

Presidential Address

By Evelyn Sutton, President of the CRA

It is with great pleasure and humility that I have the privilege to serve members of the Canadian Rheumatology Association as the president for a second year. Looking back and having been part of CRA's response since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, I cannot overstate the work that we have all undertaken and the pressures we have faced. I am proud of how well our team, committees, members, volunteers as well as partners have been proactive in developing resources, tools, advocacy campaigns, guidelines, and many other elements for the benefit of the rheumatology community.

This past year, we also formed the CRA's first Diversity & Inclusion Task Force as we seek to ensure our association delivers an inclusive opportunity and experience for all future and current members, as well as stakeholders. Although our community is distanced, our resilience and dedication continually foster a spirit of togetherness.

With the current trend of work, practice, programs, and events that are transitioning into virtual environments, this unique situation has also provided an opportunity to reflect on our pre-pandemic habits, and to be increasingly cognizant of issues relating to climate change. The CRA recently hosted an event on sustainability featuring Dr. David Suzuki, who summed up the situation with immense urgency. "The very survival of all human beings is at risk." This is not hyperbole—the evidence Dr. Suzuki presented was overwhelmingly convincing.

This is our time to change the world, and I challenge all of us to proactively seek out information and make infor-



med decisions about how we live and how we can lessen our impact on the environment. At my weekly meeting last week with our CEO, Dr. Ahmad Zbib, we discussed what we can do individually and as an organization to decrease our carbon footprint. A few of our ideas were to walk when we can, share rides when walking is not an option, and to reduce in-person CRA meetings by half. We need to do this! I would love to hear your suggestions and what you are planning to do. We cannot ignore the science of climate change. Our work as rheumatologists is important and will be for

naught if we don't have a world with clean water and air.

Now, more than ever, we must support each other. It is with a reinvigorated spirit in my second year that I pledge to everyone, as president of the CRA, that the entire team and I are ready and here to support you. The CRA will continue to innovate dynamically to positively shape the future of rheumatology in Canada. Until we meet again, I look forward to connecting with you all at Canada Night, and at our 2022 Annual Scientific Meeting, in person or remotely. Remember to make time for yourselves, your family and friends and don't hesitate to reach out to your CRA family.

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Update on CRA Initiatives *continued from page 5*

by the time of this publication. Please check the CRA website at rheum.ca/covid-19/.

Updated CRA Position Statement on COVID-19 Vaccination Care

In addition to the CRA GRADE recommendation on COVID-19 Vaccination, CRA has also published an update to the Position Statement on COVID-19 Vaccination to include the expanded use of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in children between the ages of 12-15 years. The Position

Statement is a document intended not only for clinicians, but for the public and decision-makers as well and is often used as an advocacy tool. The Position Statement has been updated several times since its first publication on December 31, 2020, to reflect changing recommendations and to advocate for the prioritization of vaccination and early second doses for immunocompromised individuals. Visit rheum.ca/resources/publications/ to read the updated CRA Position Statement.