YEAR IN REVIEW

2017 opened with the launch of a year-long recognition of the CMA’s 150th anniversary. The CMA and its members have every reason to be proud of our innovative practice, advocacy and collaboration with stakeholders. Time and again, we have been on the forefront in the advancement of human health and medical care.
Engaging members...
Addressing seniors care...
Tackling Canadian poverty...
Honouring women in medical history...
Responding to the government’s budget...

THE CMA ENGAGES ITS MEMBERS
The CMA’s lifeblood is its members. Throughout the year, the CMA engaged with its members on several initiatives related to medical professionalism. It conducted workshops in various cities as well as leading a Listening Tour with then President Dr. Granger Avery. It also conducted a series of online consultations related to physician health, the Governance Review, the upcoming Charter of Shared Values as well as the Code of Ethics.
THE NEED FOR IMPROVED SENIORS CARE

In collaboration with the CMA and following a year of intense advocacy, Member of Parliament Marc Serré rose in the House of Commons on February 24 to call for the creation of a national seniors strategy. This motion, supported by the House of Commons, led to a special study by the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, to which the CMA presented in the Fall.

LET’S REDUCE POVERTY

The CMA tackled poverty through its Parliamentary submission on Effective Poverty Reduction Strategies. Poverty is a medical issue: Its consequences to health are well established and include lower life expectancy, higher disease burden and poorer overall health. The CMA’s four recommendations addressed income guarantees, physical activity, childhood development and health impact assessments in government decision making, and they were well received by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

BUDGET 2017 AND THE SENIORS CARE GAP

Federal budget 2017 had both good and bad news. The CMA reacted, expressing disappointment that the budget did not include money for a national seniors strategy. We promised to continue pressing for the strategy in our submissions to government and our Demand a Plan campaign. Despite the budget’s serious omission, we acknowledged that the government responded positively to many CMA positions by setting aside money for e-prescribing, electronic medical records, medical system reporting, health improvement innovation and mitigation of the opioid crisis.

Women in medical history

In conjunction with International Women’s Day March 8, the CMA highlighted the pioneering role of 19 women trailblazers of Canadian medicine. From Dr. James Miranda Stuart Barry, born in 1789, who lived as a man so she could be a military doctor, to Dr. Jennie Kidd Trout who was the first woman authorized to practice medicine in Canada, to Dr. Julielynn Wong, a Joule Innovation Grant recipient who advanced solar-powered 3D printing systems so medical tools and equipment could be reproduced inexpensively around the world, we salute the women who made and continue to make essential contributions to our profession.
NEW ROADMAP: CMA 2020

The CMA’s Board of Directors embraced a bold future when it adopted a new strategic plan, **CMA 2020**. The plan affirms a new mission—Empowering and Caring for Patients—and a new vision—A Vibrant Profession and Healthy Population—as well as strategic objectives and guiding principles for a modern CMA. This new plan set the stage for engaging physicians on the structure and composition of our Board of Directors. It also provided the impetus for launching a new Health Summit in 2018, during which we will bring dialogue on health issues to a wide multi-stakeholder audience, and for adopting a new approach to our annual general meeting. The strategy will drive all association activities over the next three years.
CHARITABLE GIVING—IT MATTERS

While physicians are focused on the care of patients in clinical settings, they know that human health is advanced outside of the doctor’s office, too. The CMA Foundation was launched to provide impactful donations to registered Canadian charities that further excellence in health care. The five-year CMA 150th Anniversary Bursaries and Awards Program was launched to help more than 170 students from 17 Canadian medical schools further their education.

JOULE EXPANDS PHYSICIAN OPPORTUNITIES

April marked the one-year anniversary of the CMA’s newest subsidiary, Joule, and the expanded opportunities it has brought to CMA members. Advancing health care innovation, Joule delivers solutions driven by and for physicians, residents and medical students. Joule provides valuable continuing education opportunities and makes leading evidence-based clinical products and research available to members, thereby helping physicians be their best. Joule proudly partners with physician entrepreneurs who are pushing the boundaries of technology in health care and extends exclusive offers to members to ensure their practice is at the forefront of modern science and medicine.

CMAJ had a year of transformation, issuing 50 online and 12 print editions, launching four special areas of focus (vulnerable populations, mental health, health services research and sepsis), and publishing five major guidelines. With input from members and stakeholders, members for the inaugural CMAJ Governance Council were selected and the new governance framework for the journal was put in place. CMAJ Open continued to grow in 2017, and the reach for other CMAJ Group journals was expanded.

PROMOTING AND ENDORSING NEW OPIOID-PRESCRIBING GUIDELINES

Physicians recognize that opioids can be important therapeutic tools in the treatment of pain and that, as prescribers, medical doctors have a fundamental role in helping to ensure their evidence-based use. The CMA takes that role very seriously and played an important role in the dissemination and promotion of new opioid-prescribing guidelines as developed by McMaster University.
BUILDING A STRONG FUTURE FOR MEDICAL CULTURE AND PROFESSIONALISM

The CMA launched a country-wide series of discussions, online and face-to-face, to modernize and strengthen medicine’s values and commitments to reflect the contemporary expectations and responsibilities of the profession.

Key themes being discussed are:

• Our culture and community as a profession
• Our development and support as physicians
• Care delivery and the patient experience
• Leveraging our voice and influence
• Generational change and diversity within our profession

LEGALIZING THE RECREATIONAL USE OF CANNABIS

Following the federal government’s move to legalize cannabis, the CMA made a strong public appeal that asked the government to focus on protecting Canadians and reducing any potential harms to health, especially to the health of children and youth.
SMALL BUSINESS TAX CAMPAIGN

The CMA, supported by specialists from MD Financial Management, rallied to oppose proposed small business tax changes. Among the first to voice concern about impacts to small business corporations, the CMA’s interest was pivotal in bringing about a national coalition of small businesses collaborating to fight the proposals. Our decidedly outspoken campaign included presentations to House of Commons and Senate committees, meetings with Finance Minister Bill Morneau and his officials and grassroots engagement of our physician members. CMA President-Elect, Dr. Gigi Osler, led a delegation of women physicians to Kelowna to advocate for a gender analysis of the tax changes. The government backed down later in the year, proof positive that the CMA is an effective advocate for physicians. However, we must keep the pressure up and continue our work on tax fairness.

ANNUAL MEETING ADDRESSES ASSISTED DYING, PROFESSIONALISM, OPIOIDS

Marking the CMA’s 150th anniversary, our annual and general council meetings were held in Québec City in August. Members and stakeholders continued the CMA’s proud tradition of grappling with the most important health issues of the time. We discussed medical aid in dying, the opioid crisis, physician health, medical professionalism and health care innovation, among others.
LEGALIZING RECREATIONAL USE OF CANNABIS

The CMA presented its position on the Cannabis Act before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health. We stressed that the federal government’s marijuana legalization must centre on protecting Canadians from potential harms to health. Our three recommendations focused on reducing health risks, developing a cannabis public health strategy and streamlining the regulatory regime. We remain highly active on this key public health priority.

ACCESS TO CARE

Results of a CMA workforce survey were released showing that the vast majority of physicians in Canada are concerned patients can't access long-term care beds when they are needed. The survey also showed that physicians are working longer hours than they were in 2014 while more are accepting on-call work. Results of the survey continue to help inform CMA positions and submissions to government and also help shape programs designed for the benefit of physicians.

PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

CMA President Dr. Laurent Marcoux presented the CMA’s pre-budget submission before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance. He told the committee that Canada’s seniors population is growing as never before and the health care system must change to respond to this growth's challenges. Five recommendations addressed the need for more respite care services, additional support for caregivers and increased long-term care capacity for medically stable, elderly Canadians.

TAKING CARE OF OUR OWN HEALTH

Physicians are trained to take care of other people, so it's easy for them to forget about their own physical and mental health needs. The CMA teamed up with the Ontario Medical Association for the 5th Canadian Conference on Physician Health. Themed “Burning Brightly, Not Out,” this highly attended conference showcased research on, and initiatives for, improving physician health and wellness.
CMA President Marcoux returned to Parliament Hill to present the CMA’s contribution to a House of Commons committee study, Advancing Inclusion and Quality of Life for Seniors. Our eight recommendations—ranging from improved income security to more senior-friendly communities—were well received by the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities. Many committee members expressed an appreciation for the unprecedented challenges faced by the increasing number of Canadian seniors and the medical system that must care for them. They understood that the task faced, while daunting, is manageable and that changes will ultimately deliver health and financial benefits, not just to seniors but to all Canadians.
SUPPORTING MEDICAL PROFESSIONALISM

We achieve the highest degree of individual and collective success when we work, commit and believe together; when we share a framework of common values, virtues and principles and when we subscribe to the same explicit and implicit understandings. That’s why the CMA is committed to advancing medical professionalism in Canada. In 2017, we started work on key projects—the Charter of Shared Values, an Accountability Framework and a new Code of Ethics—to be finalized and completed in 2018.

THE CMA IS THE FIRST CANADIAN TEDMED PARTNER

The CMA became the first Canadian global partner of TEDMED, the independent health and medicine edition of the e-based TED talks dedicated to "ideas worth spreading." As a result of this new partnership, we will collaborate with global partners to improve health and health care, and we will drive change by engaging in bold conversations on important medical issues. Similarly, we are a founding partner of Singularity University so we can further advance innovation in health and medical care.

ACCESS TO PHYSICIAN-FOCUSED FINANCIAL ADVICE FOR MEMBERS

MD Financial Management continues to evolve to better serve CMA members. MD is introducing new flexible and personalized financial services options to help members achieve financial well-being and peace of mind, while offering increased convenience and choice. To that end, in 2017 MD further enhanced the My MD mobile app, launched a private equity pool, trialled new investing service offerings and reduced MD Private Investment Counsel discretionary wealth management fees, while continuing to keep fees an average of 30% lower¹ than other firms. This is in addition to leading the industry in full transparency on fees and performance, a long-held commitment made possible by MD’s ownership by the CMA.

¹ MD compared the management expense ratio (MER) for MD mutual funds and Precision Portfolios (applies to Series A fees only) with the average mutual fund MERs for comparable funds, using data from Investor Economics as of Dec. 31, 2016.

MD Financial Management provides financial products and services, the MD Family of Funds and investment counselling services through the MD Group of Companies. For a detailed list of these companies, visit md.cma.ca
The year closes with the strength of over 85,000 members firmly committed to meaningful change in health care. The Canadian Medical Association advanced positions on the most pressing issues of our time—seniors' care, the opioid crisis, legalization of recreational marijuana, medical aid in dying—while advocating fair taxation and advancing professionalism. We moved our philanthropy forward through the CMA Foundation and marked Joule's first year enabling innovation in medical care.

We enter a new year with the same zeal we had in 2017. We will continue to press for improvements in Canadians' health and in our health care system. We will further our work developing a professional culture grounded in values, accountability and ethics.

We won't be shy about saying what we believe is the right thing to do.

We continue our mission of empowering and caring for patients. Our collective eyes remain focused on our vision for a vibrant profession and a healthy population.