Comfort and complacency — the enemies of change

Dr. Merrilee Fullerton

It is remarkable how The Big Health Care Wheel keeps moving despite economic and demographic challenges to the delivery of care. While politicians and decision makers within the bureaucracy may spin off to different portfolios, departments or endeavours, individual physicians continue to be more than just spokes in the wheel. We are integral to the functioning of the entire system. As such, we are positioned not only to be affected by change around us, but to be agents of change.

More than ever before, the challenges facing health delivery require physician input. Beyond discussion however, solutions require action — not by the amorphous “they” but by “us”.

It is clear that physicians have been acting. Over the past few years, some of you adopted electronic medical record systems. Some of you moved to advance booking practice enabling patients to receive more timely care. Other physicians became involved providing expert advice on cancer care, referral processes or changed their model of practice. Others devoted time to hospital committees and public health initiatives. Enhancing leadership skills through training or furthering their education at the university level in business or health policy are all part of the active participation in solutions being sought by physicians.

The ways in which physicians have engaged in change, adapted and contributed to reform are innumerable. These efforts must continue in earnest and with even more urgency as we approach the expiry date of the Federal–Provincial /Territorial Health Accord on 31 March 31 2014. Issues such as increasing long term care requirements and the growing use of pharmaceuticals are pressing and demand new approaches. Physician engagement is increasingly important — not just by a few but by many. We must continue to make our voices heard and be active participants in change within our health care system and beyond it.

How can this be achieved?

Make use of opportunities to provide your expertise and experience at community, municipal, provincial and national levels. If you receive communication asking for a few minutes of your time to provide input, give it. If there is an area of health care that interests you above others, get more involved, give of your time. If there is an area of public policy that you believe would benefit from your contributions, reach out to others in this field. We must engage not only ourselves but others as well.

The CMA has recently championed a widespread dialogue on health care change. You may be interested in the CMA’s policy document, Health Care Transformation in Canada: Change that Works. Care That Lasts (www.cma.ca/Transformation). Through Asklepios (www.cma.ca/asklepios), CMA’s professional networking site for physicians, you can add your voice.

As the transformation unfolds, we should expect and value differing opinions and perspectives. This may not be comfortable or easy but blending diversity may ultimately provide the best solutions. We should avoid comfort and complacency, the enemies of change.

Over the past two years, it has been a privilege to serve the medical community as President of the Academy of Medicine Ottawa. I can attest to the active participation and value that physicians bring to health care and its transformation. Keep up the good work!

In this issue

| Engaging physicians in the transformation of health care | 2 |
| Physician community engagement — Cornwall | 3 |
| Measles update from Ottawa Public Health | 5 |
| AMO 4th Annual Clinical Day | 8 |
OMA District 8 Director’s update

Dr. Gail Beck

Engaging physicians in the transformation of health care

Let me begin by wishing all members of the Academy of Medicine Ottawa all the best for 2011. We are living in interesting times and I am looking forward to working with all of you to move forward the goals of the Academy.

In this issue, Dr. Fullerton is focusing on the engagement of physicians in the transformation of health care. In a short note to contributors she said, “Reforms that have had input from physicians have been beneficial.” With this in mind, I want to recommend a book for those who might be interested in a bit more background on innovation in health care in Canada. The book is Prescription for Excellence: How Innovation is Saving Canada’s Health Care System. It was written by Dr. Michael Rachlis in 2004. Based in Toronto, Dr. Rachlis is a well known health care policy analyst.

I read this book at the time of its release and was most struck by the “evidence-based anecdotes” presented of innovations, many developed by physicians that have ensured better care for patients. Innovations in prevention, long term care and quality are just a few of those covered in a book that is easy to read and well resourced. Dr. Rachlis also provides a brief history of Canadian Medicare to approximately 2002 which is also helpful in considering Dr. Fullerton’s focus on engaging physicians in the transformation of health care. I have a great interest in what the Academy will learn from its members in this regard and will ensure that whatever you learn will be brought to both the OMA and CMA Boards.

With respect to District News, I wanted to mention that Dr. Kapur and I had an opportunity to participate in a Physician–LHIN workshop on 2 December 2010. This meeting was well attended and featured presentations by both Dr. Mark MacLeod, OMA President, and Dr. Jeffrey Turnbull, CMA President. The meeting also provided an opportunity for District physicians to work one last time with Dr. Robert Cushman, who is retiring from his position as LHIN CEO, but who has ensured physicians’ involvement with the Champlain LHIN.

Having worked with Alex Munter on the Board of Youth Services Bureau, I can also say that I am certain that Alex, as the incoming CEO for the Champlain LHIN, will continue to seek out physicians’ views and input. Dr. Fullerton’s goal to have the Academy’s members engage in transforming health care in Ottawa is being introduced just in time to inform a new LHIN CEO.

Finally, I would like to remind all of you that the OMA will be seeking delegates to attend CMA General Council as Delegates from Ontario. CMA General Council is being held in St. John’s, Newfoundland from 22–24 August 2011. Please consider applying for one of the delegate positions.

In concluding, remember that Dr. Kapur and I are always available for your questions and concerns regarding your OMA representation.

The Academy of Medicine Ottawa is a branch society of the Ontario Medical Association and represents Ottawa physicians, both locally and provincially. We advocate on behalf of physicians and for best quality health care delivery and practices for patients.
Physician community engagement — Cornwall

Dr. Garrett Foley, President, Cornwall Academy of Medicine

Greetings from Cornwall, the perfect place to relocate if you are a family doctor. We have a mild climate, compared to our neighbours. Our famous odour is history. Our property prices are amongst the lowest in the province.

We are in the middle of the actual construction of the new ER ICCU and OR and expect to move in July 2012. By the time the total reconstruction is complete in 2014 we should have a wonderful hospital to work in.

A new clinic, The Seaway Valley CHC opened its doors in September and currently employs one GP and two Nurse Practitioners. It also has a diabetic clinic, physiotherapy and psychology facilities.

We in the Cornwall Academy of Medicine are engaged with the City Council in promoting the building of a group practice in a single location in order to attract at least 10 GPs to the area. We have had productive discussions with the Kingston’s medical school in an effort to have post graduate students apply their skills here.

Overall the new decade is looking very promising for the physicians of Cornwall and area.

Ottawa physicians and pharmacists connect in learning new Canadian opioid guidelines

Jennifer Barr, Program Consultant, Provincial Services CAMH

The Academy of Medicine Ottawa, in partnership with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the Champlain Local Health Integration Network and Ottawa Public Health assisted in planning a workshop for physicians and pharmacists designed to improve opioid use. Sponsored by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO), and other provincial partners including the Ontario College of Pharmacists, the workshop presented the new practice guideline Canadian Guideline on Safe and Effective Use of Opioids for Chronic Non-Cancer Pain. This guideline and the Ontario workshops aim to assist clinicians to safely and effectively use opioids to manage chronic pain and to maximize patient safety.

This workshop took place on 3 November 2010 at the Hampton Inn in Ottawa and was attended by over 85 physicians and pharmacists from the Champlain area. Attendees benefitted from expert presentation and introduction of the new tools provided by Dr. Lisa Bromley, a family physician in Ottawa who works at the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre and prescribes methadone in private practice.

Dr. Bromley is on the Steering Committee for the Medical Mentoring for Addictions and Pain (MMAP) program of the Ontario College of Family Physicians and is a mentor for the Ottawa regional group.

Attendees appreciated the collaborative design of the workshop which provided opportunities for group discussion between pharmacists and physicians during interactive case studies. This initiative and others such as the Ontario Government’s new Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act will assist in addressing problems associated with these painkillers and the rise in use of opioid prescriptions over the past few years.

The guideline can be found online at: http://nationalpaincentre.mcmaster.ca/opioid

AMO member, Dr. Derek Puddester recipient of the 2010 C.A. Roberts Award for Clinical Leadership

Dr. Derek Puddester, Director of the Faculty Wellness Program at the University of Ottawa, is the recipient of the 2010 C.A. Roberts Award for Clinical Leadership. This national award is bestowed upon a CPA (Canadian Psychiatric Association) member clinician who has been instrumental in developing new treatment approaches, creative program design or administrative innovations, and who has been recognized for consistently providing superior quality psychiatric care to patients. Upon taking his title as Director of the Faculty Wellness Program, Dr. Puddester not only provided service to faculty members, but has developed the program substantially to meet the depth and breadth of his vision and has contributed to the success of e-health projects nationally and in 40 other countries. This is indeed an honour and well earned prestige.

Congratulations to Dr. Puddester for all his hard work and dedication!
HealthForceOntario Marketing and Recruitment Agency: locums

Physicians who are interested in doing locums register at www.hfojobs.ca and employers, clinics, physicians, etc. can post opportunities on the site — all free. Those physicians who have registered as interested in locum opportunities in the applicable region or community will then be automatically sent an email about the opportunity.

If you are looking for a locum physician, contact Chris Farley Ratcliffe, Community Partnership Coordinator — Champlain (613 866-0634, c.farleyratcliffe@healthforce ontario.ca), and let him know about your opportunity. As a provincially-funded agency, there aren’t fees for any of their services.

Health care connect: helping patients who are without a family physician

Health Care Connect is a Ministry of Health and Long Term Care program which helps Ontarians without a family health care provider find one.

The program refers people without a regular family health care provider to physicians and nurse practitioners who are accepting new patients in their community. Patients who wish to register for the Health Care Connect program, call 1 800-445-1822.

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It’s membership renewal time!

Please continue to support your local medical association in 2011 by renewing your membership. As change occurs in health care at many levels, physician leadership is more important than ever before. Positive transformation requires that physicians play an active role in this process and the AMO values and encourages your input.

We are your voice in our community and at the Ontario Medical Association (OMA). Membership fees support operational costs of the Academy, which permit physician volunteers to work on projects and programs that benefit local physicians and patients.

Membership dues have not increased in 2011.

- Regular: $150
- Part-time (work less than 20 hours a week): $75
- Retired: $30
- Resident: $20
- Medical student: $10
- Associate member: $50

Measles update from Ottawa Public Health

Erin Culley, Public Health Nurse and Dr. Nadine Sicard, Associate Medical Officer of Health

In late November, Ottawa Public Health (OPH) saw the city’s first measles case in Ottawa since 2002. The source was likely international travel. A secondary case acquired measles from this case via exposure in a public setting. Three household siblings of the secondary case developed measles and a fourth case was exposed in a health care setting. All were born after 1970, were unor under immunized and recovered without complications.

OPH provides recommendations for all suspect cases and their contacts until a diagnosis is confirmed. As of January 11, 2011, Ottawa has 6 confirmed cases of measles, which are all linked. Five of the confirmed cases were unimmunized and one case had received only one dose of the vaccine.

This cluster is a reminder of the importance of routine MMR immunization. Two doses should be administered at or after the first birthday and at 18 months. Unimmunized adults should also receive the MMR vaccine.

Measles is a highly communicable disease. It can infect a patient up to 2 hours after the case has left the room. It is infectious from 4 days before to 4 days after the onset of the rash. Symptoms develop 7 to 18 days after contact with an infected person.

Physicians should maintain a high index of suspicion for patients presenting with signs and symptoms of measles, including fever, cough, coryza, conjunctivitis, Koplik spots, and a red blotchy rash on the face that progresses down the body. These patients should have limited contact with other patients and staff in clinics, be placed immediately in a single room with the door closed, and be offered masks. Required testing for measles is threefold: serology, urine AND a nasopharyngeal swab for viral culture. Non-immunized contacts born after 1970 must be offered prophylaxis (vaccine or immune globulins). Infants, pregnant women and immunocompromised patients are at higher risk of complications (pneumonia, encephalitis and death).

All suspect cases must be reported to OPH immediately at 613 580-6744 or faxed to 613 580-9640 during regular business hours. After hours, on weekends and statutory holidays, you may call the Communicable Disease Manager on-call at 613 316-7750.

List of GP Focus Practice and GP Psychotherapy physicians

The Ontario Medical Association provides a list of GP Focus Practice and GP Psychotherapy physicians. The purpose of this list is to serve as a reference guide to physicians in harmonized models (e.g. FHN, FHO). Harmonized physicians can refer their enrolled patients to the GP Focus Practice and GP Psychotherapy physicians on this list without any negative impact for a defined list of codes on their access bonus. For the list of codes and further details please refer to the application package found at: www.oma.org/Member/Resources/PrimaryCareModels/Pages/GPFocusedPracticeDesignation.aspx

This list contains only the approved GP Focus and GP Psychotherapy Physicians who signed the consent form to post their contact information on the OMA Web site. Therefore, some approved GP Focus Practice and GP Psychotherapy physicians may not be on the list because they have not yet signed their consent form or because they did not wish to post their contact information on the OMA Web site.

If you have any questions about this list or if you wish to find more about the application for the GP Focus Practice or GP Psychotherapy designation, please contact Kate Damberger at kate.damberger@oma.org or at 1 800 268-7215 ex. 3178.
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The deadline for the next issue is 16 May 2011.

Acceptance of advertising in this newsletter does not imply endorsement of product or service. We reserve the right to decline, withdraw or modify advertisements at our discretion.

To place an ad, send it to the Academy office by email or fax. Electronic transmission of advertisements is preferred. Please indicate the file format when submitting an ad.

Exam Table. Two available for sale, $250 each or $400 for both. Contact Dr. L. Rossman, 613 723-5635.

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Locum Position, Spring 2011. Looking for a long term locum to work 1 day per week in our congenial clinic in Ottawa’s west end. Option to increase if desired. FHG bonuses apply + full Practice Solutions EMR. We have 2 varied comprehensive family practices and experienced staff. Direct phone line to our house pharmacist. Many specialist colleagues, as well as physiotherapy, podiatry, audiology, Gamma Dynacare lab and CML radiology at your fingertips. Perfect opportunity for someone just getting back to clinical practice or looking to keep up their clinical skills. If interested, please call 613 729-1324 or email levitanandbartlett@gmail.com for more information.

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The deadline for the next issue is 16 May 2011.
The Academy of Medicine Ottawa (AMO) will host its fourth annual Clinical Day on Friday, 25 February 2011, 8 am – 4 pm. The interdisciplinary education event for health professionals, AMO’s Clinical Day is designed for physicians, nurses and allied health professionals, with the objective of improving clinical practice and the health of patients.

CME CREDITS
This program meets the accreditation criteria of The College of Family Physicians of Canada and has been accredited by the Ontario Chapter for up to 5.75 Mainpro-M1 credits. This event is an accredited group learning activity (Section 1) as defined by the Maintenance of Certification Program of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, approved by the Canadian Psychiatric Association for up to 5.75 credits.

CME SESSIONS AGING: IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH
Session 1. Bringing geriatrics to the patients: improving access to geriatric care
Panel (Dept. of Geriatrics, Queensway-Carleton Hospital): Fraser Miller, MD, CM, FRCPC; Christine Bidmead, MSc, Grad Dip PT, MCSP; Anne Pearce; Rosemary Lowenger

Session 2. Delirium, depression and dementia: a clinical case study
Panel (Geriatric Psychiatry Community Services of Ottawa):
Kiran Rabheru, MD, CCFP, FRCP; Linda Gobessi, MD, FRCP; Nicole Robert, BSc(N), MBA

Session 3. Bereavement risk assessment
Peter Barnes, DMin, Bereavement Services, Eastern Health, Newfoundland and Labrador

LIFESTYLE ISSUES
Session 4. Addiction: children at risk
Lisa Boulay, Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services

Session 5. Travel medicine
Peter Teitelbaum, MD, Riverside Travel Medicine Clinic; Brian Stowe, BSc, Phm, MBA, community pharmacist

Session 6. An introduction to BodySense: a disordered eating prevention program for athletes, parents, coaches and communities
Shaunna Taylor, PhD(c), CCC, CSPA, Ottawa High Performance Centre

Featuring keynote speaker:
Dale Potter, Senior Vice President & Chief Information Officer, The Ottawa Hospital
Technology in health care

REGISTRATION:  AMO members: $140  Non-members: $165  Medical students and residents: $100

For more information and to register, please visit the AMO Web site (www.ontariomd.ca/groups/amo) or call the AMO office (613 733-2604) to request a registration form.