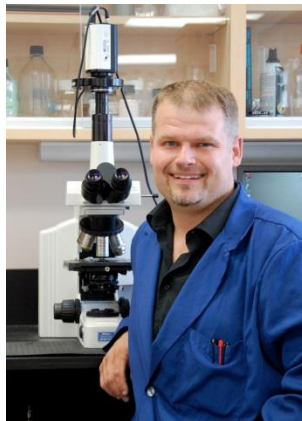




Champions in support and research partner up

When Dr. Jim Petrik read about a new support group starting in his town, he immediately reached out to the organizer to commend her efforts in bringing people together. That was when he first connected with Frances Vanover, a woman living with ovarian cancer. After years of keeping in touch, they met in person and hatched a plan to bring about the first Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope in Guelph.



Dr. Jim Petrik

“We had no idea what was possible - it felt like a shot in the dark,” recalls Ms. Vanover.



Ms. Frances Vanover

“Ovarian cancer has been the central focus of my lab for the last 15 years,” says Dr. Petrik. “Through this work, I’ve interacted with many survivors, each of them are inspiring and strong women. So aside from working from a scientific perspective in research, I personally want to get out there and do something to help out.”

At his lab at the University of Guelph, Dr. Petrik and his team are exploring new treatments specifically for women with advanced stage ovarian cancer. A few years ago he received a grant co-funded by

Ovarian Cancer Canada for research into a pre-treatment method that shrinks ovarian tumours while improving drug delivery. Dr. Petrik was recently in Boston discussing a related clinical trial.

“If you look at some of the well-known cancers, you’ll see tremendous advances in research. If ovarian cancer received that same level of investment of money, similar developments would be possible,” Dr. Petrik continues. “But outcomes for this disease haven’t changed for 50 years and funding continues to be desperately needed. That’s why I’m continuing to do the Walk, because I’m motivated to be part of the solution.”

It’s clear that the same sentiment is shared throughout his community and beyond. Participation and fundraising at Guelph’s first Walk exceeded Dr. Petrik’s and Ms. Vanover expectations.

“It was great to see survivors come out to join us,” says Dr. Petrik. “Some were recently diagnosed, others were diagnosed some time ago.”

“We were very pleased with the turnout, some coming from neighbouring towns,” adds Ms. Vanover in agreement. “It is very encouraging as we plan for our second walk in September. It certainly helps to have a dedicated team for the planning process, and as co-chairs we are grateful for their commitment and participation.”

The Ovarian Cancer Canada Walk of Hope brings people together to empower one another, support one another, and demand better for women living with ovarian cancer. Join forces with Ms. Vanover and Dr. Petrik, and thousands of amazing participants with the ladyballs to take action against this disease. The Walk takes place in most cities on Sunday, September 10, 2017. Register now at ovariancancerwalkofhope.ca