

Modernization in Governance

By Dr. Cory Baillie, CRA President, 2014-2016

By the time that I began my term as CRA President in February 2014, the organization had grown markedly in terms of numbers of members, and also in the activities and services that were provided to the membership. The CRA Annual Scientific Meeting was achieving record attendance. The CRA had numerous programs encompassing knowledge sharing and education, networking, advocacy and research support. However, the governance of the CRA had not yet kept up with the expansion of the organization. The Board had so much that it was responsible for. Board teleconferences seemed never ending and were impeding the ability to recruit new Board members. Who was accountable to whom and for what? Who had the authority to green light a new project, activity or expenditure? Clearly, we needed help.

During my term as CRA President, the CRA Board undertook an extensive governance review process, which was enlightening for the Board in clarifying its roles and responsibilities. The Board used this new knowledge to institute a number of changes which continue through to the present. The most visible was the creation of the position of CRA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) initially, Christine



Charnock, and now, Ahmad Zbib. The CEO would now be responsible for the operations of the CRA, guided by a strategic plan developed by the Board, based on input from the membership.

The modernization of governance of the CRA was not without its hiccups. It took courage on the part of committee chairs who previously reported to the President and Board of Directors to adjust to being accountable to the CEO. We also feared a loss of engagement with the committee chairs no longer attending the regular Board meetings and the annual retreat. However, three CRA Presidents later, the CRA Board continues onward with the governance changes that were instituted, and I hope that they continue to bring the CRA success in the future.

*Cory Baillie, MD, FRCPC
Assistant Professor,
University of Manitoba
President,
Doctors Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba*