

**Nominee Information:**

# 1507

Name: Ms. Maureen Story

Title: Physio/Occupational Therapist

Organization: Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children

Project / Group Name (If Applicable): International Seating Symposium

Address:

Email:

**Nominator Information:**

Name: Ms. Sonja Magnuson

Title: Occupational Therapist

Organization: BC Children's Hospital

Address:

Email:

**Dianna Mah-Jones Award of Excellence in Person-Centred Care Award:**

**1) Provide a brief overview of the project and/or team.**

The positioning and mobility team (PMT) at Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children is a clinical team that provides positioning and mobility services to children who are unable to walk or move due to physical disabilities. The amazing thing about this clinical team is they provide outstanding educational and research materials and opportunities. How do they do an outstanding job? Firstly with direct clinical assessments and follow-up, secondly by face to face clinical outreach services which include an education component to 20 communities in BC, and lastly by hosting the International Seating Symposium (ISS). It is the hosting of the ISS that makes this team honorable for the Dianna Mah-Jones Award. The ISS started 34 years ago with PMT clinicians Sunny Hill and is still hosted by Sunny Hill PMT clinicians today. In 1982, members of the Vancouver Seating Special Interest group had a desire to learn more about this intriguing subject of seating and mobility. They decided that the best way to learn more about seating and mobility was to bring the experts to them. Getting funding to host the first conference was a challenge but the BC Kinsmen Foundation took the risk. Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children took the lead in organizing the first symposium. The initial organizers, including Maureen Story (nominee) and others brought clinicians, researchers and exhibitors together to develop resources and provide a forum that fostered an exchange of ideas and created a network focused on seating and mobility.

Today the hosting committee today includes Maureen Story (Co-Chair), BSR (PT/OT), Catherine Ellens, BScOT, Roslyn Livingstone, MSc(RS), all from the positioning and mobility team at Sunny Hill. David Cooper (Co-Chair), MSc (Kinesiology), Bonita Sawatzky, PhD, Associate Professor, Orthopaedics, University of British Columbia and Jo Nam, Bcom, Sr. Education Manager, Interprofessional Continuing Education, University of British Columbia are also organizing committee members. However, it is really all the positioning and mobility team members, who present, assist presenters, welcome participants, monitor sessions and facilitate a smooth conference by their presence. The ISS has emerged into a conference that is multifaceted, including presentations and break-out sessions, and a huge exhibit hall that includes manual and power wheelchairs, seating systems, homecare equipment, standing and walking frames as well as cutting edge technology such as robotics. In 1982 the conference included 98 participants and 11 rehab equipment dealers. The most recent ISS March 6-9, 2018

included 1000 participants (650 registrants and 350 exhibitors) from 23 countries! This is a truly remarkable achievement for a clinical team whose very leadership in hosting the symposium has pushed their own capacity to be leaders, to demonstrate and to share best practice, to develop and advocate for measureable outcome measures.

**2) What is the overall goal of the project and/or team? What problem or challenge is being solved and/or what need is being addressed?**

The overall goal of the ISS is to create and continue a forum that fosters an exchange of ideas and creates a network focused on seating and mobility. The network includes local, national and international consumers, rehabilitation therapists (OT/PT), physicians, designers, manufactures and dealers of positioning and mobility equipment. Often participants have multiple roles such as designer-consumer or therapist-researcher. All these combinations add value and credibility to the symposium to meet the needs of those who create, provide, prescribe and use positioning, seating or mobility equipment. It is the simplicity of the overall goal of the symposium and a vision of "no limits" has allowed the conference to grow into a local, national and international success. At inception, the problem or challenge was isolation with lack of local experts. Today the ongoing challenge and need is to continue to provide seating and mobility equipment to increasingly complex consumers, such as children who need mobility devices that carry ventilators, suction machines and communications devices or to the adult with spinal cord injury who wants to navigate uneven ground with a manual wheelchair using power assist.

**3) How has the project and/or team demonstrated excellence, leadership, innovation and leading practices? Has it inspired other? Will it add value across the health care system? Please provide specific examples.**

The ISS has demonstrated excellence and leadership by growing both locally and internationally. Locally the ISS provides opportunities for local clinicians to present and participate as well as providing a venue for local manufacturers and dealers to share new products with local clinicians. Roslyn Livingstone and Debbie Field (PMT member) are internationally known clinician-researchers on children's use of power mobility. The PMT has also developed and researched measures such as the Level of Sitting Scale (LSS), and now the LSS is one standard of care assessment tool used around the world. PMT technicians at Sunny Hill recently presented a poster of the use of 3D printing, a tool that is just emerging in the seating and mobility industry. Other positioning and mobility team members past and present have presented on a variety of leading topics such as positioning for hip health for children with CP. It also is a place where clinicians have direct contact and conversations with designers and manufactures of seating and mobility equipment influence the end products. Local consumers, not registered with the conference are welcomed to the exhibit hall for free for one afternoon of the conference. It adds tremendous value to the health care system by providing a venue for the exchange of ideas, the visual of new products, and the opportunity to make connections. It adds tremendous value to the health care system by involving so many people! The ISS developed under the leadership of the hosting committee has inspired others around the world. In 1986 Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children was approached by Doug Hobson of the University of Tennessee, Memphis with the proposal of forming a partnership. The 3rd ISS was held in Memphis in 1987. This partnership has continued with ISS being held in Vancouver on the even years and in the USA (University of Tennessee then University of Pittsburgh) on the odd years. The ISS organizing committee members have partnered with seating and mobility conferences around the world including the U.S., Ireland, Brazil, and Asia.

**4) Has the project and/or team achieved its goals? How has care for individuals been improved? Please provide specific examples of results.**

The International Seating Symposium (ISS) is considered one of the premier meetings in the world of dedicated clinicians, researchers, manufacturers, and others who work to improve seating and mobility among people with disabilities. Countless numbers of people have benefited from new and improved products as a result of the ISS. Many individuals with spinal cord injury, one group of the many clients Diana Mah-Jones served and advocated for, have benefited from improved cushions for pressure management, sit to stand innovations in both power and manual wheelchairs, and power assist technology to manual wheelchairs. These innovations and access to these kinds of innovation change people's lives from limited to opportunities. It sounds cliché but it's true. Children with CP and their caregivers have benefited from the development of equipment that is easier to use, aesthetically appealing and more comfortable. In fact, it is hard to imagine where rehabilitation equipment and technology would be today without the ISS. The positioning and mobility team members, although many have changed over the years, have consistently led, hosted and participated. Maureen Story one of the current co-



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### ***Dianna Mah-Jones Award of Excellence in Person-Centred Care Award***

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chairs has been there since the very beginning. Maureen is a clinician, educator, leader, advocate, and mentor. Maureen, the ISS organizing committee members and the PMT members have kept the vision bright from the first conference with UBC as an enabling partner. Well done Maureen, well done positioning and mobility team!