



The President's Letter

Dr. Christopher J. (Chip) Doig

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Dear Member:

Representative Forum spring meeting

Today and tomorrow more than 100 delegates to the Alberta Medical Association's (AMA's) Representative Forum (RF) – leaders of the medical profession – are meeting in Edmonton. Their agenda includes:

- Negotiations 2011
- A single set of province-wide medical staff bylaws, zone medical staff associations, and physicians' relationship with Alberta Health Services (AHS)
- The trilateral Physician Business Costs Study, which will be used for determining overhead in future allocations
- Academic relationships with a presentation on the strategic direction planned by the faculties of medicine at the universities of Alberta and Calgary
- Physician Office System Program's deployment strategy

Recently appointed Health and Wellness Minister Gene Zwozdesky will be front-and-centre at a one-hour in-camera session to open Saturday's activities. The luncheon speaker today is MLA Fred Horne (Edmonton-Rutherford). He co-chaired the Minister's Advisory Committee on Health, which agreed with the AMA's recommendations for an Alberta Health Act and a patient's charter. Now, Mr. Horne has been charged with helping the government move forward with the appropriate legislation.

The report from the AMA Board of Directors, which is presented by the president, is always the first item of business at the spring and fall meetings of the Representative Forum. It is divided into four sections:

- Compliance – Compliance outlines how the board has dealt with resolutions from previous RF meetings.
- Activities – On an ongoing basis, board members and RF delegates are provided with "Issues Review" which provides updates about the association's activities.

- Governance – This report details the number of delegates that each section and each region are entitled to and information such as section bylaws being consistent with AMA requirements.
- Issues and Opportunities – This section highlights the major opportunities and issues before the AMA.

Value for Patients™

Today's mantra in health care management and health economics is "value for money." The AMA's vision is Patients First®, so it is only natural that physicians might find "value for money" too fiscal and too constrictive. That's why the AMA is in the process of registering Value for Patients™.

There is a natural synergy with Patients First®, but Value for Patients™ is much, much more than a theme or a slogan. Rather, Value for Patients™ expresses a 365-day-a-year commitment to pursue and support ideas and initiatives that do provide real value for our patients.

Several weeks ago a member in Calgary requested 40 Patients First® buttons. The Physician Advocacy Group was unanimous that the AMA should not only meet this request but also offer the buttons to the whole membership with some extras available for office staff.

We've manufactured 12,000 Patients First® buttons and 12,000 Value for Patients™ buttons and will distribute them with this month's regular mailing.

Looking ahead

Next week I'll report about this weekend's Representative Forum, with a special focus to introduce Negotiations 2011.

In the coming weeks and months, the AMA will continue its efforts to keep you informed and updated about its advocacy for a well-funded health care system in which our patients have timely access to quality care and a system in which physicians are valued and respected.

Yours truly,

Christopher J. (Chip) Doig, MD, MSc, FRCPC
President