



July, 2009

## A Message from ACFP President to Alberta Family Doctors

Dear Colleague,

The lazy, hazy days of summer are here, and I hope you take time for a well-deserved vacation. It is my pleasure to provide you with an update on ACFP activities over the past two months.

### Physician Forums

In two well-attended sessions, I had the opportunity to talk with colleagues from Edmonton and Banff/Canmore in June. Discussion around the Complex Care Plan, PCN activities, changes in the CME program at U of A, and local challenges dominated our meetings. In Edmonton especially, there was lively discussion about the current political environment and challenges brought by the recession. Some intriguing ideas were generated from these meetings, which will be followed up in the next several months. I remain impressed by the dedication and energy of Family Physicians in providing high quality care to their patients and community.

### Meeting with Dr. Stephen Duckett, CEO, Alberta Health Services

I was fortunate to be granted an audience with Stephen Duckett very early into his tenure as CEO of the new AHS 'mothership'. I was encouraged with his understanding of the important role that Family Physicians have in the health care system. He was aware of the Starfield data and the manpower challenges that Family Medicine feels in many parts of Alberta. While there were many themes not discussed, I left the meeting feeling optimistic that Dr. Duckett has a positive and mostly accurate view of Family Medicine in Alberta. We will continue to advocate and educate leaders in Alberta about the important role Family Doctors play in delivering health care to our patients in our communities.

### Continuing Medical Education

Our CME strategy is moving forward. You have been receiving "Tools for Practice" which has been getting great reviews from members. The 'Chronic Disease Management' CME has been planned for Jasper in September (see below). We have a growing number of CME regional representatives and hope to be working with them in the fall to develop more regional programs. Discussions were held with the University of Alberta CPL Division aimed at filling the void left by cancellation of the Wednesday Evening Program. The ACFP was prepared to develop a partnership program for Family Doctors in the Edmonton area. However, the University of Alberta is planning on an innovative program for Family Doc's to fill this void. To avoid competing with this evolving program, we put our plans on hold. The ACFP will continue to monitor the provision of CME opportunities for our members and work to address your educational needs.

### **Take Advantage of the Improved CME Membership Benefit**

In the June 11 issue of MDscope, the AMA described improvements made to the CME membership benefit and the process required to apply for the benefit. Improvements noted:

- Maintenance reimbursement increase to \$270 per day.
- Eligibility for reimbursement of fees charged by the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) for participation in MAINPRO® or MOC/CPD programs. CFPC and RCPSC membership dues up to the MAINPRO® or MOC/CPD fee amount may also be claimed.
- Availability of an overhead allowance of \$50 per approved continuous professional development credit.

Check out the [AMA website](#) for more details on this benefit.

### **Comprehensive Family Medicine Strategy Committee**

I am disappointed to report that this Committee has not moved as far as I would have liked. We had hoped to have a 'deliverable' in place for September 2009: to offer Family Physicians alternate practice compensation strategies that would promote comprehensive primary care. I think the early momentum was lost by significant distracters - the dissolution of RHA's, restructuring of AHS, dropping oil prices and the recession! Nonetheless, the challenges of providing comprehensive primary care in Alberta remain. The Executive will review our participation in this initiative and evaluate our continued involvement.

### **Complex Care Plan**

Family Doctors and patients continue to benefit from this new fee code. The ACFP remains active, in conjunction with the Section of General Practice, AHS and AHW, to disseminate education around the use of care plans and this code. Visit our [website](#) for details.

### **Alberta's Family Physician of the Year Award Recipient**

It is my pleasure to announce the ACFP's 2009 Alberta Family Physician of the Year Award recipient - **Dr. George Gish**. After graduating from the U of C in 1979, George settled in Claresholm, AB where he has continued to provide exceptional care to his patients for the past 29 years. On behalf of the membership ~ Congratulations George!

### **Shadowing Program for Incoming Medical Students**

Since 2005, the ACFP, in collaboration with AMA, has provided shadowing opportunities for incoming medical students - prior to their official start of medical school. Once again, we are pleased to continue this program in 2009 by providing shadowing placements for over 30 students throughout AB. Thanks again for your impressive response to our request to volunteer as physician participants - your passion for family medicine and your time is greatly valued.

### **Save Dave. ABCD Chronic Disease Management Symposium September 26-27, 2009 - Jasper Park Lodge**

The College is currently planning an exciting 8-hour conference on proper chronic disease management, in partnership with sanofi-aventis. During the mornings of September 26-27, you will be able to learn about DAVE - a patient many of us have in

our practices. The symposium will help you help DAVE to achieve optimal health, given his many health problems such as diabetes and CV disease. Visit [www.acfp.ca](http://www.acfp.ca) to register today.

### **Help Choose the Physicians of Tomorrow!**

The Faculty of Medicine at the University of Calgary is endeavoring to raise the profile of Family Medicine within the medical school. One priority area is in Admissions, and Family Physicians with a University appointment (full time or clinical) are being sought to serve on both the Selection Committee and the Multiple Mini Interview Committee. The members of the Selection Committee do the reviewing of the actual application files and determine who is invited for an interview. The Multiple Mini Interview Committee develops and implements the scenarios used at the interviews. Interested members should contact Adele Meyers at [meyers@ucalgary.ca](mailto:meyers@ucalgary.ca).

### **More ways to connect with the ACFP!**

The ACFP is joining the new social networking phenomena. Follow our activities and join our dialogue by adding us a 'friend' to your **Facebook** account. We are Alberta College of Family Physicians on Facebook. Also, follow the activities of the President - get 'hot off the press' insights and news, contribute to the dialog. Sign up for a free **Twitter** account and add **ACFPprez** to your list!

Wishing you a lot of sunshine and a great summer,

Cheers,

**Rick**

*Rick Ward, MD, CCFP, FCFP  
President, Alberta College of Family Physicians*