

2004: A YEAR IN REVIEW

Alberta College of Family Physicians

PREAMBLE

- The Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP) is the only provincial organization that exclusively represents family physicians.
- The commitment, enthusiasm and willingness of members to participate in College activities determine the strength of the ACFP.
- A strong ACFP allows it to act as a clear, decisive and collective voice for family physicians in influencing policies and programs, affecting their ability to deliver quality health care.
- As an Alberta member of the CFPC, the National office forwards \$178 of your total membership fee to the ACFP to sustain all services and activities on your behalf.

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PROJECT

The Recruitment and Retention project was launched in March 2004, as one initiative to help address the critical shortage of family physicians. A review of the literature indicates there are two decision points in career planning for becoming family physicians: 1) medical students who have early and positive exposure to family physicians, and 2) bright, young students considering university and a career in medicine.

Currently, there are some structured activities at the U of A and U of C medical schools where medical students are exposed to positive family physician role models, the philosophy of Family Medicine and the identification of Family Medicine as a unique specialty. However, there is no active promotion of Family Medicine to individuals prior to entering medical school particularly on a province-wide scale. It was therefore decided that the clear starting point for this project would be targeting and meeting with high school students throughout Alberta.

Phase 1 of this project included holding focus groups with high school students and with family physicians. Analyses of these focus group sessions allowed the development of key messages, and confirmed that an interactive program illustrating the life of a family physician was an effective way of having those students, thinking about medicine, consider Family Medicine.

A news conference was held on June 17, 2004 for two purposes: (1) to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the College of Family Physicians of Canada, and (2) to announce Phase 1 of the Recruitment and Retention project. St. Albert MLA Mary O'Neill brought greetings on behalf of the Minister of Health in her role as Chair of the province's Standing Policy Committee on Community and Health, and the Honorable Lyle Oberg, Minister of Learning, gave his support for the Recruitment and Retention project. Shortly after the news conference, a newsletter from the ACFP President elicited an enthusiastic response from several members who offered to help with delivery of the key messages to high school students.

In October 2004, the ACFP Board discussed Phase 1 of the Recruitment and Retention project and how to proceed to the next step. The Board was pleased with the outcome of Phase 1, in

particular, the enthusiasm that this project generated among members of the ACFP, government, the media and other organizations. While there was agreement that the ACFP should continue with the project, Board members expressed concern about the anticipated costs to implement the major components of Phase 2 - production of a video, training for family physicians delivering the program, and the design and printing of a brochure and other materials. As a result, a decision was made to seek corporate sponsorships to fund Phase 2; the scope of Phase 2 will be dependent on the amount of external funds secured.

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES (IMGs)

Recognizing that the pool of IMGs in Alberta was another, more immediate source to address the critical shortage of family physicians, the Board decided to explore areas where the ACFP could support IMGs in becoming family physicians. Discussions were held with representatives of the Alberta IMG Program and the Alberta IMG Association. Individuals from the Alberta IMG Association welcomed the involvement of the ACFP, and asked the ACFP to help them understand and coordinate the various IMG activities in the province, and facilitate discussions with the major players such as the CPSA and the Departments of Family Medicine at the U of A and the U of C.

The ACFP agreed to chair a meeting in the fall of 2004 inviting individuals and organizations involved with IMGs such as the CPSA, the departments of Family Medicine, the AIMG Program, AIMG Association, family physician preceptors and IMGs at various levels (those in family practice, residency programs and waiting for assessment to enter residency programs). The role of the ACFP at this meeting would be one of coordination and facilitation. Prior to adopting a more active role in helping to guide IMGs toward a career in family Medicine, the ACFP had to understand the challenges faced by IMGs and the programs and initiatives that are in place to help integrate IMGs into the health system and the community.

Unfortunately, the fall meeting did not occur, as some of the key players were not available. A meeting is being rescheduled for the spring of 2005. Discussions will also be held with the two residency Program Directors to explore strategies for increasing the education and mentorship capacity of family physicians.

FAMILY PRACTICE RESEARCH

The ACFP continued to promote and increase primary care research capacity through the Alberta Family Practice Research Network (AFPRN) - a successful and sensitive resource to the busy family physician.

- AFPRN's Steering Committee consists of several enthusiastic community family physicians that volunteer their time. We thank Dr. Diana Turner (Chair), Dr. Donna Manca (Clinical Director), Dr. Marlene Lidkea, Dr. Carol Rowntree, Dr. Annie Yau, Dr. David Yip, and Dr. Jim Dickinson for their dedication.
- Some of the questions/projects the Steering Committee were involved with in 2004 include:
 - The Rewards and Challenges of Family Practice
 - Barriers to the Care of the Frail and Elderly
 - Rural Research Priorities
 - Alberta Physical Activity and Breast Cancer Prevention Trial (ALPHA)

- Women’s Health and Hormone Study
 - Evaluation of abstracts for a successful 49th AFPRN poster presentation where 23 posters were presented
 - Assisted in the development of an information handout for AHFMR - SEARCH ‘V’ Physician Recruitment
- **‘The Rewards and Challenges of Family Practice’** project is nearing completion. A proposal was developed and funding obtained. The purpose of this project was to identify and describe the key rewards and challenges that have an impact on family physicians in Alberta. A web-based Delphi survey method was used. Twenty-eight family physicians across Alberta participated through a total of five rounds. The response rate was excellent ranging from 86-96%. The data are being analyzed and preliminary information will be presented at the 50th poster presentation. ‘Next steps’ workshops will be held to develop a plan of action.
 - The **‘Rural Research Priorities’** project has been completed and information is being disseminated. Workshops and oral presentations were given at Cabin Fever in February 2004, the U of A Research Forum in April 2004, the 4th Western Departments of Family Medicine Research Conference in Richmond BC in May 2004, the U of A’s Spring Seeding in June 2004, and the 2nd Annual Resident Research Day at the U of A in June, 2004. A poster was presented at the 49th Annual Scientific Assembly.
 - A paper addressing **“Ethical Concerns Encountered in Community Practice Research: Common Concerns Encountered by the Alberta Family Practice Research Network (AFPRN)”** was developed and posted on the website at <http://www.acfp.ca>
 - Dr. Donna Manca, AFPRN’s Clinical Director, was invited by the **Canadian Institute of Health Research** to attend a multi-stakeholder workshop in Toronto on August 24, 2004 to consult on CIHR’s draft privacy guidelines for health research.

CARE OF THE ELDERLY

- In July 2004, a Dinner and a Question Workshop was held in Calgary to develop a project aimed at assessing the **barriers to care of the elderly**. From this workshop a research proposal was developed and a letter of intent submitted to the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research, Health Research Fund (Health Services). Unfortunately the project did not receive funding.
- In September 2004, Dr. Jean Triscott, Bonnie Dobbs (PhD) and Dr. Donna Manca (Clinical Director, AFPRN) were invited to present at the Senior’s Council Meeting of the Society for the Retired and the Semi-Retired. Barriers to care of the elderly in Edmonton were discussed and presenters were invited to return to inform the group further. While the Senior’s Council Committee is not politically active, the members of the committee are very interested in what they can do to improve the situation.
- In October 2004, representatives from Alberta Health and Wellness and the Geriatrics (NARG) Division, Glenrose Hospital, presented the **Geriatric In-service Mentoring Program physician modules** to the Care of the Elderly Working Group. Feedback and discussion was held on strategies for implementation of this initiative to family physicians

in Alberta. While members of the Care of the Elderly Working Group were very supportive of the intent of the program, they unanimously agreed that the content and proposed delivery of the physician modules were inappropriate for Alberta family physicians. Discussion was held with the representatives on the importance of including family physicians in the process of developing education tools to ensure both the relevancy of the content to family medicine practice, as well as to ensure it meets the criteria of the CFPC MAINPRO® program.

A meeting was held with the Co-Chairs of the Continuing Care Workforce Working Group (CCWWG) to discuss the ACFP's involvement in re-writing the Geriatric In-Service Mentoring Program physician modules. A summary of the CFPC MAINPRO® program was provided, and the ACFP was asked to submit a proposal on what would be required to rewrite the modules using the MAINPRO®-C framework. The proposal was finalized and forwarded to AHW, Continuing Care Workforce Working Group for review.

- In 2003, Alberta Health and Wellness approached the Care of the Elderly Working Group to plan and host a provincial **conference on Comprehensive Care for the Elderly in Primary Health Care**. The conference would be instrumental in launching the strategic direction identified in Alberta's continuing care reform agenda, specifically, addressing the special needs of the older adult with multiple and complex health problems. However, the planning was put on hold in December 2003, as AHW recommended that the ACFP first approach the AMA for funding available under the Physician Tripartite Agreement.

In July 2004, the ACFP received a letter from the Program Director for the Primary Care Initiative stating that there are no PCI funds available to support such conferences. The conference proposal and budget were revised and again submitted to AHW for funding approval. In December 2004, the ACFP received a letter from AHW advising that the department does not have funding for primary care initiatives at this time. Discussion is underway with the AMA to explore alternative funding sources. It is apparent, however, that although the proposed conference is considered a good idea, and in keeping with recommendations from the Broda report, there are no mechanisms in place for funding such proposals.

- The Health Regions' **10-Year Continuing Care Service Plans** were reviewed for content that specifically applies to the support of family physicians caring for the elderly patient. From this preliminary review, there appeared to be quite limited consultation with family physicians during the development of the plans.

MEDICAL STUDENTS AND FAMILY MEDICINE RESIDENTS

- The ACFP continued its commitment to orienting medical students and family medicine residents to the profession of family medicine. In the fall of 2004, the ACFP organized and sponsored a medical student orientation session at the U of A. Community family physicians volunteered to participate. The students were divided into small groups and a family physician joined each group to talk about his/her life as a family doctor and to respond to the many questions raised by students. Feedback from the medical students was very positive and they requested that more frequent sessions be held in 2005.

- A similar session was held with family medicine residents who expressed enthusiasm about having family physicians share their experiences and address questions. The ACFP also made a presentation to second year residents on the role of the ACFP and the value of becoming a member.
- The ACFP Chapter Board continued to be represented by a medical student from the U of A and the U of C, and a family medicine resident from the U of A and the U of C.
- The ACFP provided funds to help sponsor the annual year-end formal dinner of the University of Alberta Medical Students. Funds were also allotted in 2004 to support the University of Alberta's Family Medicine Resident Research Day, as well as The First Annual Alberta Medical Students' Conference & Retreat (held in Banff on February 4-6, 2005).

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION

◆ CONTINUED TO REVIEW AND ACCREDIT AN INCREASING NUMBER OF MAINPRO®-M1 COURSES IN THE PROVINCE

- 190 MAINPRO®-M1 applications were processed by the ACFP office in 2004 compared with 142 MAINPRO®-M1 applications in 2003 and 165 applications in 2002. Dr. Dorcas Kennedy, Chair of the ACFP CME Committee, continued as the Accreditor of these applications to ensure that high standards were met and regional interests and perspectives were considered.
- ACFP staff answered inquiries and distributed information on the process and criteria requirements for MAINPRO® M1 program accreditation. Staff also monitored all applications to ensure that courses offered to ACFP members, advertised as meeting CFPC MAINPRO® M1 criteria, did in fact receive accreditation from the ACFP, CFPC or either the University of Alberta or University of Calgary.
- In early 2004, the ACFP learned that consideration was being given to submitting a MAINPRO®-M1 course to a single national body for accreditation thus obtaining global accreditation for all provinces. Proponents of a centralized accreditation process argued that this system would be consistent, less complex, and would meet the needs of all regions if the program has been developed with family physician input. The ACFP CME Committee discussed the implications of changing the current MAINPRO®-M1 accreditation process to a national system, and developed a position statement. The fundamental principle of this statement emphasized the importance of ensuring meaningful input and review on a local basis as a quality control measure to ensure that the accredited programs adequately and appropriately meet the needs of members residing in the province. Members of the National Committee on CPD/CME supported this fundamental principle.

◆ PLANNED, COORDINATED AND EVALUATED THE 49TH ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC ASSEMBLY (ASA)

- The 49th ASA was held from February 26th – 28th, 2004, at the Rimrock Resort Hotel in Banff, Alberta.

- The ASA Planning Committee, consisting of volunteer ACFP members and two representatives from the pharmaceutical industry acting in an advisory capacity, has:
 - Planned the Annual Scientific Assembly with an emphasis on course content that was relevant to Alberta family physicians.
 - Sought sponsorship from related industry in order to keep registration costs for ACFP members at an affordable level.
 - Worked with sponsors of the Annual Scientific Assembly to ensure a professional and ethical relationship/forum was maintained.
- The 49th Annual Scientific Assembly was very successful as rated by the evaluations completed by registrants. Conference exhibitors were particularly satisfied with the organization and quality of the Conference, even though attendance was down as compared to the previous year.
- **Dr. Harvey Woytiuk** was recognized as the 2003 Alberta Family Physician of the Year. **Robert Clarke**, Executive Publisher of Family Health magazine, was recognized for receiving an Honorary Membership in the CFPC.
- **Dr. Pat Heard** (Calgary) was inducted as President of the ACFP and **Dr. Tuhin Bakshi** (Wetaskiwin) was commended for his commitment and efforts as President of the ACFP for the past two years.

AWARDS

◆ ALBERTA'S FAMILY PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR

- The ACFP has traditionally chosen and celebrated the achievements of an Alberta Family Physician of the Year; the Alberta Family Physician of the Year is also honoured by the National CFPC as one of Canada's Family Physicians of the Year.
- The ACFP Nominating and Awards Committee reviews all nominations brought forward by the membership and were pleased to recommend the nomination of **Dr. John Bradley** as the 2004 Alberta Family Physician of the Year.
- Dr. Bradley's contribution to his profession was celebrated at a National level at FMF 2004 in Toronto, and will be further recognized by the ACFP membership at the 50th Annual Scientific Assembly.
- Dr. Bradley is an outstanding example of dedication to patient care and public education. He graduated from Queen's University medical school in 1969 and has been practicing family medicine in Calgary for 32 years. He was inspired by his family doctor to become a physician, and continues to be a strong promoter of family medicine. Dr. Bradley feels family medicine may not always be sufficiently highlighted at medical schools. He is passionate and enthusiastic about changing this fact and recruiting the next generation of family physicians.

He has been known to extend these efforts to include accomplished high school and university students. Students are very responsive to an office environment that is friendly, relaxed and encourages critical thinking and clinical decision-making. Many students have been influenced to choose a career in family medicine, while others express astonishment concerning the skills and expertise needed to be a competent

family doctor. Both current and former medical students, residents and international medical graduates are in strong agreement that Dr. Bradley is an outstanding diagnostician, possesses an expansive knowledge base and is caring and compassionate to his patients and others.

Dr. Bradley has pursued a diverse career. He recently completed a six-year term as a councilor with the CPSA. Currently, in addition to his practice, he is a clinical assistant professor in the U of C Department of Family Medicine, a consultant with several transitional units, the medical director of a psychogeriatric unit, and is involved in occupational health activities.

New! ♦

◆ ACFP CARE AWARDS

- Committed to supporting its members in providing quality patient care through education, research and promotion of best practices, the Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP) values the achievements and professional commitment of its members.
- ACFP Care Awards recognize members of the ACFP and celebrate the achievements of members who have demonstrated outstanding qualities or contributions and dedication to their patients; community; and/or the profession of family medicine.
- CARE Award Recipients in 2004:
 - Dr. Kathryn Yamashita – Lethbridge
 - Dr. Brad Armstrong – Hinton
 - Dr. Mike Kolber – Peace River
 - Dr. Guy Lamoureux – Bonnyville
 - Dr. Heather Armson – Calgary
 - Dr. Lori Montgomery, Family Medicine Resident, University of Calgary
 - Dr. Jared Bly, Family Medicine Resident, University of Alberta
 - Ms. Jennifer Hollowell, Medical Student, University of Calgary
 - Mr. Lee Graham, Medical Student, University of Alberta

◆ ACFP SCHOLARSHIPS

- Awarded annually to a medical student completing the final year in the Faculty of Medicine on the basis of superior academic achievement in the study of Family Medicine and acceptance into a family medicine residency-training program.
Recipients in 2004:
 - Ms. Lynda P. Nguyen – University of Alberta
 - Ms. Susan Dorothy Byers – University of Calgary

◆ CFPC AWARDS

- Janus Research Grants support academic and community-based family physicians in carrying out research projects that meet the changing needs of their patients and communities. Recipients in 2004:
 - Dr. Sheny Khera
 - Dr. Anne Darragh
 - Dr. Donna Manca
- **Medical Student Leadership Awards** are presented by the CFPC to recognize exemplary medical students who demonstrate interest and skills in areas such as health

care policy/economics, government/media relations, advocacy and representation on behalf of patients, peers or healthcare organizations. Recipients in 2004:

Ms. Kathy Unger
Ms. Lisa Lemieux

- **CFPC Family Medicine Resident Leadership Awards** are presented by the CFPC to recognize the leadership abilities of outstanding senior family medicine residents who demonstrate interest and skills in areas such as health care policy/economics, government/media relations, advocacy and representation on behalf of patients, peers or healthcare organizations. Recipients in 2004:
Dr. Tasha Bienert
Dr. Kasia Abel
- **Fellowship in the College of Family Physicians of Canada (FCFP)** is awarded to Certificants who have demonstrated their commitment to practice-based, life-long learning. There were 292 ACFP members awarded Fellowship in the College of Family Physicians of Canada in 2004.

EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION

The ACFP continued to have representatives on provincial and national committees to ensure that the perspective of Alberta family physicians was taken into consideration. These included but were not limited to:

Alberta Management Committee on Drug Utilization

- Dr. Sheila Hughes

Alberta Cervical Cancer Screening Program Advisory Committee

- Dr. Jana Holden

Alberta Cervical Cancer Screening Program Primary Care Working Group

- Dr. Janice Routledge

Interdisciplinary Committee on Protection of Children of Divorce and Separation

- Dr. Jeff Robinson

Organ and Tissue Transplantation

- Dr. Sandi Hucal

RPAP Family Medicine Education Subcommittee

- Dr. Tim Kolotyluk

Executive Committee of Section of General Practice, AMA

- Dr. Dr. Pat Heard

National FMF Planning Committee

- Dr. Rick Ward

National CFPC Accreditors for MAINPRO®

- Dr. Dorcas Kennedy

National CFPC Membership Advisory Committee

- Dr. Mo Verjee

National CFPC CME/CPD Committee

- Dr. Rick Ward

National CFPC Board Committee

- Dr. Pat Heard/Dr. Tuhin Bakshi

National Board Reform Working Group

- Dr. Tuhin Bakshi

The Editorial Advisory Board of *Family Health Magazine*, jointly chaired by Dr. Connie Ellis and Dr. Tim Kolotyluk, includes seven other members of the ACFP in addition to representatives from other health disciplines.

ACFP GOVERNING BODY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- The Board and staff continued to support activities and manage issues on an ongoing basis.
- The **ACFP Board** is composed of members who volunteer their time throughout the year to work on behalf of the wider membership. Board members include:
 - Dr. Pat Heard – President (Calgary)
 - Dr. Tuhin Bakshi – Past President (Wetaskiwin)
 - Dr. Paul Humphries – Honourary Treasurer (Edmonton)
 - Dr. Mohamud Verjee – Secretary (Balzac)
 - Dr. Cathy Scrimshaw – Member At Large (Pincher Creek)
 - Dr. Rick Ward – Chair, ASA Committee (Calgary)
 - Dr. Diana Turner, Chair, AFPRN Steering Committee (Calgary)
 - Dr. Dorcas Kennedy – Chair, CME Committee (Lethbridge)
 - Dr. Peter Norton – Chair, U of C Department of Family Medicine (Calgary)
 - Dr. Rick Spooner – Chair, U of A Department of Family Medicine (Edmonton)
 - Dr. Ron Garnett – President, Section GP, AMA (Lethbridge)
 - Dr. Michael Caffaro – President, ASRM, AMA (Hinton)
 - Dr. Jared Bly – Family Medicine Resident, U of A
 - Dr. Stan Fu – Family Medicine Resident, U of C
 - Miss Lindsay Bridgland – Medical Student, U of A
 - Ms. Jennifer Hollowell/Mr. Carson Chrenek – Medical Students, U of C
- There are six Standing Committees, again made up of volunteer practising family physicians: Executive, Nominating & Awards, CME, ASA Planning, AFPRN Steering, and Care of the Elderly Working Group
- The staffing complement at the ACFP office is comprised of part time individuals who each bring exemplary and complementary skills to their jobs.
- If you have any questions or would like more information about the ACFP, please contact the Chapter office at 1-800-361-0607 or (780) 488-2395 or by email at info@acfp.ca