
Western Alliance of Rheumatology: 2013 Meeting Report

By Paul Davis, MD, FRCPC

The sun shone and, as usual, some of western Canada's finest rheumatologists convened at the Manteo Resort in Kelowna for the 11th annual Western Alliance for Rheumatology (WAR) meeting. The meeting has taken on a familiar format since its inception. There are no lectures, invited speakers, or sponsored symposia: the attendees are the faculty. Each person is allotted 15 minutes to make a clinical presentation and presenters take pride in finding the most challenging clinical problems possible. This year's "winners" have to be a "case of insect fingers" and "can't see, pee, or climb a tree". Presenters are kept strictly to time by the formidable co-chairs, Dr. John Esdaile and myself, or run the risk of ending up in Lake Okanagan!

An important aspect of this meeting has always been to promote collegiality amongst western Canadian rheumatologists and an integral focus has been to encourage participation from local trainees. This year we again ran a pre-meeting rheumatology-focused objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) for residents; 11 trainees attended, pitting their skills against the likes of Dr. Anik Godin, Dr. Angela Juby, Dr. Stuart Seigel, Dr. Kam Shojania, and Dr. Tony Russell. Immediate anonymous feedback is provided. Although the "examiners" won the day, the "examinees" made a valiant effort. Any bruised egos were soon washed away by a glass of Okanagan wine! Trainees are

also encouraged to present at the meeting, and all did so with class and professionalism, and with a sartorial elegance that put their mentors to shame. If anything is to be learnt from this year's meeting, the future of rheumatology looks bright.

Clinical science is the priority of the meeting, but our philosophy has always been that continuing professional development should be fun and that family pleasure should be a component of the event. In this regard, our social activities included a welcome wine and cheese reception, a children's party, and an adult BBQ dinner as components to promote our mission. For those with a more discerning palate our annual wine tasting is a popular event.

Once again we are indebted to our colleagues in industry who provide unrestricted grants to support the meeting. We look forward to their continuing support and another sunny weekend in 2014.

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Update from the British Columbia Society of Rheumatologists

By Jason Kur, MD, FRCPC, ABIM

The British Columbia Society of Rheumatologists (BCSR) continues to be active in order to improve the delivery of rheumatology services in B.C. through leadership, advocacy, and member support. To that end, there have been some further successes on the West Coast.

B.C. Medical Association Recruitment and Retention Funding

After several months and two submissions, the BCSR was very successful in its case for recruitment and retention support through the B.C. Medical Association (BCMA) Recruitment and Retention initiative. Mr. Eric Harris, Q.C., arbitrated the allocation of \$20 million available to specialist sections that

have had difficulty recruiting and retaining physicians. Submissions were received from 26 specialties. Mr. Harris then applied criteria to the proposals to help determine where recruitment and retention issues were most severe.

In his decision, he identified different categories of specialties with the highest recruitment needs. The Group A specialties determined to be experiencing the greatest need included: endocrinology, geriatric medicine, neurology, pediatrics, and rheumatology. These groups received the highest award per full-time equivalent physician. Only 13 groups received funding in this process. In total, this process represented \$975,000 in new support for rheumatology practice initiatives across B.C. Our proposal to the arbitrator outlined strategies for improving the attractiveness of rheumatology as a specialty that will reward physicians for managing patients with complex rheumatic diseases.

Nursing in B.C.

More than 50% of rheumatology practices in B.C. are using the services of nurses. There has been dramatic uptake in the use of nursing services since the implementation of the multidisciplinary consultation code that allows rheumatologists to involve a nurse in a patient's management plan. The BCSR held its first primer for rheumatologists on the



A relaxed Dr. Paul de Champlain, enjoying his retirement.

logistics of nursing care in private practice in Vancouver in the spring; plans are in the works to repeat this event for members on Vancouver Island and the B.C. interior.

Website

The BCSR is excited to announce the launch of its first website, www.bcrheumatology.ca. The site includes practice resources for members, and will serve as the public face for the profession in the province

through advocacy and media relations.

The BCSR would like to congratulate Dr. Paul de Champlain on his recent retirement. Paul began practice in Victoria in 1979, after completing rheumatology training in Calgary and an undergraduate MD degree in Edmonton. Paul worked diligently as a community rheumatologist for those 34 years. He is commonly known as Mr. Dependable: always organized and meticulous in his obligations to his community and colleagues. An avid golfer, he is well liked by all in the medical community. We wish him well in his new more relaxing green pastures, or perhaps just "greens and fairways".

Jason Kur, MD, FRCPC, ABIM

Clinical Assistant Professor, University of British Columbia

President, British Columbia Society of Rheumatologists

Co-Director, Pacific Arthritis Centre

Vancouver, British Columbia

Musculoskeletal Ultrasound Intermediate/Advanced Course

Course Requirements:

- Basic and practical knowledge of ultrasonography.

Course Highlights:

- Canadian and international tutors, including Dr. Alessandra Bruns (Director), Dr. Johannes Roth, Dr. Margaret Larché, Dr. Lene Terslev, Dr. Ingrid Moller, Dr. David Bong, and Dr. Walter Grassi.
- High-end equipment. Low student-to-tutor ratio.
- Focused on ultrasound of hand/wrist and foot/ankle.
- Emphasis on sonoanatomy and Doppler imaging.
- Adult and pediatric components, both eligible for CME accreditation.

Location: Fairmont Hotel Whistler, British Columbia.

Date: February 24 and 25, 2014.

Cost:

- \$750 - Adult Component
- \$250 - Pediatric Component
- 25% discount for Fellows/Trainees.
- 25% EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT if you register before December 31st.

To register and for more information, please contact info@ecrus.ca or visit CRUS at www.crus-surc.ca/en/courses

