



Newsletter  
Of the  
Association of  
Pediatric/Hematology Oncology Nurses  
Southern California Chapter



# SCAPHON SCOOP

Someone asked me the other day--you know, for the 1,000<sup>th</sup> time--why I chose to become a pediatric oncology nurse. I am sure it's also been asked of you all many times as well, and each of our stories has a unique why...or how this population of amazing kids captured your heart and mind. When I think about mine, I am confident it chose me; my first choice for senior practicum in nursing school fell through like 2 days before it was supposed to start, and my instructor called and said "there's an opening at Phoenix Children's Hospital in Pediatric Hematology/Oncology....I think it would be a good fit." She was right. It was the perfect fit. The blend of science, relationship, intensity and laughter was exactly what I needed. It's actually hard to believe I thought then that something would have been better for me, but this specialty chose me...and it's been my absolute privilege to be a pediatric hem/onc nurse. I am thankful, 15 years later, I am still "choosing" it as well.

2015 is going to be the year that I "Choose Joy." I, like many of you, live a pressure-filled, stressful life, where sometimes I lose sight of finding or choosing joy. Through the commute, long work days and many other outside responsibilities and commitments, I am intentionally trying to find joy in the midst, and focusing on those glimmers of light that push me forward to purpose and happiness. I want joy to be a defining characteristic this year.... It definitely won't an easy journey, but one I know will be worth it.

The 2015 SCAPHON Conference theme is "Light the Way." I love the vision of a lighthouse for this year's event; because I think the symbol is applicable to the career in pediatric hematology/oncology nursing. Our patients are on a journey, and we have the unique opportunity helping navigate their course; through our knowledge and love. Patients and families depend on their nurses to help bring light to their treatment course; and it looks different for everyone. Joining us in May, will help you refuel on knowledge and camaraderie, to help you continue to do the amazing work you do. You will have two days to invest in your career so that you can continue to "Light the Way" for your patients, through what you learn from the podium and through relationships with other nurses on your same journey.

I am also looking forward to the events and opportunities for our membership that come before our amazing May conference. We, again, have a wonderful hematology focused quarterly meeting planned for March. We are accepting applications for the May Conference poster session. You all need to choose a deserving candidate and nominate them for the excellence award! And you all have time to consider how choosing to join SCAPHON board in the coming year may be one of the best decisions you've made!

I hope to see many of you in March and May, and until then, I will leave you with a quote from one of my little friends, "Miss Scarlett, I DO like you a lot, but you are not in my family....well, maybe my hospital family." That's a pretty great "why" and I'll choose that over and over, because it brings me much joy!

To Joy!  
Scarlett Czarnecki

## Opportunities for Professional Growth

### APHON's 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference & Exhibit

September 17-19, 2015

Rhode Island Convention Center  
Providence, RI

<http://www.aphon.org/meetings/future/dates>



### APHON Pediatric Chemotherapy/Biotherapy Provider Course

13.75 Contact Hours  
Pediatric Chemo/Biotherapy Provider Card

**Children's Hospital Los Angeles**

**April 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

\$150 CHLA employees  
\$300 Non-CHLA employees

To register, contact Maria Velasco at  
(323)361-1677 or at [mvelasco@chla.usc.edu](mailto:mvelasco@chla.usc.edu)

### CPHON® Review Course CHLA

**Tuesday, March 24, 2015**

8 CEUs Offered

Cost for non-CHLA employees: \$125

Lunch will be provided

To register or for questions, please email Diane Altounji at [daltounji@chla.usc.edu](mailto:daltounji@chla.usc.edu) by March 13<sup>th</sup>



### Supported by SCAPHON

For 2015, testing begins February 2<sup>nd</sup>. There are no longer any registration deadlines. Fees are \$286 for APHON members; \$406 for non-members.

### APHON's Foundations of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nursing: A Comprehensive Orientation/Review Course **March 16 & 17, 2015**

**TIME:** 8:00AM to 4:30 PM  
(Registration 7:30-8:00 AM)

**LOCATION:** CHOC Children's South Tower,  
Conference Rm C

**CEUs:** Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing (Provider Number 11530) for 16 contact hours

### **Registration Deadline March 9, 2015**

**COURSE** CHOC Employees: No Charge\*  
**COST:** \$100 APHON members  
\$125 Non APHON members  
Add \$25 late fee for forms postmarked after March 9, 2015  
\*\$20 refundable deposit required

### **REGISTRATION & QUESTIONS:**

PHONE: 714-509-8657

EMAIL: Casey Koerner [ckoerner@choc.org](mailto:ckoerner@choc.org)



## Education Corner

Sharon Bergeron, RN, BSN, CPON, Research Educator,  
Hyundai Cancer Institute, CHOC Children's Hospital

### Use of Blinatumomab to Treat Relapsed or Refractory Pre-B Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL)

**Blinatumomab** is a monoclonal antibody that belongs to a new class of constructed monoclonal antibodies, bi-specific T-Cell receptor-engaging (BiTE) antibodies which exert action selectively and direct the human immune system to act against tumor cells. It has been tested in the Phase I setting and just recently Amgen, the pharmaceutical company supplying this agent, received FDA approval for utilizing this agent to treat Philadelphia chromosome-negative, relapsed or refractory pre-B ALL. In December 2014, the Children's Oncology Group activated a new Phase III study, AALL1331, a group wide risk-stratified, randomized study to test whether incorporation of Blinatumomab into the treatment of patients with childhood B-Lymphoblastic Leukemia at first relapse will improve disease free survival. This is a unique monoclonal antibody that we as nurses really need to understand so I am providing you with the education tool that I developed to assist our nurses in caring for patients receiving this agent. We have experience administering this agent to 2 patients. Please contact me if you have any questions.

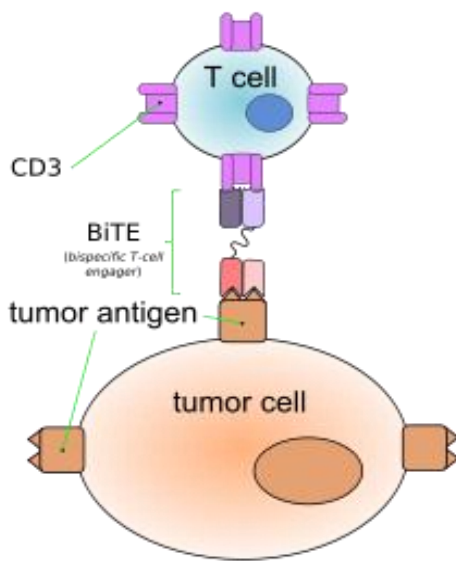
#### How Does the Drug Work?

**Blinatumomab** is a monoclonal antibody that belongs to a new class of constructed monoclonal antibodies, bi-specific T-cell receptor-engaging (BiTE) antibodies which exert action selectively and direct the human immune system to act against tumor cells.

#### What is a BiTE antibody?

T cells are potent, cytotoxic cells that occur naturally in humans. One potentially powerful approach to cancer treatment involves activating the patient's preexisting T cells to find and kill cancer cells. BiTE antibodies are a new class of antibodies made by linking two different monoclonal antibodies. One part of the new antibody activates T cells and the other part targets tumor cells. One of the advantages of BiTE antibodies is that rather than focusing on one specific T-cell response, BiTE antibodies attempt to engage all of the patient's cytotoxic T cells, causing a higher percentage of T cells in the cytotoxic response.

**Blinatumomab** is one example of a BiTE antibody and has been the most extensively tested in clinical trials to date. This agent targets CD3 on immunologic T cells and CD19 on malignant B cells, thus Blinatumomab has the unique ability to enable a patient's T cells to recognize malignant B cells. **Blinatumomab** is different because when it binds to CD3 and CD19, it physically brings T cells close to the malignant cells and enhances T-cell induced cytotoxicity. Amgen, the pharmaceutical company supplying this agent, received recent FDA approval for utilizing this agent to treat Philadelphia chromosome-negative, relapsed or refractory pre-B acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).



Blinatumomab linking a T-cell to a malignant B-cell

#### How is the Drug Administered to the Patient?

**Blinatumomab** is given as a continuous intravenous (IV) infusion because of its short half-life, the need for continuous drug exposure and the toxicities associated with the treatment. As a result, in each cycle of therapy, blinatumomab is given as a 4-week (28 days) continuous IV infusion, without any interruptions. Patients then have a 2-week break before commencing the next treatment cycle. The recommended dose based on previous adult and pediatric phase I clinical trials is 5 mcg/m<sup>2</sup>/day on Days 1-7 and 15 mcg/m<sup>2</sup>/day on Days 8-28 for cycle 1, and 15 mcg/m<sup>2</sup>/day on Days 1-28 for subsequent cycles. Administer as a continuous intravenous infusion at a constant flow rate using an infusion pump for 4 weeks. Dexamethasone will be administered prior to the start of the blinatumomab infusion. **DO NOT FLUSH THE BLINATUMOMAB INFUSION LINE ESPECIALLY WHEN CHANGING INFUSION BAGS-Flushing when changing bags or at completion of infusion can result in excess dosage.** IV bag will be changed every 24 hours. The pharmacy will send the bag attached to IV tubing that is pre-primed with the agent and there is always a back-up bag/tubing on the floor so there are no delays in hanging the next IV bag.

**NOTE:** Patients need to have a double lumen central line in place. **One lumen** is dedicated to the continuous infusion of the Blinatumomab-this line should be marked so that it is never interrupted and the **second lumen** can then be utilized for any supportive care that might be needed and blood draws as well as serve as a backup in case the first lumen can no longer be used.

**Broviac Cap Change Recommendations:** Caps are changed once a week on Mondays and for the line with the BLINATUMOMAB-place the new cap on the line prior to attaching the new 24 hour bag to prevent a long interruption of the infusion.

Hospitalization is **STRONGLY** recommended during the first 3 days of the first cycle and the first 2 days of subsequent blinatumomab cycles in case of a cytokine reaction.

At CHOC, patients will receive their initial infusion in the intensive care unit (may be as long as 48-72 hours) to closely monitor for cytokine-release syndrome that is associated with this monoclonal antibody. When the patient becomes stable the patient will be transferred to the Hem/Onc unit for the remainder of the cycle.

*This agent can be given at home but there are required logistical arrangements that need to be arranged (i.e. home care IV pumps). Most institutions are sending patients home with a 48-hour infusion bag of the drug and utilizing their outpatient infusion centers for patients to come and have nurses disconnect the completed bag and connect a new 48 hour bag.*

#### Common Side Effects of Drug:

- **Cytokine Release Syndrome:** Complex of symptoms which include fever, nausea, chills, hypotension, tachycardia,

weakness or lack of energy and strength, headache, rash, scratchy throat, tongue and throat swelling and dyspnea which usually can be mild but can be moderate in severity. ***With this monoclonal antibody, these side effects generally occur within the first 2 to 4 hours of infusion initiation and can be life threatening especially when there is more tumor burden.***

- **Tumor Lysis Syndrome:** Symptoms include ***hyperuricemia*** (increased uric acid levels), ***hyperkalemia***, ***hyperphosphatemia***, ***hypocalcemia***, ***acute renal failure***. **Flu-like symptoms** (i.e. fever, headache and fatigue) that typically resolve within the first 3 days of treatment and are thought to be related to the initial T-cell activation. **Central nervous system (CNS) and/or neurological events** can be seen at onset of treatment but can occur at any time and include encephalopathy, aphasia, tremor, disorientation, seizures and convulsions. These side effects are fully reversed after discontinuation of infusion.
- **Capillary Leak Syndrome**
  - Peripheral edema
  - Hypokalemia
  - Nausea
  - Constipation
  - Febrile Neutropenia
  - Increase Liver Function Tests (ALT/AST, T. Bili)
  - Transient DIC
  - Decreased serum immunoglobulins
  - Sepsis (Staph bacteremia most reported)

**Special Considerations and Monitoring Required:**

- Obtain baseline vital signs immediately prior to initiation of infusion and every 15 minutes **during the first hour of the infusion**. Thereafter, **obtain hourly vital signs for the first 24 hours to 48 hours** of the infusion. Once patient is stable every 4 hours can be initiated. Monitoring closely for hypotension, fever, tachycardia which could indicate cytokine-release syndrome or infusion reactions. **Dexamethasone** is administered prior to the infusion and used prn for severe reactions. Be prepared to administer emergency medications/oxygen as ordered if patient experiences a severe infusion-related reaction.
- Monitor for changes in neurological status; perform neuro-checks with vital signs and when necessary.
- **DO NOT flush or draw labs from the continuous Blinatumomab infusion line.** After each 24 hour infusion completes, take down any unused Blinatumomab solution in the IV bag and IV lines and dispose as per hospital policy. **When the 28 days are complete and the last bag is removed; hang a Normal Saline flush to infuse over 1 hour at 5 cc/hr then heparin lock the lumen as per policy.**
- Monitor Chemistry Panels for TLS symptoms and increased liver function tests.
- Monitor for cbc/with diff and platelet counts for neutropenia and thrombocytopenia
- Monitor for S & S of infection.

### From the SCAPHON Scholarship Chair.....

It's not too early to start thinking about 2015 Survivor Scholarships! Thanks to the generous donations and member support of the 2014 SCAPHON Conference raffle, we raised over \$5000 to help support six \$1,000 Survivor Scholarships. Please remember to encourage your patients and families to apply. Scholarship applications are available year-round on [www.scaphon.org](http://www.scaphon.org); please feel free to print these and hand them to your patients and families throughout the year. The 2015 deadline for applications is April 1<sup>st</sup>. The winners will be announced at the 2015 SCAPHON Conference, to be held at the Newport Beach Hyatt. And don't forget to nominate that exceptional coworker for the Kathy Ruccione Award!



Kind Regards, Lynn Schubert  
SCAPHON Scholarship Chair

SCAPHON's community service committee would like to give a BIG thank everyone who participated in the food drive at the December Quarterly. We successfully collected a truck full of much needed food for the OC Food Bank.

Please remember to keep collecting gently used books for:



BookEnds, a nonprofit organization based in Southern California, is about kids helping kids. Bookends recycles children's books through student-run book drives and places them in schools and youth organizations in need of books.

BookEnds mission is to recycle children's books of excellent quality and to create libraries in schools and youth organizations in underserved areas. Only books meeting specific quality guidelines will be considered and accepted, books whose condition and content inspire a child to read.

Bookends diverse recipients include inner-city schools, youth centers, homeless shelters, family literacy centers, after-school enrichments programs, children's group homes and juvenile detention facilities.

BookEnds believes that a literate child is the foundation of a thriving community. By providing access to books, BookEnds gives children the resources to develop literacy skills and to experience the joy and imagination of reading.





**Southern California Association of  
Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses**

## **RULES FOR PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS**

Expenses associated with the submission and presentation of an abstract are the responsibility of the presenter(s) (ex. Conference Registration, Airfare, and Lodging)

Submission of an Abstract constitutes a commitment by the author(s) to present if accepted.

The primary presenter must be a current member of and register at the SCAPHON Conference. Other presenters do not have to be a member of APHON or SCAPHON, but must register for the SCAPHON conference if attending.

### **ABSTRACT TITLE**

### **AUTHOR NAME(S)**

### **ABSTRACT TEXT**

**Background:**

**Objective:**

**Methods:**

**Results:**

**Implications for Practice:**

### **PRESENTATION**

Guidelines for poster presentation will be provided to authors of accepted abstracts.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 7, 2015**

**\*\*\*If we do not receive at least 6 posters we will cancel the presentation\*\*\***



### SCAPHON Website On-Line!

Our website address is:

[www.scaphon.org](http://www.scaphon.org)

### The SCAPHON website features Information about:

- ❖ Quarterly Meetings
- ❖ Conferences
- ❖ Scholarships
- ❖ Board Members
- ❖ Downloadable copy of our newsletter
- ❖ Quarterly Dinner Meeting Flyer
- ❖ And soon... the conference brochure!

Please visit our website often!

*Email our Webmaster with changes to your profile*

## **GET INVOLVED WITH SCAPHON!**

4 offices will be up for election  
in May 2015:

President-Elect  
Conference Chair  
Secretary  
Scholarship Chair

Look for nomination forms at the  
SCAPHON conference in May '15 or  
contact Scarlett Czarnecki  
[sczarnecki@chla.usc.edu](mailto:sczarnecki@chla.usc.edu) for more  
information

## **The SCAPHON SCOOP**

*Published by*  
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Lynn Schubert  
Sharon Bergeron



## Because “cuddling” might be part of your job description.

Children’s Hospital Los Angeles ranks fifth in the nation on the *U.S. News & World Report* Honor Roll of America’s best children’s hospitals. We have also earned Magnet® recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Partner those distinctions with research endeavors at The Saban Research Institute, and our longstanding affiliation with the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California, and it should be clear—at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, we really do treat kids better.

**CHLA is looking for experienced Hematology-Oncology Nurses and Nurse Practitioners. Management opportunities are also available.**

**323.361.2193**  
**CHLA.org/CAREERS**





**SCAPHON**  
Southern California Association of  
Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses

**Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses  
Southern California Chapter**  
Cordially invites you to attend our  
Quarterly Dinner Meeting and Educational Forum

**"Coagulation Detectives:  
Cases in Rare Bleeding Disorders"**

**By: Maria Lage, Pharm D**

*Program Supported by Novo Nordisk, Inc*

**March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
6:30 p.m.**

**Claim Jumper Restaurant  
Fountain Valley**

18050 Brookhurst St.  
Fountain Valley  
(714) 963-6711

**From the 405 Freeway:**

Exit Brookhurst and proceed south.  
Located just south of the 405 Freeway  
at the corner of Brookhurst and Talbert

**Parking is free and readily available.**

Approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing  
Provider Number 10530, for 1.0 Contact Hour

*At the conclusion of this presentation,  
The learner will:*

1. Have an understanding of signs and symptoms of bleeding disorders and appropriate diagnostic testing.
2. Participate in an interactive discussion and assessment of rare bleeding disorders.

**For more information, contact:**

**Shawna Esarey  
Quarterly Program Planner  
Esarey, Shawna  
sesarey@rchsd.org**

**SCAPHON Quarterly Meeting Registration Form  
Registration Deadline: March 3, 2015**

Yes! I will be attending the SCAPHON Quarterly Dinner Meeting and Educational Forum  
At 6:30 pm on Tuesday, December 9th at the Claim Jumper in Fountain Valley

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Menu selection:  Vegetarian  Meat  Gluten Free

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ APHON Member:  Yes  No

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ RN License # \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this registration form by March 3, 2015  
Enclose registration fee of \$25 payable to SCAPHON (\$30 if postmarked after March 3, 2015)

Mail to:  
**Shawna Esarey RN, BSN, CPON  
1578 Black Walnut Dr.  
San Marcos, CA 92078**





ASSOCIATION of PEDIATRIC  
HEMATOLOGY/ONCOLOGY NURSES

Anne Nord  
2433 Bywood Drive  
Glendale, CA 91206



**SCAPHON**

Southern California Association of  
Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses



**SCAPHON'S 29<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
MAY 14 & 15, 2015**

**THE HYATT  
REGENCY  
NEWPORT BEACH**

***Light the Way!***

**SCAPHON now has a page on Facebook!  
"Like" us to get updates on the events of  
our local chapter!**

**Note:** If you no longer wish to receive the *SCAPHON Scoop* and wish to be removed from the mailing list, please contact Anne Nord @ [ANord@chla.usc.edu](mailto:ANord@chla.usc.edu) or mail notice to 2433 Bywood Drive, Glendale, CA 91206