Edmonton Zone Medical Staff Newsletter

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Editor, Dr. Richard Bergstrom

MARCH, 2013
PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Dr. Robert Broad

EZMSA AGM Thursday, April 18th 7:00-9:00 p.m. Bernard Snell Hall
Guest Speaker: Dr. R. Michael Giuffre, President, Alberta Medical Association
Subject: Negotiations, the provincial budget and what it all means to you.

Dr. Giuffre is travelling the province, talking to physicians about the implications of current negotiations and gathering your feedback to help guide the AMA.

Acute Care Coverage Programs:
Each program is under review. ACC programs will be approved based on qualification criteria as determined by MP&C and approved at ZMAC. ACC affects everyone in various degrees. Coverage is mainly provided from Residents, known as Clinical Associates, International Medical Graduates (IMG), Physician Extenders, Clinical Assistants and Nurse Practitioners. AMA & AHS are reviewing various options as well as a program for Physicians Assistants. Having a Provincial model is the goal, there is a lack of consistency and clarity of who gets what and when for coverage. Current demands for programs and funding are exceeding budget allocations. Ongoing operations of the current ACC programs are becoming increasingly unsustainable from both a funding and provider perspective.

Ongoing meetings are being held to review the current state and future direction with every ACC program offered within the Edmonton zone. No funding cuts are expected to happen in the initial phase. More updates to follow.

EZMSA Waitlist Survey Results
Access to the top three areas of concern were identified as a priority from the waitlist survey done by the medical staff in the Edmonton Zone.
1. Orthopaedics
2. GI
3. Psychiatry
Many focus areas have been identified needing immediate attention. ENT and Neurosurgery were also frequently mentioned. Stakeholders in these areas have been engaged and strategies are in progress. Lack of access to Orthopedics was discussed at the last council meeting. Over past number of years Orthopedics has struggled with increasing volumes and wait times and access to consults have steadily increased. Some physicians also indicated that they no longer attempt to arrange office referrals for Orthopedics, Psychiatry, and Neurosurgery as they are unable to obtain appointments for their patients.

RWB
The power of inspiration

I was in Ottawa the other weekend. I was there for a one and half day symposium; my wife came along to see her parents, both of us there to see friends. It was a great weekend. The symposium which I attended (and have for the last four or five years) usually has one of the best talks of the year (and I usually go to four or five conferences a year). This year I experienced the same. A phenomenal talk, actually two. The best talk was by P.J. Devereaux regarding his studies on preoperative cardiac events post non-cardiac surgery. Sobering information. The most engaging talk was on pain control from an American Military Physician. Why was it engaging you ask (well, you are supposed to ask)? He was so incredibly inspiring. He did not refer to himself, he referred to what he was able to do FOR (not TO) others. He had enthusiasm and showed how he could make a difference, a real difference in others lives.

So, I would reflect on the word “inspiration”. You will recall my commentary regarding the previous Dean Dr. Lorne Tyrell. He is a truly inspiring individual. His humility, ability and humanity shine through alongside his brilliance and insight. He moves you, touches your innermost soul. He encourages and understands. He is true and true to the heart. He is an amazing person. When I look to someone whom I would love to emulate, I think of him.

I think of those people I have met throughout my years in medical school, residency and also the more than twenty five years in practice. When I think about them, I am immediately drawn to those who inspired me. Now, inspiration is not “OH, you are sooo good I want to be like you” with dreamy eyes and hopes of awards, accolades and press releases. Inspirational people come from many walks of life and, strange but true, not all of them were physicians!

Inspiring people have an internal drive; something that says “This is the right thing to do”. This internal drive has a strong emotional component. It is not the emotion that we are supposed to have when we see starving children on television that is to make us give money. The internal drive of inspirational people is that of someone who “knows what is true” and “lives by those rules”.

I am inspired by one of the cleaners in CVICU. I call her “Smiley” since she always has a smile on her face. Coming from a culture where you, as cleaning staff, could and would never talk to a senior physician (yeah, the senior part is a double edged sword) she has gradually been able to speak with me. We both win as I wave hello and she smiles back. She loves to serve.

I am inspired by one of the nurses in or General OR. She came from Eastern Europe and spent nights, weekends and so much time reading nursing books with a dictionary by her side. She wanted a new life for her family and this was the investment it took (notice I did not say cost).

I am inspired by the strength of families who go through the true turmoil of complex health care. Months of struggle to have someone “go through the system” with ups, downs and more downs, only to be alive and rejoice at living after months of being in hospital.

I am inspired by some physicians, the true leaders of our profession. Many of them do not have titles, some do. Yet, the true leaders show us the value of care and caring. They show us balance in our lives (there is not one award for a physicians with a balanced life). The true leaders do not show us the path
we always tread; they show us the path of better. Better for our patients, better for ourselves and better for our system.

Now, I would speak to whether you feel inspired by the Alberta Government, the Ministry of Health and Alberta Health Services. In each of these arenas there are good people working hard. They have jobs to do and they do them. Yet, I would challenge each of these organizations to a moment of self reflection (as we all should do) and ask if they inspire the physician workforce. An uninspired workforce is a disengaged workforce.

I would encourage them to speak about something other than money. When they speak of money, everyone speaks of money. It is not a dirty word; I know most of us need a job as we prefer to purchase our food as opposed to stealing it. We want to provide for our families, we feel better when we donate (as opposed to being told to donate). We can contribute to a better world; it makes us feel better.

I would encourage everyone to focus on the true values of being a physician (AHS has their values and they will change with the next organization to manage health care). I think our values are those of service to patients; to provide care in a caring manner, to help people know that they can trust us, to show compassion, understanding and also expert opinion. In addition, to show that we are a community of physicians. Let us lead by inspiring patients, our colleagues, our co-workers and those around us. Inspiration works, it works in spades.

Clinical Teaching and Clinical Academic Colleagues in the Edmonton Zone
T K Lee MB,BS FRCPC.
(Dr. Lee is a general internist at the Grey Nuns hospital and in private office practice. He is also part-time Associate Dean, Clinical Faculty at the University of Alberta.)

We now have our own Clinical Faculty (Clinical Academic Colleague) Website!

A year in the making, the beta launch is set for the end of February so by the time you read this it should be up and running. For now, it is simply a beta site – subject to typos, revisions, suggestions for improvement. In March, training of the website owners who will be responsible for keeping the website current and accurate will commence. Any commendable features are the result of the excellent team I worked with. If there are any glitches or missing information, the fault is mine.

Why a website? You’d think with everyone being so busy, another website is not something you’re likely to have time to visit. However, the world is moving – has moved – to electronic communication. As a faculty, we need a means of sharing information in a timely fashion, a means to promote interaction and collegiality. We need a site where new faculty can access information regarding their career paths as clinical teachers and academic colleagues.
Where is it? It is part of the University of Alberta website (for directions to get there see last paragraph below). Thanks are due to my colleague, Dr. Jill Konkin (a great family doc who is also Asssociate Dean of Community Engagement) who insisted we keep all faculty – i.e. tenured (full-time) and clinical (volunteer or part-time) - grouped as one within the pull-down menu.

What’s in it? Besides the usual description of what is Clinical Faculty (CAC), it provides practical information relevant to all CACs. It will tell you How to Get or Reclalm a CCID (if you haven’t already done so) and how to take advantage of being a CAC (Getting The Most of Your Benefits). If you click on Communication it tells you what I’m doing presently and gives you access to all current and past EZMSA Newsletters like this one you’re reading (and you can also re-read Richard Bergstrom’s entertaining editorials). Under CAC Resources, you can (under Promotions & Appointments) access all the information needed for your annual promotions exercise, together with links to Faculty Development activities. The last listing on this section is the most exciting one to me – Sites and Staff. Still a work in progress, we plan to publish each and every one of you with a short bio and picture, listed under your main (self elected) site of practice / teaching. Yes, I know the list as you see it now is far from complete, especially with many clinic names missing (though we have all the hospital sites) – we hope to complete it, and accurately, in time to come. It will allow friends and colleagues from elsewhere to find you and know you are a respected member of the teaching faculty of the University of Alberta.

How to check it out? Go to https://medicine-beta.sitecore.ualberta.ca/ (if that doesn’t work, try http://www.med.ualberta.ca ). On the upper left of the menu bar, click on ABOUT US and select Faculty Affairs. On the subsequent window, on the left again, underneath About Us: Faculty Affairs, look for Clinical Faculty (Academic Colleagues) - second line, sandwiched between “Tenure Track Faculty” and “Faculty Governance”. Open it - it lists the 4 Faculty Affairs sections - Message from the Associate Dean, Benefits, Communication and CAC Resources. Happy surfing.

Again, I would be grateful for any feedback – especially from you tecchie types – on what you think. Is the layout user-friendly? What else should we have on the website aside from the above? Any ideas on how we can use it to make ourselves more cohesive as a group, and how it may help make our professional lives and our teaching better and more pleasurable? Please email me at tzulee@shaw.ca or tzulee@ualberta.ca with your comments.

TK

Upcoming events

Events open to the medical community:

The EMWC is hosting a talk for physicians, residents and their spouses, EMWC members and non-members. Please note the change of venue below.

Pandora’s Box - The art and science of creativity and what that can mean for you: A look at how people come to create, and innovate, with specific ideas on how to apply this knowledge in one’s own life.
Dr. Marc Cherniwchan of the Physician and Family Support Program will present on this topic Tuesday April 16th, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Idylwylde Library (8310 88 Avenue). This talk is a highly interactive visual presentation (approximately 45 - 50 minutes length). It includes examples of highly creative individuals (many may be new to the audience), the results of cutting edge research, as well as lessons learned the hard way over 30 years as a working artist. The presentation will also include information about the Physician and Family Support Program - a valuable resource available to physicians and their family members in Alberta.

Please RSVP by March 18th to edmonton.medwomen@gmail.com.

Member events:

Edmonton Medical Women’s Club Welcome Event: If you are interested in our club, please join us on the evening of Wednesday, April 10th. This will be a small, casual get-together providing an opportunity to gather information and meet some of the current members. Please RSVP by April 5th to edmonton.medwomen@gmail.com.

Spring meeting and lunch: Save the date - Tuesday May 14th at the Selkirk Hotel in Fort Edmonton Park. Special guest Sherri Sommerville, well known singer, actress and Edmonton personality to entertain us and make it an event to remember.

Golf: Beginning in May. Join other members who enjoy golfing at different courses around the city. Golfers of all abilities welcome. Can’t regularly attend? Consider joining other EMWC members at the EZMSA golf tournament June 5th.

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SUBMISSIONS:
EZMSA monthly newsletter welcomes submissions (articles, notices, letters to the editors, announcements, photos, etc.) from practitioners and healthcare providers in Alberta. Please limit articles to 600 words or less.

Deadline:
The deadline for article submission to EZMSA is the 15th day of the month for distribution the first week of the following month.

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