

CPSA Council met in Edmonton on November 30 and December 1, 2017 to discuss College activities and vote on policy matters affecting physicians and the public. Meeting highlights included:

Three new faces on Council

Council ratified election of the following physicians for three-year terms starting January 2018, replacing Dr. Tarek Motan and Dr. Maeve O’Beirne:

- Dr. Kirsten Jones, General Surgeon, Lethbridge
- Dr. Luke Savage, Family Physician, Three Hills
- Dr. Graham Campbell, Radiologist, Calgary (re-elected)

Ms. Levonne Louie has also joined Council as a Public Member, replacing Ms. Janet Blayone. Appointed by Alberta’s Lieutenant-Governor in Council, Ms. Louie brings extensive business experience from over 37 years in the energy industry.

Elections at the annual Council organizational meeting resulted in public member Ms. Kate Wood continuing to serve as Council President, Dr. Louis Francescutti elected Vice President and Dr. John Bradley re-elected as Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee. Dr. Jim Stone will continue as Past President.

CPD rule changes eliminate most exemptions

To underscore the importance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), Council voted to eliminate all CPD exemptions except for members who are learners practising exclusively within a training program. A two-year period of transition will apply to those previously exempt for other reasons. If unable to comply with CPD requirements because of medical reasons or other exceptional circumstances, a member may apply directly to the CPD program (i.e., Mainpro+ or Maintenance of Certification) for deferral or exemption.

New *Prescribing* standard of practice will not exclude long-acting stimulants

Council considered a request by the AMA Section of Pediatrics to exclude long-acting stimulants (used to treat Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) from the *Prescribing: Drugs with Potential for Misuse or Diversion* standard of practice. Lacking sufficient evidence to support exclusion, Council decided not to amend the standard.

New safety standards for Stem Cell Therapy, Sleep Medicine & Pulmonary Function Testing

To improve safety and quality of care, Council approved new standards for stem cell regenerative therapy, and accreditation standards for sleep medicine and pulmonary function testing (PFT). Taking effect in January 2018, the sleep medicine and PFT standards are written in an ISO-approved format and reflect extensive consultation with field experts.

Competence program update

Physician feedback continues to help shape the new Competence program, largely rolled out through 2017. For the first time, in fall 2017 every Alberta physician received Practice Checkup, an individualized, data-based outline of practice risks and guidance to help mitigate the risks where possible. Prescribers of opioid and benzodiazepine medications also received MD Snapshots providing individual and comparative prescribing data.

Five hundred family physicians were randomly selected for MSF plus (a multisource feedback process followed by facilitated review with a trained peer), and 50 family medicine clinics participated in a Group Practice Review. Feedback mechanisms are built into all the new Competence processes, and the College continues to look for ways to improve their value to members based on participants' experiences.

Additional plans for 2018 include selecting 60 physicians to undergo an individual practice review, a piloting a pre-opening inspection for new clinics and consultation with specialist groups ahead of developing a specialist-specific Group Practice Review process.

Council considers changes to the Provisional Register

Under the *Health Professions Act*, the Provisional Register is intended as a bridge to General Registration, available to physicians with substantial equivalency but not Canadian credentials. Current rules enable Provisional Registrants to become eligible to transfer to the General Register after 6 years of "successful practice" if they have also fulfilled their PAR/Competence and CPD obligations.

With little incentive to obtain Canadian credentials, many never do. Defining "satisfactory practice", requiring physicians to obtain their Canadian credentials OR successfully complete a summative assessment as a prerequisite for the General Register, and a firm 6-year expiry on Provisional status would help address this issue and better align Alberta with other Canadian jurisdictions.

Council was supportive of this direction, but understood the summative assessment option and clear communication with physicians will be important to minimize the impact on healthcare delivery in small communities. A work plan will be drafted for Council's consideration in March 2018.

Taking action on disruptive behaviour

In November 2017, the College hosted a workshop with other healthcare partners to talk about the extent of disruptive behaviour in Alberta's healthcare system, why it's happening and how to solve it. Council received a presentation on the workshop and, following discussion, agreed to continue working with partners and commit the necessary time and resources to help bring about positive culture change.

Budget surplus forecast for 2017

The College is forecasting a \$2.2 million surplus for the year, largely due to lower than budgeted expenses and higher revenues. A modified zero-based budget plan will be implemented in 2019.

Bylaws amended

Council amended the College bylaws to address several housekeeping items.

Digital health: The future is here

Registrar Dr. Scott McLeod reported the College is doing a deep dive into the rapidly growing world of digital health to better understand the opportunities, risks and responses of other jurisdictions. As a regulator, the College's challenge is to protect Albertans from unsafe online practices without inhibiting innovation and significant benefits such as digital analysis of diagnostic tests and expanded data analytics. At the national level, the College is participating on a committee of the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC) focused on these issues.

The next Council meeting will be March 1-2, 2018.