Canadian Audiologist

The Official Publication of the Canadian Academy of Audiology

The Canadian Academy of Audiology: A Transformative Organization

Published September 3rd, 2019

Dave Gordey, PhD

I have always valued the member diversity at the Canadian Academy of Audiology (CAA). We are clinicians, researchers, educators, business owners, and members of industry, and this composition makes us truly unique. Together, we have built an organization that has accomplished some amazing initiatives to further audiology in Canada. Therefore, I would like to acknowledge the excellent work of our board members, executive team, and committees who carry out transformative work and activities to promote and support the work of audiologists in Canada.

We are nearing the 22nd annual CAA conference in beautiful Halifax, Nova Scotia. This is our time to celebrate the year's work of Canada's only dedicated national audiologists' organization. And thanks to you, what an exceptional year it has been! CAA initiatives, partnerships, and collaborations have led to some very exciting new opportunities in the areas of advocacy, education and research. Undoubtedly, this is an excellent representation of our commitment to audiology in Canada. As your outgoing president, it is my pleasure to share with you a few of this year's highlights!

Our advocacy activities got off to a great start when CAA joined other invested hearing partners in the Hearing Healthcare Alliance (HHAC). The HHAC is a pan-Canadian alliance created to bring together the many hearing health-related organizations and professional societies to achieve a common purpose - a better hearing health system for Canadians. This would include increasing educational messaging on the need to prevent, detect and manage hearing loss within a more functional system. For example, members of the HHAC organized and attended two high profile events for members and staff of federal parliament in Ottawa and provincial legislature in Toronto. Both were very well attended and generated a lot of discussion around the impact of hearing loss for Canadians.

Ear, Nose and Throat specialists (ENT) are a vital link in hearing health care. This year, we strengthened our relationship with our medical and surgical colleagues by commiting to a new initiative, referred to as "audiologist direct referral to ENTs." The Canadian Academy of Audiology and the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology each received board approval and overwhelming support to collaborate and proceed with this initiative. Provincial ENT and Audiology representatives have been identified, and they will be working together to complete this process with their respective provincial Ministries of Health.

Accessibility has been defined by the Ministry of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour as creating communities, workplaces and services that enable everyone to participate fully in society without barriers. We are very fortunate to have CAA committee members dedicated to this cause, most recently by introducing an exciting project to explore how audiologists provide accessibility to people with hearing loss. The committee is optimistic that the outcomes from this

work could help inform audiologists in Canada on how best to promote accessibility within their clinical practice.

The Canadian Infant Hearing Task Force (CIHTF) continued its exceptional work investigating Early Hearing, Detection and Intervention (EHDI) programs in Canada. Survey research informed the development of a report card, which the committee presented on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. This presentation and press release drew a lot of media interest, and the committee was able to draw attention to the inequitable access to EHDI in provinces and territories across Canada. The CIHTF committee is optimistic that this activity will promote further conversations and strategy development for the need of a formalised, national strategy for EHDI.

Education and research have always been extremely important and central to the work at CAA. It was with great excitement that we announced our formal partnership with the Ida Institute. The Ida Institute is an independent, non-profit organization working to integrate person-centered care in hearing rehabilitation. Together with hearing care professionals around the world, they develop tools and resources to strengthen the counseling process. Our new partnership means an opportunity to collaborate on projects related to person-centered care and share Ida’s exceptional resources with our CAA members.

These are certainly only a few of the many exciting activities that have happened this year at CAA. I truly believe that our work at CAA is transformative and would not be possible with out the commitment of our executive director and administrative manager, our board and committee members, and our volunteers. To them, a very heart felt thank you! Your engagement, dedication, and passion to audiology in Canada inspires me everyday. It has been a privilege to be a volunteer, and a president of an organization with an endless amount of enthusiasm for hearing health care in Canada.