

Dr. Todd Hatchette
2018 President's report

The past year has been a busy one for AMMI Canada. First, I would like to extend a very special thanks to our annual conference Program Planning Committee for another very successful meeting in Vancouver. Having an engaged membership is vital to a successful organization and I would personally like to thank all of the members of the Association who volunteer their time to sit on council and the various committees. Members of the association have been very active in continuing to move our key strategic areas forward and there have been a number of changes to our committees to better reflect the organizations goals.

Antimicrobial stewardship (AMS) and antibiotic resistance (AMR) continue to be a primary strategic area for the organization and remain a priority for PHAC who sees AMMI Canada as the leading experts in this area. AMMI Canada is involved in a number of committees at the national level. We are co-chairing the Canadian Public Health Officer's (CPHO) Health Professionals Forum on AMS/AMR and have worked with the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) to develop a policy statement that will be discussed for approval by council at our spring meeting. This year Dr. Edith Blondel-Hill resigned as chair of the Antibiotic Stewardship and Resistance Committee (ASRC), so she could focus on local initiatives. Council took the opportunity to revisit the scope and role of the ASRC. I would like to thank Dr. Blondell-Hill for her work as chair over the last year and the helpful suggestions on how we can make the committee more effective. While the ASRC has been very successful in producing a number of important toolkits, the role of AMMI Canada is growing as a leader of AMS initiatives at the national level. As such, council felt that the role of the ASRC needed to expand. At the fall council meeting Dr. Nicole Le Saux was appointed as the new chair of the committee. She has been working with council to revise the terms of reference and develop a work plan for the committee moving forward. With her experience and leadership we will continue to be the source for AMS/AMR information for government, health care professionals and the public.

There have been a number of other changes to AMMI Canada committees. Dr. Kevin Katz has become the new co-chair of CHEC, Dr. Dylan Pillai is the new chair of the Grants and Awards Committee and Dr. Vincent Deslandes is the new chair do the Members-in-Training Committee. Dr. Yves Longtin has been appointed the chair of the Communications and Public Relations Committee, which will be revising its terms of reference to try and develop a process to better address media requests and manage public relations related aspects for the organization. This will be increasingly important as we continue to increase the visibility of our organization as the experts in infectious disease and medical microbiology in Canada. This year we also had an inaugural face to face meeting of the recently formed AMMI Canada Clinical Research Network (CRN). The network will foster investigator-initiated research inquiries into infectious diseases and will strive for open collaboration with other networks and stakeholders interested in advance knowledge and outcomes in this field. There will be another face to face meeting prior to our annual meeting to develop research projects further.

We continue to be active participants in the Chief Public Health Officer's (CPHO) Health Professionals Forum whose purpose is to facilitate enhanced relationships and synergy across health professions, advance strategic and horizontal public health issues of national importance and improve responsiveness and public communication on emerging public health and population health issues. The four key areas identified by the group include: Indigenous health (with focus on cultural awareness); problematic substance use and linkages to mental health; Antimicrobial Resistance/infectious disease prevention; and seniors/dementia/chronic disease prevention.

Dr. Yoko Schreiber, the chair of AMMI Canada Indigenous Health Committee is collaborating with other professional societies to capture existing approaches, and identify resources across CPHO Forum member organizations to inform the development of the following three areas: common values and guiding principles on Indigenous engagement; common understanding and definitions along the continuum of cultural awareness/safety to professional practice; compilation of resources/tools/learning modules to support cultural awareness/safety among health professionals. Importantly, as mentioned above, AMMI Canada has been identified as the co-chair of the AMR working group that will be led by Dr. Nicole Le Saux. The working group is in the process of gathering an inventory of AMR tools that have been developed by members of the roundtable. The latest initiative that AMMI Canada will be involved in is reducing stigma among people who use drugs.

Lyme disease remains an area where AMMI Canada is asked for leadership. Dr. Dan Gregson and I are involved in a number of important national initiatives to develop evidence based educational modules for various groups including the Centre for Effective Practice, Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada, and the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN). In addition, in response to multiple requests from advocates to update our position on Lyme disease, we have published a statement on individuals suffering from persistent symptoms that are attributed to Lyme disease. These individuals are suffering from very real and sometimes debilitating symptoms. They want answers. Unfortunately, there has been a lot of misinformation about Lyme disease and we felt it was important to provide accurate information for both healthcare providers and the public. This role will become increasingly important as we live in an era of "fake news" and misinformation. This is exemplified by the resurgence of measles which is due to the ongoing propagation of misinformation on the internet and social media that continues to confuse the public into second guessing whether to vaccinate their children with vaccines that are safe and effective. As the experts in Infectious Disease and Medical Microbiology we will continue to provide accurate information to government, healthcare providers, and the public.

Finally, there have been significant changes within the Secretariat last year with the departure of both Paul Glover and Melanie Desjardins, however, with change comes opportunity. Dana Mather joining the team to help with conference planning and will soon be joined by Alison Peverly. Leah Menard will be part of the reorganization of our team to ensure there are adequate resources to focus more on supporting our education

committee, another strategic area of AMMI Canada, and one that generates income to support the organization. I would like to end by formally thanking Riccarda Galioto, our Executive Director, for everything she does for our organization. She works incredible hard and is the foundation that keeps our organization moving forward. This was never more apparent than this year when she had to take on the roles of the departing members of the secretariat. Thank you Riccarda.