

## President's Address

By Cory Baillie, MD, FRCPC

The mission of the CRA is to represent Canadian rheumatologists and promote the pursuit of excellence in arthritis care, education, and research. In order to fully represent Canadian rheumatologists, the CRA needs to understand the needs and wants of its members, as owners of the CRA. The CRA Board of Directors appreciates this and has established a membership engagement committee chaired by Dr. Trudy Taylor to pursue this goal.

The CRA has undertaken a number of membership engagement activities over the past two years to gain input on what direction the CRA should take in the future. In 2014, expert-led focus groups during the CRA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM), as well as telephone interviews with members, were arranged. In addition, one-on-one meetings with Ontario rheumatologists took place during the Ontario Rheumatology Association (ORA) ASM.

This year, the CRA had a teleconference with several resident members enquiring about how the CRA can best support them as they launch their careers; members were also questioned on a variety of topics during the membership renewal process. CRA board members each interviewed a representative sample of the rheumatology community attending the 2015 Quebec City CRA ASM (see table for some of the topics contained in this survey). Also during the 2015 ASM, the first ever CRA Town Hall meeting was held, allowing idea generation on key areas of CRA interest such as clinical care, research, education, and representation.

In late April, the CRA council and staff travelled to Winnipeg for our annual retreat. The results of all of the membership engagement activities were reviewed and discussed at length. The concept of the value of networking and collaboration was very prominent throughout many of the engagement activity results. Combining this information with feedback on the CRA's current activities and education about the external environment, the board worked to revise the strategic priorities of the CRA. The new strategic priorities document is lengthy and is a work-in-progress but the broad theme highlights that the CRA exists so that Canadian rheumatologists achieve excellence in clinical care, education and research. As a result:

- Members and individuals receive direct benefits;
- Partners and other organizations support the issues of rheumatologists and the field of rheumatology; and
- There is public awareness and understanding about rheumatologists and the field of rheumatology.

The CRA board is always looking for further input from its members. If you have any thoughts or suggestions regarding the future plans of the CRA, we would love to hear from you. Please contact us at [info@rheum.ca](mailto:info@rheum.ca).

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Table 1. How could being a member of the CRA bring more value to you?

