



# Ontario's Anesthesiologists

A SECTION OF THE ONTARIO MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

SPRING 2017

## Update from Spring 2017 Council

Dear Colleagues,

It is once again a very interesting time for Ontario Physicians and the OMA has undergone significant change over the last year. We feel that Spring Council this year was characterized by a greater sense of optimism and unity than in previous council meetings.

Dr.'s Monica Olsen, Eric Goldszmidt, and I attended the Spring Council meeting as your section delegates. Dr. Katherine Ryans attended as an alternate for Dr Yusuf. Dr Ryans also attended as Delegate for her district. Many other Anesthesiologists were present in other capacities including executive members Drs. Lukasz Bartosik, Rohit Kumar, and Paul Tenenbein

All council reports, motions and resolutions from the weekend can be viewed on the member's section of the OMA website, [available here](#). Below are a few key highlights to report:

**Negotiations:** Mr. Goldblatt, the Lead Negotiator from Goldblatt partners, provided an update on the progress of negotiations with the Ontario Government. Presently the Negotiations Committee is negotiating a framework for binding interest arbitration to be in place for this, and subsequent, Physician Service Agreements. There is no substantive discussion on the elements of the PSA or discussion over actual terms of the PSA. The OMA and the Negotiations Committee have plans to engage membership in extensive consultation to obtain their views when they are ready to begin PSA negotiations.

Kevin Burkett has been agreed upon as the mediator for these negotiations and they have had two mediation sessions to date. The Charter Challenge remains in place, but there is liaison with the Charter Challenge counsel and there is broad consensus that the framework for BIA will not undermine the Charter Challenge.

Mr. Goldblatt reassured Council that the process is keeping to reasonable timelines and suggested we may see a resolution as early as the fall. The process is very dynamic and it has been a very intense. Mr. Goldblatt

strongly believes that a framework for BIA will protect us from further Unilateral Action and provide a process for dispute resolution

The OMA also presented some principals, themes and ideas of what job action might look like if it were to be deemed necessary implement during the negotiation process. The OMA Physician Action Working Group (PAWG) has been gathering information and there is not insignificant support by general membership to co-engage in job action should the impasse with the government continue. It was clarified that Ontario Physicians reserve the right to engage in job action, but there are some principals by which we will abide, including but not limited to, opposition to proposed legislation (linked to harm caused by government), having public engagement as part of job action, not compromising patient safety and continuing emergency care, not placing an unfair burden on particular services or impacting resident education, as well as complying with CPSO guidelines. They also presented common themes, such as work to rule (i.e. no more uncompensated work), reconsidering voluntary data sharing with hospital, LHINS and ministry, as well as study days/emergency service days only as a last resort form of job action. The OMA has also asked interested members to sign up as champions; if we are going undertake job action, we need champions in every specialty and district.

[Click here for more information.](#)

**Governance Report:** Some important motions proposed by the governance Committee to amend bylaws passed. These amendments change the way in which President and President Elect are nominated and elected. The election pool for the President Elect can be elected from the board with no minimum duration of time served on the board or any member of Council. The OMA delegates will continue to elect these positions at council, but the OMA plans to better inform membership so their voice can be represented. The term of the Chair of the Board has been extended to two years. To read all council motions in detail, [please click here](#).

**Elections:** Congratulations to Dr. Shawn Whatley, who has been elected as the OMA's newest President and Dr. Alan Hudak, who was re-elected as Council Chair.

## Update from Council Continued...

Dr. Nadia Alam, a FP-A from Halton Hills, was elected as the President-elect. And Dr. Sanjay Acharya, an Ottawa Anesthesiologist, was re-elected as the Vice Chair of Council. We are proud to have anesthesiology represented in such significant roles at the OMA.

**Beyond the Mask:** Outside of OMA politics, we are delighted the section's Beyond the Mask projects have seen a lot of traction over the last few months. We are pleased to report that the development of our Choosing Wisely Implementation Guide is almost complete. This in-depth guide will include comprehensive case studies, tools and templates and will be ready to launch in mid-June 2017. We hope that this guide will help Anesthesiologists to adopt and implement rational, evidence-based pre-operative testing protocols. We look forward to reaching out to our membership with the final product in the coming weeks!

Another part of the BTM initiative was the recent launch of our Chiefs Resource Centre, designed to help Chiefs by providing materials such as health-related bills, information on hospital financing, sample order sets, policies, protocols, and important links. It is hosted on PetalMD, which includes document sharing, messaging and calendar features. We have had such positive feedback,

the BTM Initiative plans to create a similar PetalMD group accessible to all our 1400 membership, with work beginning this summer. We are very proud of the positive engagement by our membership and we look forward to building communication tools to better enable constructive change by Ontario Anesthesiologists.

We will also have more in-depth information on all section initiatives at our Ontario Anesthesia Meeting and Conference Weekend held at the Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto, the weekend of September 14th-17th. We have another great academic program planned, including our annual Thursday PLI Leadership Development program, thought provoking PBL discussions and innovation workshops. Registration will be open in mid-June and we hope to see you all there! On behalf of the Ontario's Anesthesiologists executive, we hope you all have a happy, safe and restful summer.

Warm Regards,



Christopher Harle, FRCA FRCPC  
Chair Ontario's Anesthesiologists

## 2017 Ontario Anesthesia Meeting and Conference Weekend WESTIN HARBOUR CONFERENCE CENTRE, TORONTO

Save the Date September 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 2017



Planning for the 2017 Ontario Anesthesia Meeting is well underway. This year's event will be held the weekend of September 14th-17th, 2017 at the Westin Harbour Castle conference center in Toronto. The Westin Harbour Castle is located on the shores of Lake Ontario, steps away from the Downtown Core near Toronto's exciting theatre and entertainment districts. Our annual Saturday night social event will be held at LOFT in the trendy Distillery Historic District on Saturday, September 16th. The Distillery Historic District is widely regarded as Canada's premier arts, culture and entertainment destination. We invite all our members to come explore the unique Distillery District and join us for food and drinks as we mingle with Anesthesiologists across the province! Space is limited.

Our Leadership Development Program is now entering its eighth year and will be combined with the Ontario Anesthesia Meeting on Thursday September 14th, 2017. This year's 1-day session is on *Conflict Management and Negotiation* and will be facilitated by renowned Canadian political scientist and international relations expert Janice Stein. Ontario's Anesthesiologists sponsors the 1-day program. All participants must be a member of the Section and must be registered for the Ontario Anesthesia Meeting. Applicants should [email the section](#) and outline their interest in the workshop and the leadership roles they have had and anticipate holding in future.

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION AVAILABLE JUNE 2017**

# + BEYOND THE MASK: Interview with Dr. Beverley Orser

Interviewed by Dr. Jane Cooke-Lauder, BA, MBA, DM, CMC, BTM Strategic Consultant, and Emily Hill, the Section's Administrative Coordinator



Dr. Beverley Orser, a highly-regarded anesthesiologist, researcher and health system leader, practices at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre (Toronto). She is affiliated with the Sunnybrook Research Institute and holds a number of leadership positions, including: Director of Research for Sunnybrook's Department of Anesthesia; professor, Department of Physiology, University of Toronto; and incoming Chair (as of July 1, 2017), Department of Anesthesia,

University of Toronto. She is also a former holder of a Canada Research Chair in Anesthesia. Dr. Orser is extremely modest about her achievements- "I am nothing special. I am not a rocket scientist" -and attributes much of her success to support and encouragement from several colleagues, mentors and team members. We had the pleasure of sitting down to talk to Dr. Orser about her remarkable experiences.

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*"There does come a point when you have to step up and accept responsibility, even if it is uncomfortable or unfamiliar."*

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The key points of Dr. Orser's philosophy about leadership can be summarized in four 'C's' and three 'S's, starting with **Commit**. She started her career as a GP-Anesthetist and embarked on additional training after being inspired as a medical student by the difference made by an anesthesiologist in an under-resourced area. Dr. Vince Hughes was working at St. Jude's Hospital in St. Lucia. After Hurricane David devastated the island, Vince was delayed by road closures in getting to the hospital. "When Dr Hughes was finally able to show up, I saw what his presence did in that disaster situation and how talented and committed he was. He became a role model." Her advice is to find a problem and stick with it. "I think what I have been fortunate to be, is determined and committed. My advice

to young leaders and researchers: try to find a problem that fundamentally speaks to you and that you think is important. If you are determined and are fortunate enough to find yourself in the right environment, things will work out okay. Be sure to have some fun along the way as the time available is not infinite. It is usually more fun with a group of folks who share the same interest and passion. Expect the falls; you are not pushing hard enough if there are no falls. Weather the bumps— and expect that things will not always go well. Build resilience."

**Step Up.** This is somewhat akin to 'lean in'! Take advantage of opportunities. Give back to your community and grow others. Dr. Orser reflected on how her early mentors prepared her for leadership roles, "There does come a point when you have to step up and accept responsibility, even if it uncomfortable or unfamiliar. And I think ideally, you want to try to grow into leadership positions in a step by step manner. You want to make sure you've learned how to take on those responsibilities in an appropriate manner with the right toolsets." Dr. Orser advocates continuing to be open to new avenues and opportunities. Listening to the patient is absolutely critical in her mind before, during and after surgery: "The patient, their family and the patient's physiological and pathophysiological responses can tell you what you want or need to know in order to provide optimal care".

**Be Curious:** Wanting to learn more and find answers, Dr. Orser knew that further education was required to learn the language of the world of science she was entering. She went on to complete her specialty FRCPC training in Anesthesiology at McMaster and Oxford Universities, and to earn her Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences at the University of Toronto. She describes herself as being amazed at the lack of understanding as to how anesthetic drugs actually work – which was stalling the introduction of new anesthetic drugs. A milestone for her lab was when the team discovered the properties of a population of inhibitory receptors, pharmacological properties that hadn't been described before. "We really stumbled on this because we were looking for anesthetic sensitive receptors and these receptors were causing problems in our experiments. It turned out there was this whole new population of inhibitory receptors that have now become the focus of our work." Being curious is not constrained to science or medicine. Dr. Orser believes there is much to be learned from other disciplines and continues to read widely, including business literature to learn more about such topics as team development.

**Be Strategic and Selective:** Dr. Orser co-founded her laboratory with another outstanding researcher, Dr. John Macdonald, who mentored Dr. Orser through her Ph.D. "John really had a true love of knowledge and scientific advancement. He taught me how to choose people carefully to be on the team. You need to be strategic and selective about who you are sharing your time with." So, it is important to identify the right environment in which you will flourish.

Not every mentorship relationship works. Dr. Orser went on to say, “It is most important to watch carefully. Watch how the people that seem to be effective make their decisions and execute their decisions. I also think soft mentoring is important. We are fortunate to be surrounded by leaders all the time, and some are good, even outstanding and some are not so good - but the point is to watch carefully to see what’s most effective, what’s most principled, what motivates a group to move forward – and select your mentors accordingly.”

**Both Collaborate and Compete:** Dr. Orser believes in driving for excellence but without compromising values. She adopted and continues to use the team based-approach she learned from Dr. Macdonald, “It is all about peer support and keeping the core message alive. Create the environment where team members can thrive. Retain high standards, be rigorous, model a strong work ethic and never compromise integrity for productivity. Celebrate achievements and when things get tough just fall back on that core message.” Establishing a vision and mission for your lab that will motivate and energize all members of the research team is key. Dr. Orser also believes in sharing knowledge generously, celebrating success and ensuring that everyone is recognized appropriately. However, she is also a ferocious competitor, a character trait that she attributes to having an identical twin sister! Wins – especially in the research lab - continue to excite and motivate her. Attaining the necessary resource for success remains highly competitive and surviving, let alone thriving, requires sound instincts and social acumen. Her counsel in this regard is to do the hard work required and set yourself up for success by using your time thoughtfully. “You are not entitled - so work hard and seek out those who can help you. Find the group that will move things forward. Celebrate small wins. Be both patient and respectful – try for win-win outcomes and ensure that your work can withstand scrutiny and criticism.”

Dr. Orser says her medical, research and leadership journey was never planned or calculated, “I don’t think I every planned it, I just went from one step to the next and it seemed like the right thing to do at the time.” But it is clear that throughout Dr. Orser’s career, she has been committed to caring for her patients, “I like the sense of taking care of patients and I have the sense of being pulled into that level of responsibility. The research is not just helping one patient, it is helping a lot of patients. That’s the motivating factor.” We look forward to seeing more breakthroughs from the Orser Laboratory and wonderful work by Dr. Orser in her clinical, research and education roles.

## Meet Your New Section Members....



**Dr. Rohit Kumar, Member at Large.** Rohit is an Anesthesiologist at Trillium Health Partners in Mississauga. He is originally from Halifax and completed Medical School at Dalhousie University. He did his Anesthesia Residency training at the University of Toronto. At Trillium Health Partners he has been the Physician Lead in the Pre-Operative Assessment Clinic and is a member of the Acute Pain Service. In 2014, Rohit was presented the Trillium Health Partners Better Together Physician Award for demonstrating leadership in advancing collaborative practice. He is active in the OMA as a District 5 Delegate and a member of the Audit Committee. Rohit is also a member of our Beyond the Mask Choosing Wisely Hub to help with the development of the new Choosing Wisely Implementation Guide. In his spare time, he enjoys golfing and reading.



**Dr. Paul Gill, Member at Large.** Paul completed his family medicine residency and family medicine anesthesia training at the University of Toronto in 2013. Since then, he has been working in Goderich in the capacity of FP-anesthetist while also carrying a family practice, working in the emergency department, and OR assisting. His interest in leveraging technology to drive change has led him to multiple local and regional administrative leadership positions at the hospital level (Chief of Anesthesia, IT Co-Lead AMGH/HPHA hospital groups etc). As the SW LHIN Primary Care Co-Lead, Paul has and continues to advocate for an elevation in the value and role of physicians in regional and provincial healthcare system planning. When not at work, Paul has his hands full playing lego with his two terrific boys, and Scrabble with his genius physician wife.

### Request for Submissions

The Ontario’s Anesthesiologist Newsletter is looking for submissions from our members. If you would like to contribute an article, promotional piece or general information to the newsletter, please email us at [info@ontariosanesthesiologists.ca](mailto:info@ontariosanesthesiologists.ca)