

Alberta Doctors' Digest

It was a tumultuous year

Dear Members:

This marks the end of my term as AMA president. It has been a challenging year, full of change, much of which was difficult for the profession. In our more than 115-year history, the AMA has never faced so many fundamental challenges in so many areas at one time.

Regardless, I want members to know that this year has been the high point of my professional career. It has been so deeply rewarding. I am honored that I had the chance to represent you, to speak out and act on your behalf for fairness and justice.

Government policies and decisions have impacted our livelihoods, our families, our practices and our ability to fulfill our duty to our patients. We are experiencing this in the midst of an unprecedented, global health crisis with COVID-19. To that heavy burden, add threat and pressure from a government that is moving to reshape our health care system without the meaningful advice of organized medicine or patients.

Very soon after government took office, it became abundantly clear that they were on a mission to diminish the AMA, and by extension, the leadership role of physicians in the system. In potentially fragmenting the AMA, our single voice, they would diminish the ability of physicians to advocate strongly and participate as stewards for system level change.

The next two years will define what the future of health care looks like in Alberta for years to come. Do not forget our real power is demonstrated in our unflinching commitment to providing high-quality care for our patients. The support of the AMA structure is necessary for the power of our profession to be felt. Remaining united under the AMA banner is critical.

I have been so inspired by you, my colleagues, during these tumultuous times. You are an amazing group of strong, compassionate, dedicated professionals who make a positive difference in our world each and every day. I am humbled by your commitment, your insight and your resilience. I want to thank you.

To the many members across the province who have consistently spoken up against harmful government decisions and misleading information and have spoken up in support of the AMA in many different venues. Thank you.

To the many that have contacted me to provide information, advice or concerns. Thank you.

To the section leaders, the zone leaders, the Specialty Care Alliance, the Primary Care Alliance and the Joint Task Force. Thank you.

To our negotiations team and our strategic advisors. Thank you.

To my fellow Board members. You have performed your duty over and above expectations. Thank you.

Thank you so very much to our Indomitable CEO, Mike Gormley and our fabulous AMA staff who are unflagging in their commitment to helping us through this year and who will undoubtedly be instrumental in our future success.

And successful we will be. We will not give up or give in. We will achieve our goals. And we will do it together.

Thank you to the Canadian Medical Association for their amazing and unwavering support of the AMA. The CMA has been at our side at every step this year with advocacy and significant financial resources that have made a real difference in our plans. We know we will prevail with such a strong partner standing steadfastly with us.

In closing, I want to thank my dearest husband Dr. John Henry MacGregor for his love, kindness and support throughout the year. I want to thank my family for their enduring love and help and my dear friends who thankfully adhere to the adage, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

Lastly, to Dr. Paul Boucher, I pass the torch. Hold it high! As I know you will.

In your service,

- Christine P. Molnar, MD, FRCPC

Immediate Past President, Alberta Medical Association