SUMMARY

Alberta Medical Association
Special Representative Forum
News Conference, Leduc
September 15, 2012

Representative Forum

- Attended by 115 of the 129 members
- RF meets usually meets twice a year
- This was a special meeting called as a result of the AMA’s negotiations with the Alberta government.

RF agenda

- Review of negotiations up to now

- The possibility of a legal challenge under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

- Results of a recent public opinion poll of Albertans.

- Results of a recent survey of AMA members.

Key Outcomes from today’s special meeting

I. The physician leaders of the Alberta Medical Association agreed that “during negotiations the AMA rejects any form of job action that adversely affects direct patient care.”
They also made a commitment “that doctors in Alberta will continue to provide the excellent medical care to patients that they deserve, in spite of the ongoing dispute with government over contract negotiations.”

II. Last spring the Alberta Medical Association went on record that it would advocate for patient care “before, during and after” the April provincial election.

The Representative Forum encouraged the Board of Directors to have a high public profile as an advocate for a Patients First® health care system.

The AMA will use the expertise of its committees, specialty sections and zone medical staff associations in developing its advocacy and public communications.

III. This summer the Ontario Medical Association went to the courts with a claim that the Ontario Government had violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Representative Forum heard from the lawyer who had headed up that legal challenge.

It unanimously approved a resolution that calls on the AMA to “reserve the right to file a Charter challenge.”

IV. A year ago the AMA had a mandatory levy of $500; it raised about $3.5 million.

Because physicians still do not have an agreement, the AMA wants to make sure it has the resources for advocacy, communications, legal costs and the negotiations themselves.
The Representative Forum supported a voluntary levy of $500 per physician. It will be up to the Board of Directors to decide whether to go ahead with the levy.

V. Many of the 20 resolutions provide direction for the AMA’s negotiators when negotiations resume. As such, we are not making them public.