

Alberta Doctors' Digest

Honors for those who serve

I wanted to write about our inaugural virtual annual general meeting, held on October 5. It was a chance to think of the year just passed and lay out our plans for the year ahead. You will be hearing much more about these plans in upcoming letters.

Today, I want to focus on recognizing achievements and tell you about the awards that were bestowed on some of our colleagues during the AGM. This province is justly recognized across the country for our abundance of excellent physician leaders. When handing out numerous awards to our members some years ago, a master of ceremonies at the Canadian Medical Association awards gala said, "I don't know what they are putting in the water in Alberta, but it sure seems to work!"

It is important to celebrate the tireless efforts of colleagues, as the contributions they make every day are part of the reason that Albertans receive such high-quality health care. All Albertans benefit from the generous gift of their wisdom and expertise. They make the work of the AMA possible as the engine of our health policy and advocacy efforts.

We have placed a [two-page ad](#) in *Avenue Magazine*, Calgary and *Edify Magazine*, Edmonton to showcase our 2019-20 recipients of AMA Long-Service and Member Emeritus Awards, as well as those bestowed by the CMA on AMA members. We are proud of each of them.

The Long-Service Award recognizes physicians with 10 years of AMA service. This year, we congratulate 26 recipients who have contributed their knowledge, skill and time to the Association's development and the advancement of the profession. Their involvement is not only directly within AMA committees, the Representative Forum or the Board, as many work quietly in the executive committees of their own specialty sections of the AMA. In this way, they help improve care for their patients by identifying and advocating for the needs of their particular patient populations.

The Member Emeritus award recognizes significant contributions to the goals and aims of the AMA, seniority, long-term membership (20 years or more) and distinguished service based on criteria determined by the Board of Directors. Members Emeriti enjoy all the rights and privileges of a full member but pay no annual dues. We have five recipients to honor this year. To these amazing members, we say: Thank you for your dedication.

[Please take a few minutes to peruse our awards booklet](#) to view the names of all honorees. You may see many colleagues whom you know and I hope the next time you cross paths – virtually or otherwise – that you will offer well-deserved congratulations. The AMA is nothing without our talented and hardworking physician leaders.

In reviewing the personal comments of the honorees in the booklet, I was touched to see how much their involvement in the AMA has meant to them and that many of them encouraged learners and young physicians to engage with the Association throughout their careers.

Be sure to continue your own journey with the AMA and [renew your membership](#).

A special commendation

The Committee on Achievement Awards recommended that the AMA confer special recognition this year on Alberta physicians who practice in the specialty of Public Health and Preventive Medicine for their hard work during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their dedication to protect Albertans in such a crisis and under such pressure is remarkable and worthy of our deepest respect. We also wish to acknowledge their leadership contributions, not only in the wake of the pandemic, but also in the continuous collaborative efforts to promote health and the well-being of Albertans through various public health initiatives, projects and programs.

This specialty area sometimes misses the profile that other specialties enjoy with the public. COVID-19 has brought them very much to the forefront as our daily guides to health and safety. Alberta's Dr. Deena Hinshaw and her many colleagues who work behind the scenes have been critical to Alberta's response to the pandemic.

We salute these colleagues for managing the tide of emerging evidence and crafting sound policy under extreme pressure. We also want to acknowledge that while COVID-19 has grabbed the spotlight for much of 2020, their day to day work, year in and year out, makes our province a safer place to live.

- Paul E. Boucher, MD, FRCPC

President, Alberta Medical Association