

Message from the President

The summer is almost over and it has been about two months since I took over the President's position. In the past two months, I have been working on different issues that I believe are important to OEMAC that I would like to address in the next two years within my term.

1. **Teamwork and Our Future:** Like other medical professions, Occupational Medicine takes a team-work approach. We, on a day to day basis, deal with case management, return to work, occupational exposure, and some of us even treat occupational illnesses. We work closely with occupational health nurses, hygienists, ergonomics, chiropractors, physiotherapists, etc. Unlike 15-20 years ago, the providers of occupational health are gradually changing over from stand-alone occupational physicians to for-profit companies that provide case management and other services to the industry. Some of the occupational physicians feel that they now have issues that are not common to other areas of medicine (i.e. competition). I have been approached by members that his/her clients have been "stolen" by other firms. The survival of independent occupational health physicians may be in jeopardy. There is no good answer to this developing issue and I welcome your input in terms into the ethics in the business of Occupational Medicine.
2. **Other Organizations in Occupational and Environmental Medicine:** OMSOC, (Occupational Medicine Specialists of Canada) consists of a group of specialists in Occupational Medicine who have similar interests and expertise, like OEMAC. OMSOC and OEMAC run independently and have their own conferences. I have enclosed a copy of their brochure on their conference in Edmonton on September 27, 2014. The program looks excellent, but unfortunately, it falls on the day of the Board of Directors' meeting and I am not able to attend. However, for our members who are in Edmonton on that day, I strongly urge you to attend the conference. I would like to continue to work together with OMSOC to benefit our members.

There is also an organization, called CAPE, (Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment). They are more into looking at the environmental impact from various human activities. I am exploring the possibility of reviewing our interests since OEMAC also includes Environmental Medicine.

3. **Current Issues:** Our members have been well served, I believe, from our weekly electronic newsletter, "Occ Doc Talk". However, sometimes current issues may not be dealt with-in a timely manner, and I am looking at ways to communicate to our members on current issues,

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e.g. occupational health for possible Ebola in Canada. That includes from the front end worker EMS, firefighters, police, and health care workers, to funeral directors, the final common pathway. I am thinking of putting a column area called “Current Issues” on the “Occ Doc Talk”, so members can submit their thoughts in that section.

4. **Best Practice/Position Paper:** I have had some discussion with OMSOC, and we believe that, because of the size of our organization and the resources that we have, it is unrealistic to have Best Practice or Position Papers. However, I am thinking of, in order to assist members in the area of uncertainty, a process called ‘consensus statement’ can be explored. This will be discussed in the Board of Directors’ meeting.
5. **Website:** I have explored our website and there is room for improvement, especially in the membership directory. It is important that you update your directory, specifically in your area of expertise. Our membership directory is open to the general public and if someone is looking for a physician with specific expertise, they can go to our website and locate a member.
6. **Lunch Meeting:** During the lunch hour on Sept 30, 2014 (New date), the Annual General Meeting will not be held. As most of you know, because of the legislating requirements, our general meeting was held in August by teleconference. This frees up the lunch hour on September 30th. I am intending to use this time as a ‘town hall meeting’ and the format has not been determined. If any of you have suggestions on issues you would like to discuss, please send to our email address, and we can incorporate it into our town hall meeting.

Have a good summer, what is left of it, and we will see you in Edmonton.

Dr. Sidney Siu

