixty percent find the newsletter to be helpful or useful, whereas 33% find it only occasionally useful.

On the important question about frequency (weekly, bi weekly or monthly) 29% feel that the current weekly schedule is 'about right'. However, 28% of respondents find the weekly frequency is 'too often'.

On the choice of topics respondents choose the following:

Diet & Nutrition	13%
Supplements	12%
Exercise	12%
Medications	11%
Research	11%
Diagnosis	9%
Life Style	7%
Falls	6%
Other Topics	2%
All topics	17%

The next question was: "Do you agree or disagree that COPN should try to present its story to government and try to get better therapy and raise the awareness of osteoporosis in Canada?"

An overwhelming 89% agreed with this statement, while 2% disagreed and 9% were No answer/Unknown.

The follow up question was: "Would you personally be interested and able to engage government on behalf of COPN and Osteoporosis Canada?"

...14% agreed and 66% disagreed. No answer/Other was 20%

The last question: "Would occasional articles about politics as they relate to osteoporosis, COPN, Osteoporosis Canada be of interest to you?"

Respondents who agreed totalled 81%. Who disagreed 8% and No answer/Other was 6%.

FUNNY BONE: The vast majority of our imports are from outside the country.

Attr. George W. Bush

Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis. It is important for you to continue with a program of healthy diet, appropriate exercise/activity, calcium and vitamin supplements and/or prescription drugs as directed by your physician. If you have a prescription, follow the directions.

What's Happening in Your Area?

COPN would like to know what is going on in your area that would be of interest to people living with osteoporosis. E-mail us at copn@osteoporosis.ca with your report.

Join our team. E-mail us at copn@osteoporosis.ca.

Newsletter disclaimer: We invite you to contribute to this newsletter. Selection of material is at the discretion of the editor. Individuals contributing material are solely responsible for the content, accuracy and originality of the material. To contribute to the next edition of the COPN newsletter, contact us at copn@osteoporosis.ca. Any information contained in *COPING* is not intended to replace medical advice. Readers are advised to discuss their individual circumstances with their physician.

November 10, 2006

COPN Survey Part 2: Analysis of Results

Last week, COPN released the statistics generated from a short survey sent to COPN members in July 2006. The purpose of this survey was to determine what you, our members, think about the newsletter and where you want COPN to go on your behalf. It is our hope that through the ninety-three responses we received, that we can identify and if need be, re-evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the current newsletter format.

Distribution of Newsletter

More than three quarters of all respondents (84%) indicated that they read the COPN newsletter. However, only 65% have regular access to the internet or e-mail. What is also equally important to note is that although 29% of respondents prefer the weekly distribution of the newsletter, 28% feel that the current format is much too frequent.

With this information, two issues arise:

1. How will COPN distribute the newsletter to the remaining 35% of respondents?
2. How often should the newsletter be distributed?

Ideally, if COPN had additional resources, newsletters could be researched, written and mailed to members without internet access and e-mailed to those with regular access.

However, keeping in mind that 28% feel that the weekly distribution of the newsletter is excessive, and taking into consideration the responses we received which suggest that the schedule be changed, one option COPN could consider is to change circulation to either a bi-weekly, tri-weekly or monthly schedule.

With a regular, but more sporadic approach, COPN could spend more time working on articles and research. This alternate schedule would also allow COPN extra time to ship the newsletters out to members who are without internet or e-mail access.

Topics of Interest

To address the 40% of respondents who do not find the weekly newsletters helpful, COPN examined the topics of interest which were the most popular. Other than 17% having an overall appreciation for the eight topics the newsletter currently addresses, the topics of interest earning the highest votes were: Diet/Nutrition (13%); Exercise (12%); Supplements (12%); Medications (11%); Research (11%); and Diagnosis (9%).

What this tells us is that most COPN members would like to read more about topics which address management. The question then becomes, if COPN narrows the focus of future newsletters on management-related topics, will this make the newsletters more appealing?

COPN and the Government

A large percentage of respondents (89%) favour the notion of COPN extending its reach to the government in order to spread awareness about Osteoporosis. An equally high percentage (81%) would appreciate reading the occasional political article which references or deals specifically with Osteoporosis.

Though these numbers clearly show that our members support and recognize the benefits of a relationship between COPN and the government, only 14% of respondents would personally feel comfortable approaching government officials on behalf of COPN.

Across Canada at the provincial level we have seen some changes in governments and in 2007 Ontario is certainly having an election – it is set for October 4, 2007. Alberta is very likely to have an election shortly following the leadership convention of the provincial Conservatives to replace Premier Ralph Klein and Saskatchewan is close to the end of its mandate. Even Quebec may have an election in 2007 or early 2008.

Of course, there continues to be much speculation that the federal minority government may fall in early 2007 sparking a general national election.

All of this provides opportunities for COPN to connect with policy makers shortly before the elections or shortly afterwards. Writing letters, attending candidates meetings and asking questions are all useful tools in getting the word across and to help set agendas. We can all play a part in this.

FUNNY BONE: “Nothing can confound a wise man more than laughter from a dunce.” (Lord Byron)

Remember: You can live well with osteoporosis. It is important for you to continue with a program of health diet, appropriate exercise/activity, calcium and vitamin D and/or prescription drugs as directed by your physician. If you do have a prescription, follow the directions.

What's happening in your area? COPN would like to know what is going on in your area that would be of interest to people living with osteoporosis. E-mail us at copn@osteoporosis.ca.

Information contained in COPN Weekly is not intended to replace medical advice. Please discuss your individual circumstances with your physician.

November 17, 2006

This past week was another busy few days for volunteers and staff at Osteoporosis Canada on behalf of the organization and on behalf of COPN.

On Monday, representatives from both the Regina and Saskatoon Chapters met together with Saskatchewan's Minister of Health, the Honourable Len Taylor. The purpose of this meeting was to bring forward a proposal to fund education coordinators who will visit fracture clinics in Saskatchewan (starting with clinics in the health regions around Saskatoon and Regina and expanding later).

It is important that both patients visiting the fracture clinics and the staff working in them understand how critically important it is to get adequate (let alone exemplary) post-fracture care and information. All too often, the clinics and even the individual's own physician, do not make a review of risk factors for osteoporosis a regular part of the fracture care protocol. Certainly everyone within Osteoporosis Canada and COPN knows all about this, but it is surprising (or not) how much this is absent throughout the health care system in Canada.

Next week, the Saskatchewan Chapters are hosting an MLA breakfast to meet with more members of the Saskatchewan Legislature and continue to press for funding for osteoporosis fracture education coordinators in the province.

The volunteers and staff at both Regina and Saskatoon Chapters are to be commended for taking these important steps toward making their Minister of Health and the Legislature aware of some of the issues relating to osteoporosis and for seeking funding for Osteoporosis Canada in Saskatchewan to do something about it.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Honourable Jim Watson, Ontario's Minister of Health Promotion rose in the Legislature to announce November as Osteoporosis Month and to describe Ontario's ongoing Osteoporosis Strategy (a world-leading effort for prevention and education) and to congratulate Osteoporosis Canada for its work in Ontario and of course across Canada. Minister Watson spoke for about ten minutes and when finished his remarks were greeted with a round of applause from all the members (it was a full house).

As well, in both Manitoba and in Nova Scotia Chapters volunteers and staff are also working to bring information and requests to their respective Ministers of Health. In each instance, the Chapters have been working with Osteoporosis Canada, Government Relations and with COPN to coordinate and strengthen these messages.

For those of you living in Ontario, now is the time to drop a line (email, postcard, note card etc) to your 'new' Mayor and Council. After all, the municipal elections just took place on November 13. Send in congratulations (even if you worked for their opponent). You can mention how important it is that your town, city, regional municipality understands the incidence of osteoporosis and perhaps have a falls prevention strategy in place and that you, COPN and Osteoporosis Canada are here to help them make it a reality.

FUNNY BONE:

I have come to the conclusion that politics are too serious a matter to be left to the politicians.
Charles de Gaulle

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