PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The 2016-2017 year was one filled with increased member engagement, collaboration and responsiveness to a rapidly evolving and often uncertain climate. It has been a rewarding yet challenging year and I believe our staff team led by our CEO Mr. Rob Key, along with a dedicated Executive Board and PARA Assembly, rose to the challenge and navigated this landscape with a unified, professional and collaborative spirit. I am proud of all that our association has accomplished this year.

A strong testament to PARA’s success is the ongoing strong relationships established with our partners. This was reflected in the collaborative bargaining approach taken in the negotiation of our new agreement, where we have been strong and clear in advocating for resident physician interests while respecting the viewpoints of all parties involved. I am pleased to say that a new agreement is in place.

One of the major focuses over the past year has been in the realm of Physician Resource Planning. I believe that all current and future physicians in Alberta are committed to improving the sustainability of our health care system, however the “how” by which this goal is reached is not as clear and many opportunities and challenges exist. In the context of rising health care costs, with evolving environmental and political factors, I am proud to say that we have remained responsive and unified in the face of uncertainty and have been actively involved in advocating for the resident physician perspective at multiple tables, including the Physician Resource Planning Advisory Committee (PRPAC). I am grateful for the outpouring and sharing of personal stories and perspectives on this matter from resident physicians. Such communication continues to direct the work of the Association to ensure we represent the resident physician voice. I am also grateful for the many discussions and invitations to engage in dialogue with our various partners.

From a wellness perspective, we have had a very successful year with many well-attended events, as well as the launch of several new events, such as the Picnic in the Park event to cater to a wider audience. We have also launched a Wellness fund at the University of Calgary, which previously only existed at the University of Alberta, to support resident physician-driven wellness-related activities.

We continue to embrace our roles as leaders and advocates for all Albertans. Resident physicians helped members of our communities to assist Albertans in need through yet another successful PARAdime campaign. This past year, our Resident Physicians in the Legislature (RIL) advocacy efforts focused on Advanced Care Planning, particularly providing education around the importance of Goals of Care discussions. Resident physicians spoke to political leaders at the Alberta Legislature and passionately advocated for this issue to improve health care for all Albertans.

In the months and years ahead, we will continue to advocate for resident physicians and the wellbeing of all Albertans. We continue to strengthen our partnerships with various stakeholders including Alberta Health, AHS, AMA, CMA, RDoC and both universities. We look forward to another exciting year ahead as we represent the unified voice of resident physicians of Alberta, and strive to improve the lives and health of all Albertans.

Dr. Catherine Cheng
PARA President, 2016-2017
Psychiatry, University of Alberta
Resident physicians are most often involved in a patient’s first medical contact in hospitals and clinics throughout Alberta.

- Following the completion of a Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) program, resident physicians undergo further training, known as residency, which prepares them for licensure with either the College of Family Physicians of Canada or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

- Resident physicians generally have at least eight years of university training prior to the commencement of residency.

- With residency programs requiring an additional two to seven years of post-graduate training, most resident physicians spend more than ten years training to become fully-licensed physicians.

Residency training has a rich tradition. The term ‘resident’ reflects that these trainees used to live within the hospital, providing intense, round-the-clock care to patients during their training. While resident physicians no longer live within the hospital, they do take on a significant portion of overnight and after hours care in acute care facilities across Alberta.
The Professional Association of Resident Physicians of Alberta (PARA) is the voice of the more than 1,700 resident physicians who provide round-the-clock care to Albertans in outpatient facilities and acute care hospitals.

PARA is a non-profit association representing physicians completing further training in a residency program, through:

- advocating for excellence in education and patient care, while striving to achieve personal wellbeing for its members
- supporting individual resident physicians through education, leadership and well-being initiatives

PARA has been advocating on behalf of resident physicians since 1975.

**PARA’s Vision**

**Informed** about our patients’ health and innovations in medicine.

**Empowered** to create healthy professional working and learning environments.

**Involved** in shaping the future of health care delivery in Alberta.

What does PARA do?

PARA negotiates the Resident Physician Agreement on behalf of resident physicians that deals with the non-academic aspects of residency training, such as:

- salary
- well-being benefits
- stipends (call, practice, chief resident, etc.)
- on-call service expectations
- working conditions

PARA strives to ensure compliance with the terms of this agreement.

PARA enhances resident physician well-being by organizing social events, information seminars, workshops, and research.

PARA advocates for individual resident physicians with professional or academic challenges.

PARA advocates on behalf of resident physicians as a whole at all levels with various organizations:

- Locally with the Universities, Faculties of Medicine and Alberta Health Services;
- Provincially with the Alberta Government, Alberta Medical Association and College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta; and
- Nationally (through Resident Doctors of Canada) with the Canadian Medical Association, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, College of Family Physicians of Canada, Medical Council of Canada, Federal Government and Canadian Medical Protective Association.
PARA GOVERNANCE

PARA is governed by an elected Assembly comprised of the PARA Executive Board and two regional Councils: Calgary & Southern Alberta Council and Edmonton & Northern Alberta Council.

The PARA Assembly supports the strategic direction of the Association and is responsible for ensuring the interests of all PARA members are represented.

Through their work on the Assembly, resident physicians access opportunities to fulfill a number of CanMEDS roles:

- develop leadership skills
- liaise with health and medical education partners
- represent Alberta's resident physicians at the regional, provincial and national levels

Each Council has up to 20 delegates from the region, comprised of Program Liaisons and Members at Large.
INVESTING IN RESIDENT PHYSICIANS

Resident physicians are an integral part of the health care delivery system in Alberta. Investing in resident physicians results in better care and outcomes for Albertans.

PARA is committed to advocating excellence in education and patient care while striving to achieve optimal working conditions and personal well-being for all its members.

PARA also supports individual resident physicians through education, leadership and wellness initiatives.

PARA negotiates the Resident Physician Agreement on behalf of resident physicians. This Agreement addresses the non-academic aspects of residency training, such as salary, well-being benefits, stipends, on-call service expectations and working conditions.

PARA members enjoy benefits that are mandated through the Resident Physician Agreement. These benefits include:

- health/flexible spending account
- health and dental insurance
- long term disability/life insurance
- compassionate leave
- maternity/parental leave
- flex/float days

Resident physician working conditions are also mandated through the Resident Physician Agreement. These conditions include:

- call rooms
- resident physician lounges
- medical libraries
- commitment to safe and secure work environments

As both learners and front-line health care providers, resident physicians are in a distinct position. This dual role means resident physicians often work long hours providing patient care.

PARA is committed to advocating for evidence-based fatigue management initiatives. To this end, PARA participates on a national working group aimed at identifying and mitigating fatigue-related risk at health facilities, having a positive impact on patient safety and supporting resident physician health and wellness.

Taxi Reimbursement Program

The PARA Taxi Reimbursement Program ensures resident physicians make it home safely when too tired to drive after a traditional in-house on-call shift. Research has shown that resident physicians and members of the public are particularly at risk from motor vehicle collisions caused by fatigue. The program contributes to resident physician and public safety and is an opportunity for PARA to exemplify resident physician well-being as one of our priorities.
MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Member engagement is one of PARA’s strategic priorities. This includes being informative and relevant for members, as well as medical students, allied health colleagues and partners.

PARA communicates exclusively electronically via PARAscope, our monthly member e-newsletter, and PARAphrase, our bi-annual member magazine, as well as our website and social media platforms.

PARA engages actively with members, partners and other interested audiences via our Facebook page, Twitter and Instagram.

In July 2016, PARA launched a complete redesign of the Association’s website. The new site is visually appealing, more user friendly, and now includes a secured members-only side, intended to support a member community for added engagement.

PARA’s Instagram page was launched in October 2016 and features snapshots of residency training in Alberta. Almost all photos are submitted by resident physicians.

In January 2017, PARA added a ‘Faces of Residency’ page to the PARA website, which features resident physician profiles. These profiles encourage resident physicians to learn about other specialties, aid medical students with their career decision-making process and help interested members of the public understand more about resident physicians.

PARA’s communications strategy also includes a variety of presentations to support resident physicians as part of their academic half days. We also participate in resident physician orientations at both universities, as well as presenting to medical students to help prepare them for moving into residency.

Presentations

Helping resident physicians navigate all aspects of their residency training is an important part of our engagement strategy. We regularly give presentations to resident physicians as part of their academic half days. We also participate in resident physician orientations at both universities, as well as presenting to medical students to help prepare them for moving into residency.

WHAT ATTRACTION YOU TO MEDICINE?

Dr. Chris Beavington

WHAT ATTRACTION YOU TO YOUR SPECIALTY?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR RESIDENCY TRAINING?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST ENERGIZING PART OF RESIDENCY TRAINING?

WHAT IS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT LESSON FROM MEDICAL SCHOOL?

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU TO UPDATE AND IMPEMENT IN YOUR RESIDENCY TRAINING?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST CHALLENGING PART OF YOUR RESIDENCY TRAINING?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST ENERGIZING PART OF RESIDENCY TRAINING?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST ENERGIZING PART OF RESIDENCY TRAINING?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON FROM MEDICAL SCHOOL?

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON FROM MEDICAL SCHOOL?
RESIDENT PHYSICIAN WELLNESS

ARA is committed to providing opportunities to facilitate resident physician wellness. This includes hosting wellness events and sharing wellness-related research and initiatives from other partners.

PARA SPONSORED EVENTS

PARA hosts social and wellness-oriented events throughout the year, including:

- PARAlypers (pub nights)
- Jubilations Dinner Theatre
- WHL hockey games
- CFL football games
- bowling
- picnics
- skating
- sponsoring registration for charity runs

All PARA-sponsored events are free for PARA members and guests (including families where appropriate).

MOVEMBER CAMPAIGN

PARA supports community outreach initiatives directly related to health. In addition to sponsoring resident physicians in the Run for the Cure (October) and the Mother’s Day/Teddy Bear Fun Run (May), PARA supports the Movember Foundation through the Dr. Stache photo contest.

During the month of November, we encourage resident physicians to participate in the Movember awareness campaign. For every photo submitted to the PARA office, PARA makes a donation to Movember, with an additional donation made on behalf of the Dr. Stache winner.

Dr. Sam Montasser was selected as PARA’s 2016 Dr. Stache.

Resident Physician Wellness Week (RWW) encourages resident physician wellness and recognizes resident physicians for the work they do.

PARA celebrated RWW from May 14-20, 2017, with wellness events and initiatives including:

- healthy snacks in resident physician lounges
- family recreation day
- RWW PARAlyzer
- random acts of wellness
- spin class
- cooking class
- wellness photo contest
RESIDENT PHYSICIAN OF THE MONTH AWARD

The Resident Physician of the Month Award is an initiative focused on improving Resident Physician well-being by recognizing and rewarding Resident Physicians who make a positive contribution to their work environment while maintaining a balanced lifestyle.

CLINICAL TEACHING AWARD

PARA recognizes excellence in resident physician education through the Clinical Teaching Award. The Award is given to a deserving physician at the University of Alberta, University of Calgary and a rural centre.

2016-2017 Recipients: Dr. Karen King (U of A), Dr. Gilles Lauzon (U of C) and Dr. Ryan McColl (rural)

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAMWORK AWARD

Resident physicians often work as part of a team providing care to patients, and the experience of that team is greatly dependent on the contributions of its members. The Interdisciplinary Teamwork Award was established to recognize our allied health care colleagues who value and exemplify a positive team-based approach, and who advocate for healthy and caring work environments for all members of the team and our patients.

2016-2017 Recipients: Ryan Amyotte (U of A) and Michelle Mcleod (U of C)

RESIDENT PHYSICIAN WELL-BEING AWARD

PARA recognizes the outstanding contributions of educators to resident physician well-being through the Resident Physician Well-being Award. This recognition is awarded to a physician preceptor at the University of Alberta, University of Calgary and a rural centre.

2016-2017 Recipients: Dr. Paula Burke (rural), Dr. Melanie Marsh-Joyal (U of A) and Dr. Claire Temple-Oberle (U of C)

PARA BURSARIES

The PARA Bursaries are awarded annually to graduating medical students who are entering a residency program in Alberta. Selection is based on demonstrated financial need and academic standing.

2016 Recipients: Baljot Chahal (U of A) and Evan Genge (U of C)

LEADERSHIP

Volunteering with PARA allows resident physicians to directly benefit their own residency experience and that of their colleagues. It provides opportunities to interact with people from all facets of residency and from all areas of Alberta, as well as learning about the function of different organizations within health care and how decisions are made. PARA volunteers have the opportunity to interact with the leaders of health care change.

PARA opportunities include:
• serving on the PARA Assembly
• participating on PARA committees and working groups
• serving as an ambassador at external partner meetings
• hosting social events
• attending educational opportunities and social activities

PARA AWAREDS & RECOGNITION

Involvement with PARA provides resident physicians with several benefits, including the opportunity to network with colleagues with similar professional backgrounds and interests. It also exposes them to trends and best practices within their profession and provides leadership training and experience.

CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP

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PARA opportunities include:
• serving on the PARA Assembly
• participating on PARA committees and working groups
• serving as an ambassador at external partner meetings
• hosting social events
• attending educational opportunities and social activities

In November 2016, PARA hosted leadership workshops in both Edmonton and Calgary. These one-day facilitated sessions explored the dynamics of collaboration in a multidisciplinary health care setting.

These workshops will continue to be offered annually, free of charge to PARA.

ABOVE
Dr. Christopher Koo, Family Medicine Resident Physician
and
Dr. Granger Avery, President, Canadian Medical Association

In September 2016, PARA sent Dr. Christopher Koo and Dr. Fernando Mejia Mulet to the International Conference on Physician Health in Boston, MA. In April 2017, PARA sent Dr. Martha Decker and Dr. Sydney Pearson to the Canadian Conference on Medical Education in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

These conferences are selected based on how they assist the Association in achieving its strategic direction.
ADVOCACY

As part of our leadership and advocacy development mandate, PARA is committed to fostering strategic relationships and positively impacting health care policy in Alberta.

Resident Physicians in the Legislature (RIL) is a continuing advocacy event providing Alberta’s resident physicians the opportunity to participate in face-to-face meetings with elected representatives and senior government officials and to offer their distinct perspective on issues relevant to health care delivery in Alberta. It also supports the CanMEDS roles of health advocate and communicator.

In March 2017, a group of resident physicians met with MLAs from several parties, as well as the Health Minister and senior policy advisors, to advocate for increasing public awareness and understanding around Advanced Care Planning and Goals of Care. As front-line health care providers, resident physicians see first-hand the impact that the lack of public understanding of Goals of Care has on the provision of quality patient-centred care.

Alberta’s resident physicians are committed to working with elected officials and health care policy makers to share our perspectives and help ensure the highest possible quality of patient care for all Albertans.

PARADIME

The PARAdime Campaign is an annual resident physician-driven initiative that provides support to some of Alberta’s most vulnerable citizens.

From November 21, 2016 to January 31, 2017, collection bins were set up in hospitals across Alberta, allowing resident physicians and allied health care workers to drop off donations of gently used clothing and other items most needed by partner agencies.

At the end of the campaign, resident physicians delivered the donations to local shelters and agencies working with Alberta’s most vulnerable.

Media coverage of the drop-offs included CTV Edmonton, the Edmonton Journal, the Edmonton Sun, CBC Calgary and Doctors’ Digest.

PARAdime is an opportunity to increase resident physician awareness of the challenges faced by some of their neighbours. It is also an opportunity to engage other allied health care workers – those who work with resident physicians as part of the interdisciplinary teams providing patient care – in providing basic necessities that will improve the health of some of those at risk.

The PARAdime Campaign encourages resident physicians to help keep their community healthy by providing basic necessities; recognizing that improving the health of some of the most vulnerable will help relieve some of the pressure on a stressed health care system.