

Winter doldrums

Over Christmas and New Year's, it is always as if the country closes down for two weeks. People get ready for the event in December, recover and catch up in January. In total, it seems like nothing is happening for a month. It seemed like nothing was happening at the Canadian Thoracic Society (CTS), but, as always, things have been changing and moving ahead.

I was preparing a talk for our medical grand rounds on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). In reviewing the literature, I was reminded that over the past 50 years, Canadian respirologists have contributed a vast amount to the knowledge of this disease. The incidence of COPD is increasing and will become more of an issue for health care as the baby boomers reach retirement age. Perhaps anticipating this, the COPD Committee of the CTS has been very active developing Canadian guidelines for COPD. They are due to be published early this year. Dr Denis O'Donnell, the Committee Chair, has been working hard for the CTS in this regard. Once the guidelines have been published, the next challenge will be implementation. Dr Louis-Phillippe Boulet recognized that this was a particular challenge with the asthma guidelines. He has been instrumental in setting up a new committee of the CTS. The 'Guideline Implementation' Working Group will develop expertise in this area and will work closely with the COPD Committee this year. They can then apply this expertise to any guidelines that the CTS may develop in the future.

The Professional Development Committee has completed the undertaking of achieving accredited continuing medical education provider status for the CTS with the Royal College of Physician and Surgeons of Canada. They have made the final submission, and we are awaiting the response from the Royal College. We need to thank Dr Gordon Ford and Dr Sharon Peters for all of the hard work that they have put into this endeavour for the CTS. Dr Ford has now retired as Chair of the Professional Development Committee. He has overseen the transition from the original Education Committee to its new mandate for the changing times. The CTS is grateful for the hours and energy that he has expended. He is leaving the Committee well organized and invigorated for the challenges ahead. Dr Darcy Marciniuk has taken over as the new Chair. He has big shoes to fill.

The CTS Annual Scientific Meeting was held in San Diego, California in November 2002. The Program Committee, with expert Chair Dr Darcy Marciniuk, present-

ed an excellent day. All of the presentations were world class. During coffee and lunch breaks, there was ample time to catch up with old friends. Dr Marciniuk has now completed his three-year term as Program Chair. I take this opportunity to extend our thanks to him for undertaking this daunting task. He became the Program Chair just as the CTS was branching out in a new direction. The



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CTS Annual Scientific Meeting now has a reputation of excellence. This year, for the first time, the Christie Memorial Lecture was part of the program of CHEST 2002. Hence, it was open to all attendees at the CHEST meeting. Dr Art Slutsky introduced the speaker, Dr Eliot Phillipson. This was an excellent way to recognize Canadian respirologists who have made seminal discoveries in their field. Dr Phillipson was superb and set a standard that will be difficult to surpass in the years to come. Dr George Fox has taken over the planning of the 2003 program that will be held in Orlando, Florida on October 26, 2003, in association with the American College of Chest Physicians. The preliminary program is awe inspiring. Please take a moment to write the date on your calendars. The annual general meeting of the CTS and the banquet will be held on the same weekend.

The office in Ottawa, Ontario is coping with the work associated with the National Grants Review. This project was initiated by Dr Peter Pare some years ago when he recognized that it was important for researchers to have good, national peer reviews of their grants. The number of provinces participating in this review is increasing, showing that the idea has been a success.

All of these extra activities have put some pressure on the staff in the office in Ottawa. Valoree McKay is doing a grand job trying to keep things running smoothly. I would like to officially thank her for putting so much effort into making these new projects so successful for the CTS.

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