



UPDATE FROM THE CACAP EXECUTIVE

A Time for Community and for Mental Health

Dr. Claire De Souza MD FRCPC, CACAP President

What a year it has been: we are 1 ½ years into the pandemic and concerns of a 4th wave mount. Hope is being offered with the vaccine. There is discussion of vaccine passports along with a growing number of work places and schools insisting on proof of vaccination. The vaccine rollout is ongoing with attempts to address vaccine hesitancy. Kids have started back to school after being quite isolated.

CACAP Members strive to meet the growing mental health demand brought on by the pandemic. Virtual care has become the norm, being offered from our homes to those of our patients and families. We meet virtually with colleagues. Working from home has brought about new challenges for CACAP members with greater need to multi-task and manage multiple demands. Members face increased work and personal demands as a result.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance both of community and of mental health, not only for our patients and families but also for one another. In this regard, I am very grateful to the Board executive Drs. Jana Davidson (CACAP Past President), Lila Amirali (CACAP Vice President), Jordan Cohen (CACAP Secretary) and Ms. Elizabeth Waite (CACAP General Manager) for their collaborative work. I am grateful to the Board and Committees for going above and beyond during a challenging year, not only serving through their roles as child and adolescent psychiatrists but also supporting the mission and vision of CACAP, and to Elizabeth Waite (CACAP General Manager) who is the glue that holds us all together.

The Conference Committee under the leadership of Dr. Chris Wilkes organized a successful virtual conference for the second time on the theme of Global Psychiatry with 252 in attendance. The pre-conference Institute again proved

popular with 122 participating. Planning is already underway for the upcoming joint conference with AACAP in Toronto next year. The Research and Scientific committee under Dr. Daphne Korczak's leadership organized a range of global and local speakers with timely topics. The Continuing Professional Development team at the University of Ottawa, led by Kassaundra Richards, and the technical staff were responsive behind the scenes to optimize our conference experience.

The year has brought attention to various communities experiencing social inequities and structural racism against marginalized groups. I am grateful to the Advocacy committee under Dr. Raj Rasasingham's leadership, issuing timely position statements in response to challenges facing our communities: supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and speaking out against anti-Asian and anti-Muslim racism; highlighting Indigenous mental health and the horrible history of residential schools, something that Indigenous communities have always known but which has only come to public attention recently; reflecting on the Crisis in Afghanistan and noting the impact of school closures on children's mental health.

The Education committee, chaired by Dr. Khalid Bazaid and previously by Dr. Leanna Isserlin, enhanced the educational materials available for members on the CACAP website including educational videos and helpful links. They are planning a debate series. Under the leadership of Dr. John McLennan, editor, the JCACAP editorial board is overseeing four issues and developed new submission types including ALAN (Arts, Literature and Nature) which members are encouraged to check out.

Dr. Jana Davidson oversees Governance, ensuring we are following Board processes. The Finance committee,

chaired by Dr. Lila Amirali ensures a balanced budget and is exploring an investment strategy for CACAP. The Communications committee, headed by Dr. Matthew Morrisette has been responsible for enhancing CACAP's social media presence and website and is exploring ways to optimize communication. The Awards committee, headed by Dr. Jordan Cohen is supporting ways to honour members. Congratulations to the award winners recently announced at the CACAP Annual Conference: Drs. Kerry Boyd (Paul Steinhauer Award); Vincenzo DiNicola (Naomi Rae Grant Award); Leanna Isserlin (Excellence in Education Award) and Roberto Sassi (Certificate of Special Recognition). The Membership Committee also chaired by Dr. Jordan Cohen is exploring ways to increase recruitment and retention through education, mentorship and involvement of Members in Training (MiTs). Our MIT representative on the Board, Dr. Alexandra Manning, is suggesting ways to enhance recruitment and engagement of MiTs, and has been responsible for organizing a recent mentorship survey. Regional representatives (Drs. Kelly Saran (BC/Yukon), Blair Ritchie (AB/NWT), Lina Degen (Prairies) Raj Rasasingham (ON), Arianne St. Jacques (ON), Ashley Wazana (QC), Taline Bedrossian (QC), Tolulope Alugo (Atlantic)) raise local challenges and initiatives, areas for advocacy, and ways to support member engagement. I'd like to thank our out-going Board members: Drs. Ashley Wazana and Tolulope Alugo for their years of dedication, and welcome new Board members: Drs. Paola Habib (QC) and Sabina Abidi (Atlantic).

This past year, CACAP undertook the process of exploring a name change. This started in the summer 2020 with

our new Vision as *national leader in Child and Youth Psychiatry collaboratively advancing the mental health care of children, youth and families through advocacy, education and expertise*. This led to the proposed name change to the *Canadian Academy of Child and Youth Psychiatry (CACYP)*, introduced at the AGM last year and explored and communicated through member survey in the Fall, Town Halls over the Fall and Winter, a special meeting in the Spring, debate articles, quarterly updates from the Executive in the Journal and most recently a Q&A communiqué to address questions and concerns from members. The vote took place in early September: 154 members voted, representing just under 40% of voting members. Of those who voted, 54% were in favour of a name change; however as per the Canadian Not For Profit Corporations Act, '66%' would be required for a major change to pass. As such, our name will remain the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (CACAP). The Town Halls and Special Meeting were venues for rich discussion and debate, reflective of an engaged membership, which is quite appropriate and important for our member driven organization.

As we look forward, we will be undertaking strategic planning over the Fall to plan for 2022-2025, developing the strategic directions endorsed by the Board in June 2021 of advocacy, collaboration, education, and membership.

We are a community of clinicians, researchers, educators, collaborators, and advocates. Together, we can advance the mental health care of children, youth and families through advocacy, education and expertise. We look forward to working together on this.