



The genial members of the Therapeutics Committee.

The Canadian FM Guidelines (endorsed by the Canadian Pain Society and CRA) have received great international interest and accolade. They are available in both English and French. Multiple manuscripts have been prepared and submitted, including a publication in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ)* in May 2013. Dr. Mary-Ann Fitzcharles presented the FM guidelines at the American College of Rheumatology (ACR) Meeting in San Diego in October 2013. There is a slide kit available for use by any individuals interested in presenting the guidelines to their local colleagues.

The Spondyloarthritis Research Consortium of Canada (SPARCC) held a meeting in May 2013 to begin the process of updating the CRA/SPARCC Treatment Recommendations for the Management of Spondyloarthritis, which were published in 2007. The group identified topics for update and is currently engaged in a systematic literature review. They are hoping to have a completed manuscript in early 2014.

In addition to guidelines, the Therapeutics Committee has been engaged in acquisition of data to improve patient access to appropriate therapeutics. Over the past few years, there has been increasing difficulty accessing subcutaneous methotrexate due to its listing as a cytotoxic agent,

particularly in institutional environments. A systematic review was conducted on the safety of subcutaneous methotrexate administration at the low doses common in rheumatology. The results were presented in poster form at the CRA ASM and full paper publication is in progress. At our meeting in Ottawa in February 2013, we were fortunate to have a special guest, Agnes Klein from Health Canada, in attendance. With her guidance and expertise, we continue to work towards changing the listing for low-dose methotrexate at the Health Canada level. We are also actively engaging other relevant professional societies, such as nursing, pharmacy, and occupational health.

The Therapeutics Committee has been involved in multiple other emerging issues. We are working with the Pediatrics Committee of the CRA to try to improve access to triamcinolone hexacetonide for intra-articular injection. We have been actively involved in defining the role of cannabinoids in rheumatic diseases. A needs assessment was distributed to the membership in spring 2013, which has since been summarized; a policy/consensus statement is in progress. We have also been keeping up to date with the progress of subsequent-entry biologics and their potential arrival in Canada.

Based on activities of the past year, I have no doubt that Therapeutics will continue to be an exciting and interesting committee to chair. I feel fortunate to have such amazing and enthusiastic colleagues who continue working hard to improve rheumatology in Canada. Sincere thanks to all of our passionate members for their time and dedication; I would also like to thank Christine Charnock, the CRA Board, and the Executive for their support. We are always looking for new members to become involved. Please email me at shahin.jamal@vch.ca if you are interested.

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Nominations Committee

By Jamie Henderson, MD, FRCPC

The Nomination Committee is composed of Past Presidents of the CRA. It is chaired by the immediate Past-President, a role I presently occupy. Its traditional role has been to identify prospective board

members and invite them to join the board of the CRA. Every two years the Committee must identify an individual to join the executive committee as Vice-President for a two-year term. This individual would assume the presidency in

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two years and then serve another two years as Past-President.

In recent years the Committee has expanded its role to nominate members it feels deserving of awards offered by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the American College of Rheumatology (ACR), and national organizations. We were successful in obtaining the Queen's Jubilee Medal for several of our members in the past year.

The tasks performed are not onerous but are extremely important for ensuring that we have fresh, enthusiastic,

and talented members from all parts of the country representing diverse styles of practice to keep the CRA vibrant and relevant as we move forward.

James Henderson, MD, FRCPC

Past-President, Canadian Rheumatology Association

Chief, Internal Medicine, Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital

Teacher, Dalhousie University

Fredericton, New Brunswick

Scientific Committee

By Joanne Homik, MD, MSc, FRCPC

The CRA returns to a premier Canadian ski location for 2014! You may have noticed that we have experimented with some new venues for the Annual Scientific Meeting over the last few years. The urban venues were well-received but now we are returning to more recreation-oriented locales: Whistler from February 26-March 1, 2014 and Quebec City from February 3-6, 2015.

Capitalizing on successes from our previous meetings, we will continue to offer plenary sessions for the most highly ranked abstract submissions, keynote addresses from celebrated international rheumatologists, a state-of-the-art lecturer, and our distinguished investigator awardee, plus many workshops and our blockbuster "Great Debate". The topic for 2014 is, "Be it resolved that rheumatologists monitor their patients too closely while on disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs and biologics".

Our venue at the Fairmont Chateau Whistler should be a beautiful one. In order to ensure that attendees get a chance to appreciate the beauty, we will have three- to four-hour breaks in the afternoon, should anyone wish to ski or explore the beauty of Whistler Village. The entertainment also includes the ever-popular banquet and dance on the Friday night.

Hope to see you all in Whistler!

Joanne Homik, MD, MSc, FRCPC
Associate Professor of Medicine,
Director, Division of Rheumatology,
University of Alberta
Chair, Scientific Committee,
Canadian Rheumatology Association
Edmonton, Alberta



Annual General Meeting

The next Annual General Meeting of the CRA will take place the morning of Saturday, March 1st at the Chateau Whistler Hotel.

The meeting is open to CRA members in good standing only.

Please visit www.rheum.ca for meeting registration information.