

Update from the Pediatrics Committee

By Ronald M. Laxer, MDCM, FRCPC

The CRA Pediatrics group includes all Canadian pediatric rheumatologists and trainees. The executive committee includes the Chair [Ron Laxer], past Chair [Deb Levy], vice-Chair [Bobbi Berard] and Secretary [Nadia Luca]. Executive meetings are held by teleconference at least four times annually and more often if necessary. Face-to-face meetings of the entire committee are held at both the American College of Rheumatology and Canadian Rheumatology Association annual meetings.

In order to accomplish our tasks in a timely manner, several subcommittees have been formed. They include Human Resources (chair Michelle Batthish), Education (co-chairs Mercedes Chan and Evelyn Rozenblyum) and Advocacy. We also try to ensure that all CRA committees have appropriate pediatric representation.

This past year, the committee struck up a relationship with the Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS) to form a Special Interest Group and hold workshops at the CPS annual

meeting. A new sub-committee, Community Pediatrics, has been established and will be led by Tommy Gerschman. This will provide wonderful opportunities for connection for our community pediatrics members. Under the leadership of Deb Levy, triamcinolone hexacetonide has now become available in Canada without the need for a Special Access Program, which will facilitate patient care immensely.

There are many opportunities to become involved with the Pediatrics Committee of the CRA. Please contact any member of the executive to learn about these. We would welcome your input.

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B.C. Society of Rheumatologists (BCSR) – Update from the Pacific

By Jason Kur, MD, FRCPC



Celebrating the accomplishments of Dr. Bob Offer with his partner Yoli Hassey at the BRIESE meeting in Vancouver in September.

Several projects are underway to help evaluate the impact of negotiated special fee codes in B.C., in particular the impact of rheumatology nurses in the province as well as the changing demographics of the rheumatology community. In 2010, we documented a critical shortage of rheumatologists in BC. In the past eight years we have seen a transformation from 34 full-time-equivalent (FTE) rheumatologists to more than 55 FTEs in 2018. Plans are underway for a provincial rheumatology human resources summit to discuss the inequity in distribution of rheumatologists in the province. Work has also begun to look at the impact of nursing through a collaboration with the Doctors of B.C. and the Specialist Services Committee.

Provincial mandated non-medical biosimilar switching. We anticipate that the provincial government will mandate non-medical switches from originator to biosimilar in the coming months, one of the first jurisdictions in Canada to do so. We have been working with the province to try and make this process as safe and seamless as possible for patients and physicians.

Dr. Bob Offer is retiring this year after a highly decorated rheumatology career in B.C. His contributions to teaching, leadership, and patient care were recently celebrated at a reception hosted by the BCSR at the BRIESE meeting.

The Northwest Rheumatism meeting is going to be hosted in Vancouver April 25-27, 2019. Updates are available at www.nwrsmeeeting.org