

I want to thank the CAPHO Awards Committee for awarding me the CAPHO Conference Pharmacist Travel Grant. This support allowed me to attend the 2026 CAPHO Conference that was held in Saskatoon, Canada in April 2026. It was an incredible opportunity with a few surprises!

One of the first surprises was arriving in Saskatoon and the temperature was well below zero! Upon arrival, I rushed over to attend the Clinical Workshop: Management of Antibody-Drug Conjugate (ADC) and Bispecific T-Cell Engagers. As an informatics pharmacist, the majority of my work is indirect patient care so I was very excited to be able to learn from fellow pharmacists with focused discussions on how to manage adverse events of these drugs. In addition, I was excited to hear that there was a section on handling the logistics of this group of drugs as I consistently see challenges in our information systems with each drug! There was a lot of engaging conversations on how sites across the country were handling all the different pieces, which included engaging everyone within the healthcare team.

On Friday morning, I woke up to multiple centimetres of snow! But this did not dampen our spirits at all! I was excited to continue to connect with my colleagues at the event all weekend. I found the plenary session on generational intelligence to be thought provoking. As the healthcare system struggles with staffing, I think being able to understand our colleagues will be critical. I believe this will not only help us work better as a team, but ultimately, striving towards a sustainable healthcare system that will allow us to improve patient outcomes.

The session on Artificial Intelligence highlighted the need to keep up with technology while balancing this with sensitive healthcare information. It also demonstrated how healthcare systems can leverage AI so that we can better focus our efforts on pharmaceutical care.

For the concurrent sessions, I had attended the “Chemotherapy (and More..!) during Pregnancy” and I had found the presenter Gabriel Gazzé to be very engaging. He did provide a lot of practical recommendations and had some cases that illustrated how delicate this situation is. While some of the older chemotherapies are mostly safe in second and third trimesters, the new immunotherapy agents often have limited evidence in pregnancy.

The other concurrent session that I had attended was “Key Challenges in Funding High-Cost Cancer Drugs: Ethics, Affordability and Future Considerations” presented by Dr. Brian O’Rourke. There is no question that oncology drugs are increasing in cost. And while this presents options for treatments for our patients, Dr. O’Rourke has highlighted the challenges that health systems are facing in the near future. Every jurisdiction across Canada will struggle as the public healthcare system is limited in resources.

I also had the opportunity to support my resident, Erin Cho, as her residency project was awarded the best poster in the Research – Clinical category. I was very thankful to be able to be in the audience as she presented!

Despite the cold weather that we had experienced, I had a wonderful time connecting with colleagues across Canada, many of whom I'm often in regular calls with. It was very inspiring to hear their practice and to be able to share knowledge to ensure we are at the forefront of oncology care. I am very grateful to have received this award and I can't wait to see everyone again to share our research and ideas in Montreal!

Shirley Yeung