

**June 10, 2008**

**Dear ACFP Members:**

**New Places & New Faces.** Travel and meetings have consumed the past three weeks. Below is a brief update on ACFP activities that have taken place since my last message, and I invite you to email me your comments or concerns at [acfpres@acfp.ca](mailto:acfpres@acfp.ca).

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**Face-to-Face with the Docs.** In mid-May, I began visiting health regions to meet with physicians. Four Physicians' Forums took place in the following centres: Bonnyville, Edmonton, High Level, and Medicine Hat.

In Edmonton, I had the opportunity to speak at the AGM of the Capital Region Medical Staff Association. Other speakers included Darryl LaBuick, AMA President. Many of the themes we discussed were complementary and demonstrated a convergence in our desire to address concerns raised by Family Physicians. Doctors attending the rural and regional forums engaged in lively discussions about issues in their region, and "hot topics" of concern to all family physicians. Attendees were eager to share their thoughts and concerns, which assist us in determining how best the ACFP can serve you. To date, ACFP members feel that advocacy for family physicians should be the College's first priority.

Other discussions surrounded the frustrations family docs experience with the shortage of family physicians and other health care professionals, the referral process, never-ending paperwork and high overhead. Some issues are common to all the regions I've visited; other issues are unique to specific communities. On a more positive note, many attendees felt PCNs are a potential solution to several problems that family physicians encounter.

On a personal note, I was touched by the dedication and commitment, passion for patient care and community. Albertans are blessed to have such a resource of Family Physician champions!

Physicians' Forums are open to all family and general practitioners, not just ACFP members. Upcoming meetings include:

Calgary Health Region	10 June 2008	6 pm	Legacy Suite, U of C Dining Centre, Calgary
Northern Lights East	19 June 2008	6 pm	Sawridge Hotel, Fort McMurray
David Thompson	23 June 2008	6 pm	Venue – TBA, Red Deer

Please visit the ACFP website at [www.acfp.ca](http://www.acfp.ca) for more information.

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**Bending the Government's Ear.** I met with Minister Hector Goudreau, Employment & Immigration on May 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the issue of health workforce shortages, discussions focused on areas of special interest including recruiting new family physicians, attracting students to family medicine, and family physician compensation strategies. Minister Goudreau favoured a future meeting for further discussions.

The next meeting also took place on May 15<sup>th</sup>, with Dr. Raj Sherman, Parliamentary Assistant, Health & Wellness. Dr. Sherman voiced a strong commitment to primary care and family medicine. He encouraged all of us to continue meeting and corresponding with MLAs to highlight issues of concern to family physicians, and to identify potential solutions.

We will be meeting with Minister Doug Horner, Advanced Education & Technology on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, and are in the process of securing a meeting date with Minister Ron Liepert, Health & Wellness.

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**Calling All Presenters...** Here is a great opportunity to connect with Alberta's family physicians to present and discuss ideas, tools, and best practices in family medicine. The ACFP's 54<sup>th</sup> ASA Planning Committee has opened a Call for Presentations for the 54<sup>th</sup> ASA, February 26 – March 1, 2009. Deadline for submissions is Friday, July 18, 2008. Visit the ACFP website at [www.acfp.ca](http://www.acfp.ca) for the submission form and instructions. What better place to teach, learn, and meet with colleagues than in the mountain paradise of Banff?

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Again, I invite you to share your thoughts and concerns. Please email me at [acfpres@acfp.ca](mailto:acfpres@acfp.ca).

Cheers,



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President  
Alberta College of Family Physicians