

An Update on the CRA's Programs for Students and Young Rheumatologists

By Christine Charnock, CEO of the CRA

Since it was founded, the CRA has worked to promote and advance the field of rheumatology by organizing networking, training, and educational opportunities for clinicians, students, allied health professionals and researchers alike. The following programs are just a few of our initiatives to help highlight rheumatology to students and residents and to support residents and early-in-career rheumatologists.

FLIRT

The Future Leaders in Rheumatology Training (FLIRT) is a mentorship program designed for rheumatologists at an early career stage who are likely to become leaders in research and/or education and/or advocacy in Canada.

This program seeks to identify and promote leadership in community, research, and academic rheumatologists early in their career. It is comprised of a variety of initiatives identified via a needs assessment conducted with participants, and a collaboration with Canadian mentors and expert advisors. This program is presented by leaders in academic centres and community practice and covers topics relevant to all "rising stars" regardless of their practice setting.

To learn more, visit <https://rheum.ca/en/members/flirt>, and turn to page 11 for Dr. Janet Pope's description of this popular mentorship program.

The Dilemma Rheum

The Dilemma Rheum is a series of educational teleconferences designed for recently certified rheumatologists and trainees. Each session features an expert on a particular topic who will discuss and answer questions on cases brought forward by participants. Topics discussed during these educational teleconferences are always changing, and future topic suggestions are welcome.



Upcoming sessions include:

- Sarcoidosis and other problem cases – May 10, 2017 at 8:00 pm ET
- Autoinflammatory Diseases, Behcet's and other problem cases – June 6, 2017 at 8:00 pm ET

Our feedback from attendees has been fabulous; they love the opportunity to be able to ask questions directly to experts in the field. To register, please visit https://rheum.ca/en/education/dilemma_rheum. To read more about a former Dilemma Rheum participant's thoughts on this program, read Dr. Tom Appleton's article on page 12.

NRRW

We are in the midst of planning the next iteration of the National Rheumatology Residents' Weekend (NRRW) designed to bring together all of the residents and program directors from across Canada to address topics that are better suited to a larger group education session and discussion. It is also an opportunity for rheumatology residents to network with their colleagues and form lifelong working and personal relationships.

Residents' Pre-course

We continue to support the highly valued Residents' Pre-course, which welcomes any students who attend the CRA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM). It covers topics that both

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The CRA would also like to announce that the 2018 CRA Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) and Arthritis Health Professions Association (AHPA) Annual Meeting will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia. Please stay tuned for more details.

radiography is a primary factor in delayed diagnosis. It is incumbent on the rheumatologist to learn the language of MRI and to understand basic aspects of interpretation of Digital Imaging and Communications in Medicine (DICOM) images in order to engage in an informed dialogue with the radiologist. Radiologists receive little or no training in the interpretation of MRI features in SpA and are often unaware of the key clinical scenarios where MRI may change the management of patients with SpA.

An online training module based on the DICOM image format is available through the Imaging Portal at CaRE Arthritis (www.carearthritis.com) to provide rheumatologists with essential basic knowledge on MRI interpretation of SpA and other conditions that often fall under the differential diagnosis. A simplified DICOM image-viewing tool allows intuitive learning in how to set up a DICOM image. Each of the 20 cases is highly annotated and experience with MRI interpretation is rapidly acquired through experiential learning, a proven way to acquire new skills. The module is based on the seven years of experience that I and colleagues in musculoskeletal radiology have acquired in providing hands-on training workshops to rheumatologists and radiologists all over the world. Workshop participants

have often reported the satisfaction of having acquired a new skill through this experiential learning technique. Maintenance of skills is reinforced through presentation of case-of-the-month content based on images submitted to the Imaging Portal for second-opinion review.

MRI has an indispensable role in the management of patients with SpA and the rheumatologist who is not familiar with basic interpretation of MRI cannot be practising to standard. It is not appropriate or realistic to transfer sole responsibility for interpretation to the radiologist. The presented case illustrates the potential consequences of this strategy.

*Walter Maksymowych, FRCPC
Professor of Medicine,
Department of Medicine,
Division of Rheumatology,
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta*

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residents and program directors suggest be covered. Popular sessions include those on career planning, practice setup, x-ray interpretation and other disease-specific topics.

ASM Mentorship Program

The mentorship program has been developed to ensure that students and residents are made to feel part of the CRA Annual Scientific Meeting and rheumatology community and to introduce them to people and sessions at our meeting. It enables our "seasoned" members to connect with up-and-coming members, to share their wisdom as well as learn from our "newbies." This is where great partnerships and connections are made to support careers and foster learning.

TROT

The objective of the Training the Rheumatologists of Tomorrow (TROT) program is to increase awareness and interest

in rheumatology among medical students, internal medicine residents, and pediatric residents. The program aims to produce and disseminate evidence-based messages about rheumatology, so that students' future career choices take into account first-hand knowledge about the subspecialty.

With an impending severe shortage of rheumatologists in Canada, TROT's mandate is as important as ever. For more information on TROT and their initiatives, turn to page 6 or contact Dr. Alf Cividino at civi@cogeco.ca.

The CRA is very keen to meet the needs of our future members, so if you have any suggestions...please send them our way!

*Christine Charnock
CEO, Canadian Rheumatology Association
Newmarket, Ontario*