

CRA Committee Reports 2007

Report from the Pediatric Section of the CRA

We are pleased to report that the Pediatric Section of the CRA has become a reality over the past year. The inaugural meeting of the Section took place at the ACR in Washington, D.C., in November 2006. The first annual meeting of the Section was held in Lake Louise in February 2007 at the CRA annual meeting. Members of the Pediatric Section worked closely with the CRA Scientific Committee to increase the pediatric content of the CRA annual meeting in Lake Louise in 2007. Each of the three workshops included a pediatric topic, and a pediatric poster session with oral presentations was also well attended and enjoyed.

There are currently 36 members of the Pediatric Section of the CRA. Members of the section can be contacted through Christine Charnock, Executive Coordinator of the CRA. Potential new members of the Section should contact one of the members of the Pediatric Section Executive Committee.

Over the past number of months, we have concentrated our efforts in developing a subcommittee structure for the newly created Section. We hope that these subcommittees will allow us to focus our activities in a number of areas, including advocacy, education and human resource

planning, as well as facilitate close cooperation with the corresponding CRA subcommittees. The subcommittees established to date and their membership are listed below:

Executive Committee: Bianca Lang (Chair), Ciaran Duffy, Rayfel Schneider, Rosie Scuccimarri

Advocacy Committee: Lori Tucker (Chair), Brian Feldman, Sarah Campillo, Shirley Tse, Janet Ellsworth, Bianca Lang

Education Committee: Rayfel Schneider (Chair), Rosie Scuccimarri, Ross Petty, Ciaran Duffy

Human Resources Committee: Paul Dancy (Chair), Ron Laxer, Nicole Johnson, Janet Ellsworth

Scientific Committee: Bianca Lang (Chair), Paivi Miettunen, Rae Yeung

Our plans for the next six months include developing short- and long-term goals and objectives for each of these subcommittees. In addition, the chairs of the subcommittees will be in contact with the corresponding CRA subcommittee chairs to look at ways to work together to improve the lives of all patients —young and old— with arthritis and other rheumatic diseases.

The Access-to-Care Committee

The CRA and the Mexican College of Rheumatology are continuing to explore collaborative efforts. The success of the combined 2005 meeting in Acapulco has encouraged the two organizations to consider planning another meeting.

We are also piloting two new projects. The first is a resident exchange where one resident from each organization will cross over and spend four weeks in the other country. The Canadian rheumatology resident will be exposed to a wide variety of rheumatologic pathologies and levels of care in Mexico City, whereas the Mexican resident will acquire new skills in laboratory and imaging. We are looking for residents and interested hosting groups.

The second is to plan a meeting of collaborators (or near collaborators) probably just prior to the ACR in

November 2007. The goal will be to share information across interest groups as well as to allow for time for collaborators to meet.

For more information you may contact me directly. I am very interested in receiving feedback from all members on these three projects (zimmer@attglobal.net).

Chair: Michel Zimmer
Members: Dianne Mosher
 Diane Lacaille
 Arthur Bookman
 Lori Tucker
 Gilles Boire
 Carter Thorne

The Education Committee

The Education Committee of the CRA has been active this year. There are several new projects being presented to the membership during 2007.

Firstly, the committee has recommended that CRA will now have an award at the Annual Meeting to recognize a fellow rheumatologist who has proven him or herself to be an exemplary teacher. The awardee can be nominated for excellence in teaching at any level—continuing medical education to family doctors or colleagues right down to medical students. You will see more about this in the fall when the nominations open for all of our awards of honour.

The major project of the committee has been the preliminary development of some web- or distance-based education projects for our members. Recognizing that getting to CME activities including the Annual Scientific Meeting of the CRA can be difficult for some of the membership, the Education Committee has worked with industry partners to bring some rheumatology educational activities to the CRA website.

Under the Educational Resources heading on the members' home page, you will see a heading for CME Activities. If you click on this, you will find our first accredited, web-based program—The Role of Emerging Therapies in the Contemporary Management of Rheumatoid Arthritis. Sponsored by BMS, it is a great learning or review opportunity while sitting in the comfort of your home or office! Additionally, coming soon, there will be on line availability of selected components of the academic presentations from the Annual Scientific Meeting, which was held at Lake Louise in February. Through a generous educational grant by Amgen Wyeth, over eighteen hours of video from the meeting will be accessible for your review. You will be able to see the slides, see the presenter via video and hear the accompanying audio component. For those who were there, it will allow you to

catch those clinical pearls that you might have missed first time round and for those of you who didn't travel to Lake Louise (or may have been on the ski hills at the time of one of the sessions), the learnings are not lost.

While we hope that these ventures are of interest and value to the membership, we do ask that you be vocal – let us know if this type of activity is of benefit to you! Short survey questionnaires will be attached to the educational programs so that we can find out if this is meeting your needs or if there are other educational activities that you think the Education Committee could be investigating on your behalf. Alternatively, feel free to send your observations and suggestions to me directly via email and I will be happy to bring your feedback to the Education Committee for consideration.

Chair: Heather McDonald-Blumer

Members: Evelyn Sutton
Sue Humphrey-Murto
Janet Pope
Lori Albert
Christopher Penney
Kam Shojanian
Avril Fitzgerald
Paul Davis (CME representative)
Alf Cividino
Dana Jerome
Jerry Tenenbaum
Andrew Thompson
Mary Bell
Michael Aubrey
Kim Northcott
Mark Hazeltine

The Human Resources Committee

Over the last year the HRC has had the opportunity to provide books for second year medical residents to encourage them to consider Rheumatology as a subspecialty.

These books have been donated through a generous donation from Roche.

Distribution of the books will be done once the program directors notify Christine Charnock, the CRA Secretary, of the numbers and names of the residents. Please get your list in early. Even an estimate of the numbers will do with later provision of the names. The reason for the names is to see how effective the books are in attracting young recruits.

The books include Andy Thompson's Complete Handbook of Rheumatology, Evelyn Sutton's beautifully illustrated Rheumatology Physical Examination, and Lori Albert's practical Summary of Rheumatology. In French we have found a very useful CD by Marc Hochberg.

We now have a Pediatric member of the Committee as

well, Paul Douchey, who is checking out the availability of similar material for our Pediatric counterparts.

We recognize that medical students are making their choices very early and look forward to distributing these books even earlier, perhaps during systems lectures if we can get adequate sponsorship.

This year at the Annual meeting in Lake Louise through a very generous donation of one of the authors, Dr. Ross Petty, a Textbook in Pediatric Rheumatology was the prize for the best poster and abstract in pediatrics.

Efforts also include a Residents week-end in Rheumatology. Finally considerations are being made to have a week-end summer Boot Camp to try to encourage young recruits.

Chair: Janet Markland
Members: Janet Pope
Doug Smith

The Management Committee

The management committee is sometimes referred to as the "Star Chamber" by fellow board members. Its mandate is to oversee the finances of the association and set the investment principles with our broker. Our priorities have been to maintain steady growth in the investment portfolio with low risk investments for the most part. Only 25 % of our investments are in equities at the present time. The board has passed a resolution recently that forbids our organization from running a deficit and it would be this committee that would have

to enforce this. The committee will review our situation on a yearly basis and make recommendations as needed.

Chair: Jamie Henderson
Members: Carter Thorne
Michel Zimmer
Cory Baillie
John Thomson
Gunnar Kraag

The Scientific Committee

March 5th-8th 2008. Reserve the date for the CRA annual meeting. The planning process is underway with the addition of some new members to the scientific program committee.

The current members working on your behalf include Janet Pope, Stephanie Ensworth, Kam Shojania, Paivi Miettunen, John Thomson, Glen Thomson, Sindhu Johnson, Proton Rahman, Majed Khraishi, Gilles Boire, Cory Baillie, Joanne Homik, Marlene Thompson and Shahin Walji with Alf Cividino as chair.

Janet Pope steps down as chair after three successful years.

Journal club has been well received over the years with Hy Tannenbaum and Duncan Gordon at the helm. We thank them for their contribution. This year we will have a clinical update session chaired by Shahin Walji. The focus of these sessions will be brief reviews of current interest to the practising rheumatologist. Dr Walji will be reaching out to community and academic rheumatologists for participation.

Workshops have always been popular and we will continue to provide a valuable learning resource for attendees.

Industry symposia deemed of educational interest to the membership will provide yet another avenue for learning.

Of course the Great Debate will be featured with the

topic being "Who treats Rheumatoid Arthritis the best? East versus West!" Sharpen your DAS calculators. The winning team will be subjected to a lengthy questionnaire.

Let's not forget the social events. There will be opportunities for skiing, skating and taking in the village at Tremblant.

Beyond this it is too early to confirm our keynote speakers but stay tuned for updates. It will be worth staying to the end.

Chair: Alf Cividino

Members: Joanne Homik

Gilles Boire

Sindhu Johnson – Abstract chair

Janet Pope – past chair

Glen Thomson

John Thomson

Kam Shojania

Majed Khraishi

Marlene Thompson

Cory Baillie

Paivi Miettunen

Shahin Walji

Stephanie Ensworth

Proton Rahman

The Studentship Committee

The Canadian Rheumatology Association Abbott Summer Studentship is underway. We have had several successful years with our previous sponsor Merck and are indebted to them for their support. We are now embarking on a three year agreement with Abbott to support this valuable summer student program. We had approximately 40 applications and were able to accept 13 students this summer. The placements are truly throughout Canada with many students leaving their own university to experience their summer learning elsewhere. The studentship has been valuable to the trainees. We have to date been overwhelmingly positively evaluated by the candidates and more importantly to us, we have generated rheumatology trainees. We have had pediatric and adult rheumatology residents directly resulting from their summer experience. For instance, Mark Matsos did his summer studentship at UWO and is now a rheumatology resident at

McMaster. Shirley Chow did a summer studentship and has done further research in rheumatology as a student in both Toronto and London, and is an applicant to rheumatology for the coming year. Both of these trainees were also nominated to attend our CRA meeting, which may have had a positive influence (especially if they ski!). The next steps are to determine our cumulative success rate and to have a process whereby the trainees can be further mentored after they complete their summer experience, particularly as first and second year internal medicine residents. I would like to wholeheartedly thank Abbott and Merck for committing to our rheumatology human resources crisis. Our future for Canadian rheumatology rests on experiences such as this unique clinical program.

Chair: Janet Pope

The Therapeutics Committee

Guidelines: Recently the CRA has kept you abreast of changing treatment guidelines with the use of NSAIDs/Coxibs. As therapeutic areas become increasingly complex for all areas of rheumatology and with the advent of new therapies for RA, SLE, scleroderma, etc., it is the goal for the CRA to develop on guidelines in all these areas of rheumatology. The main focus of the Therapeutics Committee at present is to devise an updated set of guidelines for the pharmacologic management of RA. You will have recently received an invitation to participate in a survey, which will help the committee identify in what areas of RA management there is still controversy or uncertainty. Based on this specific areas will be researched by a systematic review and this will be used for the development of national guidelines. It is very important that all Canadian, practicing rheumatologists complete this. Thank you again or in advance for doing so!

Safety Card for Patients Receiving Biologics:

Frequently our patients are not reminded to stop biologic therapies while receiving antibiotics and/or their pri-

mary-care providers are not entirely aware as to how to handle their biologic therapies in the case of surgery. A wallet-sized card that patients can show to their physicians can facilitate understanding about safe use of their biologic therapies. You will see in the near future a template for such a patient safety card on the CRA website. You will be able to download this and print these on to pre-perforated business card sheets (available from business depot) or order them from the CRA directly. Patients will be able to carry in their wallets general safety information about their biologics.

If there are initiatives you wish to see the Therapeutics Committee pursue please email me at vbykerk@mtsinai.on.ca

Chair: Vivian Bykerk
Members: Andrew Thompson
Sharon LeClerq
Janet Pope
Majed Khraishi
Paul Haraoui
Claire Bombardier

The Website Committee

As everyone is aware the new CRA website was launched on July 13th, 2006. Visits to our new site are up considerably with 40 visitors per day and over 11,000 visitors since our launch. This is much improved from the 5 to 6 visitors per day on the old site. Much of our work over the last year has been behind the scenes polishing up a few aspects of the site and getting our French side ready for launch (we are close).

Our next initiative, in partnership with our Education Committee, involves significant changes to the website in terms of continuing medical education. We will be moving the website to a new server with better video streaming capabilities to support CME initiatives. We encourage all of you to view our first CME, Emerging therapies in RA, which was posted in March 2007. We will soon have access to video and slide presentations from the 2007 CRA Annual meeting in Lake Louise.

Other planned projects include a quarterly website newsletter, a database for national job postings, and a database for trainees interested in a career in Rheumatology. Of course we will continue to develop our other academic resources and ask all of you to continue to upload your interesting pictures and power point presentations.

We will see further exciting changes to the website as we strive to better meet the needs of our membership. It is an exciting time to be a rheumatologist!

Chair: Andy Thompson
Members: Volodko Bakowsky
John Watterson
Cory Baillie
Elisia Teixeira (Webmaster)
Kam Shojania (Past Chair)

CRA Retreat Overview

The 2007 CRA retreat was held in Vancouver in May with Stephanie Ensworth serving as a one woman organizing committee and social convenor. As expected she did an outstanding job.

Proton Rahman and Bob Offer attended their first retreat as new Board members and Alf Cividino participated as the new Chair of the Scientific Committee. He takes over from Janet Pope who served two terms and never failed to organize an outstanding program for the annual meeting. There is absolutely no doubt that Alf will carry the torch and continue to do the same. We have been blessed with never having had anything but excellence in this position. I can't say enough about Janet's contributions to all facets of CRA activity. Janet will continue to be involved in committee work and of course directs the Abbott summer studentship program.

The hot topic at this retreat was the possibility that the CRA might purchase the Journal of Rheumatology. In this issue, Art Bookman brings us up to date of exactly where we stand in the process. The topic is both exciting and a bit scary as it is a major financial commitment for the CRA, but also has great potential as a second income stream. Everyone agrees that it would be a prestigious acquisition for us.

You will see from the reports in this issue that the committees continue to be active and productive. Our needs assessment clearly indicates the having an outstanding website is a top priority for the membership, and although we have made great strides towards a better site, Andy Thompson's report points out that we still need a major financial investment to make it outstanding, meet our

objectives and attract sponsorship. The CRA remains committed to the web and will make a major effort to attract Industry support. Also very high on the list of important activities from the needs survey are the development of position papers and guidelines. Vivian and her committee continue to work very hard in this area as reflected in the therapeutics report.

Janet Markland outlines how we continue to try and attract students and residents to our speciality and this remains a priority for the CRA.

I am pleased to report that our "new" section of Paediatrics is fully integrated and as happy to be part of the CRA as we are to have them with us. Our paediatric colleagues strengthen our organization tremendously and I would suggest make us "complete."

We will continue to work closely with Industry Council. We have a wide array of projects and other sponsorship opportunities to present to them as they have requested and which we feel are mutually beneficial to the CRA and Industry. We also continue to collaborate in producing the best annual meeting possible.

The strength of our organization remains the people who work tirelessly on our behalf. The reports in this issue of the CRAJ give you some idea of the scope and quality of the work done by members who serve on the board and committees. They all have "day" jobs, but continue to support the CRA with passion and selfless hard work. We are indebted to them and very grateful.

*Gunnar Kraag
President of the CRA*

The Potential Purchase of *The Journal of Rheumatology*

By Arthur Bookman, MD, FRCPC

Background

The shareholders of *The Journal of Rheumatology* want to sell because their editorial board is aging, and presumably, they want to cash out. They would like to sell in Canada to the Canadian rheumatology community. They would like to see the journal continue as a Canadian rheumatology legacy to the journal founder, Metro Ogryzlo.

The shareholders commissioned an “Estimated Fair Market Value” assessment from an accountancy consultant. This was based on healthy gross revenues from 1999-2004, rising from baseline to a pretty well plateau between 2003 and September 2005.

The estimate of worth was made as a multiple of EBITDA (Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization.)

However, the net earnings for December 2006 have returned at somewhat less than the estimate based on December 2005. This year, gross revenue was down and expenses were up. This will change the EBITDA and estimated value, at least at this point in time.

The Journal of Rheumatology purchase committee (Arthur Bookman Chair, Gunnar Kraag, Michel Zummer, John Thompson, Andy Thomson, Cory Baillie) has commissioned Blue Hammock, a business consulting firm, to evaluate its website. They feel that there will be an immediate investment needed of \$120,000 with an eventual investment of \$400,000 over the next 4-5 years to upgrade the website. Furthermore, a full-time webmaster would be required. The committee feels that web-based publication and journal access will become a major venue that must provide revenue if the journal is to remain healthy.

The committee subsequently hired Ralph Moxness, an expert in mergers and acquisitions from Ottawa to assist us in navigating these negotiations. Through Ralph, we have had a consultation with Terry Carter, a lawyer with expertise in not-for-profit organizations, and Jim Blackwell, an accountant from BDO Dunwoody, to give us an opinion on how we could legally structure purchase of the Journal, as we are a not-for-profit organization.

We have also hired, Richard Wise, of Wise-Blackman, a Montreal-based Chartered Accountancy firm, to give us an independent valuation of the journal, upon which we can structure a purchase offer. We have received a preliminary

report from Wise-Blackman based on the limited information that *The Journal of Rheumatology* would make available to us at this time. We have currently extended a preliminary offer to the shareholders of *The Journal of Rheumatology*, and will be meeting with representatives of their board of directors very shortly for discussion. At the time of writing, we have no idea whether we will be proceeding further.

Terry Carter et al think that we may be able to purchase the Journal within the structure of the CRA. They will give us a final opinion in due course after reviewing our charter etc. Carter has suggested that we might be able to finance this by issuing a limited number of debentures. These would be structured in agreement with the lenders to give them a profit, and a share of net growth, with an agreement to allow the CRA to redeem the investment after a set time. Such debentures would have to be less than 50 in number, or else we would have to report expensively to the Securities Commission. Ten investors at \$150,000 would give us \$1.5 million. In fact, advertisers in the Journal of Rheumatology might find benefit in purchasing such debentures to stabilize the purchase of this “Canadian advertising vehicle.” Some of our members may be interested in a significant investment of this sort. This way, the CRA would end up with full ownership of shares, and a significant asset for future growth and development.

We also have the option of purchasing a percentage of the journal, but there may be laws preventing one shareholder from taking a dominant 51% position that would leave the minority shareholders unprotected. Also, this may not be possible within the structure of the CRA, as many shareholders are non-rheumatologists. Unfortunately, until we get into negotiations, we will have no idea whether this entire project is viable financially. We have limited our expenses to date until we can get to the bargaining table.

The Purchasing Committee is enthusiastic about obtaining ownership of *The Journal of Rheumatology*, and this enthusiasm is shared by the board of the CRA. However, we recognize our fiduciary responsibility to the CRA, and will not enter into an agreement that we cannot afford, or that will not give us value. At the time of writing, we do have a plan for purchase and financing that we think we can manage, but much depends on the success of future negotiations with the shareholders of the Journal.

2007 CRA Executive Retreat in Vancouver



The dynamic duo. The engine that drives the CRA.



CRA party boat in the background. Great to be in Vancouver!



"So Janet, you are absolutely sure that organizing the Scientific Program is a piece of cake!"



Woman at work. We have no idea what the men are doing!



We really don't want to know what these guys are looking at. Be assured it has nothing to do with the agenda.



Jamie and Gunnar just after awarding themselves hefty raises.



"Hi! I'm Andy the web guy. Actually the webMASTER!"



"No Cory, I don't think that Manitoba is as pretty as BC, but you are right it is flatter - I'll give you that."



A serious discussion on how to increase womanpower, decrease manpower, and where to shop.

Milestones and Announcement University of Toronto

Dr. Mary Bell, of the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, has been selected to be the Director of Continuing Education and Knowledge Translation and Exchange, in the Department of Medicine, at University of Toronto.

Dr. Gregory Choy, of the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, has been promoted to Assistant Professor.

Dr. Brian Feldman, of the Hospital for Sick Children, has been promoted to Professor of Medicine. He has been awarded the Canada Research Chair in Childhood Arthritis for a second 5-year term.

Dr. Dafna Gladman, of Toronto Western Hospital, was elected the first president of the Group for Research and Assessment of Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis (GRAPPA). This is an international group of rheumatologists, dermatologists and methodologists who have come together to promote research in these conditions.

Dr. Gillian Hawker was awarded the Senior Distinguished Research Investigator Award from The Arthritis Society of Canada. She is currently the Physician-in-Chief at Women's College Hospital and has been promoted to Professor of Medicine.

Dr. Allan Kagal has been appointed Lecturer Adjunct at the University of Toronto.

Dr. Louise Perlin, of St. Michael's Hospital, has been promoted to Associate Professor. She has received the St. Michael's Hospital "Values in Action" Award for Compassion. Dr. Rob Rottapel, of St. Michael's Hospital, has been promoted to Professor of Medicine.

Dr. Rachel Shupak, of St. Michael's Hospital, has been awarded the Colin R. Woolf Award for Excellence in Continuing Education for the development of the Advanced Clinician Practitioner in Arthritis Care (ACPAC) program.

Dr. Rae Yeung, of the Hospital for Sick Children, has been promoted to Associate Professor.

Dr. Dana Cohen (Rheumatology Fellow) has recently married Andrew Levstein.

Dr. John Stein (Rheumatology Fellow) and his wife Beth Stein are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter Mira Stein.

Dr. Humaid Al Wahshi (Rheumatology Fellow) and his wife Iman Nasr are please to announce the birth of their son Mohammed Al Wahshi.

Dr. Paul Fortin, of Toronto Western Hospital, has been promoted to Professor.

Dr. Lori Albert, of Toronto Western Hospital, has been promoted to Associate Professor.

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