



## IPOS Fear of Cancer Recurrence Special Interest Group (FORwards)

### FORWARDS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Dear FORwards members,

I hope 2023 is turning out to be a happy and productive year for you. On behalf of the FORWARDS committee, I would like to update you on a number of issues and follow-up on some matters discussed at the last FORWARDS AGM held in September 2023 at IPOS in Milan.

#### **INTRODUCING OUR NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM**

We are delighted to announce the appointment of our new Chair, Jose Custers, Deputy Chair, Christine Maheu, Secretary, Cristiane Bergerot, and Early-Career, Lauren Rudy. Their wealth of experience and dedication to the mission of FORWARDS will undoubtedly bring valuable insights to our group.



Jose Custers is a behavioral scientist and works as assistant professor at the department of Medical Psychology at Radboudumc, the Netherlands. In the past 10 years, her FCR research activities followed the route from conceptualization and assessment of FCR to the development of an FCR intervention and its implementation into routine clinical care. Her current research focuses on fear of progression in advanced cancer patients receiving ongoing systemic treatments.



Dr. Christine Maheu, an associate professor at McGill University's Ingram School of Nursing and a senior cancer program researcher at the Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre. Her work covers critical post-cancer issues, including FCR, return to work, transition from tertiary to primary healthcare post-cancer follow-up, and coping mechanisms. Dr. Maheu co-directed the creation of the Cancer and Work website in 2016. Her contributions earned awards for nursing research excellence.



Cristiane Bergerot, Ph.D., is the head of Supportive Care at Grupo Oncoclínicas, Brazil. She completed a 3-year research fellowship at the City of Hope in California, USA. She has been working with cancer patients for almost 20 years as a clinician and as a researcher. She has over 100 peer-reviewed publications. She has received four merit awards from the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) Conquer Cancer Foundation. She is past recipient of multiples Grants.



Lauren Rudy is a current doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at the University of New Brunswick, Canada. She possesses a Master's degree in Educational and Counselling Psychology from McGill University and a Bachelor of Arts with Honour's in Psychology from Mount Allison University. Her research work focuses on cancer survivorship and includes the standardization a single-item measure for assessing FCR.



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### **AGM**

An AGM was held at IPOS Milan in 2023. Nineteen members attended. All committee positions were declared vacant except for the early-career representative. A new board was installed.

### **IPOS RECAP**

The recent IPOS in Milan provided an excellent platform for our members to showcase their work. Members of our SIG organized more than 5 joint symposia on FCR, along with numerous individual oral presentations and posters on FCR. Our SIG FORwards received high praise at the annual meeting, partly to our successful webinar series.

### **MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT: FORT INTERVENTION**

- FORT implementation funded study (NPI S. Lebel) being tested and evaluated in five cancer centres from two provinces in Canada, Ontario and Quebec with Sophie Lebel leading Ontario, and Christine Maheu Quebec.
- FORT was translated and adapted for Mexican culture and is currently being pilot tested for women with breast cancer (PI: Dr. Lizette Galvez).
- FORT is currently being translated and adapted to Spain (PI: Dr. Tania Estape) and Turkey (PI: Dr. Ozan Bahcivan).
- FORT is currently adapted to young adults with lymphoma at the Princess Margaret Hospital (PI: Aliza Panjwani).
- Ashlee R. Loughan is creating a new intervention for people with brain cancer that is based on FORT and ConquerFear.
- Caregiver version of FORT is being pilot tested by Jani Lamarche, PhD student of Sophie Lebel, and is beginning to adapt FORT to parents of childhood cancer survivors.

### **WEBINARS RECAP AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

We successfully conducted a webinar focusing on the implementation of FCR (Fear of Cancer Recurrence) interventions, with active participation from 16 engaged attendees. Thank you to all who participated. For those who missed the live session, the webinar is now available for viewing on the IPOS website. Catch up on the insightful discussions and valuable insights shared during the event at your convenience.

Stay tuned for announcements about our upcoming webinars – an excellent opportunity to continue learning and connecting with fellow FORWARDERS members.

### **CALL FOR MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS**

We invite all FORWARDERS members to share their recent achievements and research for inclusion in our upcoming newsletters. Your work is integral to the success of our group, and we want to



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celebrate your accomplishments. Please reach out if you would like to feature your work in our next edition at: [crisbergerot@gmail.com](mailto:crisbergerot@gmail.com)

### THANKING OUR PAST LEADERSHIP

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Marie van der Lee, the outgoing Chair, and Lauren Heathcote, the outgoing Deputy Chair, for their exceptional dedication and leadership. Under their guidance, FORWARDS has grown and achieved significant milestones. We appreciate their tireless efforts in advancing our mission and shaping the future of psychosocial oncology research within our group.

Thank you, Marie and Lauren, for your unwavering commitment, insightful contributions, and the positive impact you've had on FORWARDS. Your leadership has left an indelible mark, and we are immensely grateful for your service. We wish you continued success in all your future endeavors.

### IPOS membership

The IPOS office have asked us to remind all members to renew their membership. Only paid members can access the webpage.

### Warm Wishes for the Holidays from FORwards!



As we wrap up another remarkable year together, the IPOS Fear of Cancer Recurrence Special Interest Group (FORwards) extends heartfelt wishes to you and your loved ones. May this festive season bring joy, peace, and moments of connection. Reflect on the strength and resilience that each of you contributes to our community. We are grateful for the support, collaboration, and shared commitment to understanding and addressing the challenges of fear of cancer recurrence. Here's to a joyful holiday season and a new year filled with continued progress, compassion, and unity.

Happy Holidays!

The FORwards Team