

THE COMMENTATOR

CMLTA COLLEGE OF
MEDICAL LABORATORY
TECHNOLOGISTS
OF ALBERTA

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PRESIDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

What's up with volunteering and why are so many people doing it? According to Dr. Dawn Carr, a social gerontologist, people that volunteer are happier and healthier than those that do not volunteer. Dr. Carr's research¹ on healthy and active aging found that those that established meaningful volunteer roles when they were younger were more robust psychologically as they aged and remained physically functional longer. She found that individuals that started volunteering early in life almost always continued volunteering into their post-retirement years. Carr's research confirmed that a commitment to volunteering has a profound impact on well-being and she described volunteering in later years as "even more beneficial for one's health than exercising and eating well."²

Volunteering provides opportunities to establish and grow professional relationships, build friendships, learn something new, and as Dr. Carr pointed out, provides a sense of purpose. Individuals brought together by volunteering bring distinct attributes to teams that allow a volunteer group to explore topics through different lenses. That said, a variety of perspectives allow team members to learn and grow together and ultimately become stronger as a collaborative team. The academic description of the benefits of volunteering aligns perfectly with my own experience as a volunteer with the CMLTA. It has been a pleasure volunteering with the CMLTA Council and the Legislation Sub-Committee over the last few years. In addition to building professional friendships, volunteering with the CMLTA has enhanced my understanding of the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) and how a self-regulating college functions.

Regulated Members can volunteer in several different

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NOMINATIONS

[click here for details](#)

RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

DEADLINE: December 31, 2018

[Click here for details](#)

chart the strategic direction for the organization. Councilors attend four (4) regularly scheduled Council meetings and one strategic planning session each year. **The Legislation Sub-Committee** is an adhoc committee of Council that reviews and revises CMLTA policies, procedures, and other CMLTA documents ensuring they are aligned with legislation and leading practices. If you like writing policy and procedure and “finessing the details”, then the Legislation Sub-Committee is the place for you; the committee meets 2-3 times per year. Councilor and Legislation Sub-Committee appointments require a three-year commitment. Appointments are staggered over a three-year cycle, so there are always experienced volunteers to mentor the incoming volunteers. All meetings are held on a Saturday at the CMLTA office in Edmonton. There is an honorarium provided for these volunteers and travel, accommodation, and meal per diems are covered by the CMLTA. For additional information about the role of a Councilor, visit <http://cmlta.org/home/about/governancetrainingtools/> and for more information on the Legislation Sub-Committee visit <http://cmlta.org/home/about/volunteer/>.

Pursuant to Section 15 of the HPA, CMLTA Council must appoint a minimum of four (4) Regulated Members to serve on the **Regulated Member Resource List (RMRL)**. RMRL members volunteer on hearing tribunals when an investigation into a complaint of unprofessional conduct has merit and warrants a formal hearing on the matter. The time commitment for this volunteer role varies depending on the number of complaints and the nature and complexity of each complaint. RMRL members may go for several months without participating in a hearing tribunal; however, when assigned to a hearing, this role will require time to prepare for the hearing, time to attend the hearing (average 1 – 3 days), and time to work with independent legal counsel to draft a written decision with findings and reasons as outlined in the HPA. It is important to seek support and approval from your employer before putting your name forward for this volunteer position. RMRL members receive expert training with educational courses and conferences reimbursed by the CMLTA, as well as wage replacement for missed days of work to attend a hearing tribunal. Regulated Members appointed to the RMRL tend to volunteer for longer

interested in volunteering on the RMRL and have questions, please visit <http://cmlta.org/home/about/volunteer/>. For more information on educational offerings, please visit the [Foundation of Administrative Justice](#) and [Canadian Council of Administrative Tribunals](#).

To fully appreciate the benefits of volunteering, one must become a volunteer. I encourage all Regulated Members to consider volunteering with the CMLTA. Please email info@cmlta.org if you have any questions about the volunteer roles described, or submit a [volunteer resource form](#) to put your name forward for upcoming appointments in 2019.

1. Carr, D. C., Kail, B.L., Towe, J.W. (2018). The relation of volunteering and subsequent changes in physical disability in older adults. *The Journals of Gerontology*, (73:3), 511-521. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbx102>.

2. Carr, D.C. (2014). 5 reasons why you should volunteer. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-third-age/201403/5-reasons-why-you-should-volunteer>.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The CMLTA Council convened on March 10, 2018 for a regularly scheduled Council meeting. The following are highlights from the meeting:

- Approved the 2017 audited financial statement as presented by the auditors.
- Approved the 2017 annual report prepared for the Minister of Health.
- Appointed Yaremchuk and Annicchiarico as the 2018 auditor.
- Approved Legislation Sub-Committee amendments to CMLTA Bylaws.
- Approved revisions to CMLTA operational program and finance policies.
- Approved new software and records management system based on the [Helsby Drake](#) platform.
- Approved extension of office space lease for 2020 – 2030 term.
- Appointed Lisa Purdy as the CMLTA representative on the Health Safety Organization/Accreditation Canada (HSO/AC) Accreditation Decision Committee

NOMINATIONS

Council is currently accepting expressions of interest for the following vacant positions:

- 2019 - 2021 Councilor (3 positions)
- 2018 - 2020 Legislation Sub-Committee Member (3 positions)
- 2019 - 2021 Legislation Sub-Committee Member (3 positions)

If you are interested, please contact Lori Kmet at registrar@cmlta.org.

2019 DUES NOTICE

September 15-October 31, 2018: \$450 (early bird discount)

November 1-30, 2018: \$500 (regular dues)

December 1-31, 2018: \$625 (regular dues plus processing fees)

NOTE: Since 2013, annual MLT dues have been reduced from \$610 to \$500.

REGISTRAR'S REVIEW

"Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change."
Stephen Hawking

New Helbsy Drake Software Platform for CMLTA Programs and Services

The CMLTA learned last fall that our current third-party software platform, RSmart and its MTrack software platform will no longer be supported. The end results are no additional improvements to software programming and status quo for all current functionalities, and that the MTrack system cannot be reconfigured to be compatible with future upgrades from various providers (Microsoft, Bambora online payments, etc.). The CMLTA must be proactive and responsive in its operations and must not be handcuffed to outdated software and technology. The mandated programs and services of the *Health Professions Act* need to be fulfilled and administered by the CMLTA and electronic means is the most

In its quest to find the best and most cost-effective software solution; the CMLTA investigated five (5) leading software providers in the regulatory/association field. CMLTA Council chose the Helbsy Drake (HD) platform under Thentia Global Systems Inc. as this was the only platform designed by regulators for regulators, used cloud-based technology with Canadian servers, and invested significantly (25% of resources) in research and development. One other important feature of HD was their commitment to privacy, security, and confidentiality. HD also does securities regulation for major Canadian banks and must meet inordinately high information security, disaster recovery, and auditing standards set by the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions and are governed by other provincial and federal regulations, such as the *Bank Act*.

HD software has all the current online capabilities Regulated Members are familiar with (online applications for initial registration, reinstatement, and renewal and an online Continuing Competence Program and Compliance Audit) as well as additional functionalities for the end-user. Some of the online HD cloud-based modules include: initial registration/renewal/reinstatement, continuing competence, complaints and discipline, registrant self-service for practice permits and receipts, public register with more data elements and enhanced search capabilities, mass emailing, accounting/invoicing, quality assurance, secure Regulated Member and volunteer website portals, online voting for nomination and election to Council, daily data extracts to Alberta Health's Provincial Provider Registry, and reporting and analytics. Additionally, HD critically analyzes all regulatory operations to optimize business processes and when a new module and functionality is created for one client, it is shared with all clients and configured to each client's specific needs.

The CMLTA is targeting go-live for the new HD platform July 15, 2018. What does this mean for Regulated Members? There will be a different look to the secure Regulated Member and volunteer websites and initial/renewal/reinstatement application processes; however, the HD platform is user-friendly and allows for easy and intuitive navigation. Regulated Members will have access to previous year's registration data and Continuing Competence Program

will be shared with Regulated Members to ensure there are no surprises. Regulated Members will be required to “activate” their new registrant account in advance of the 2019 MLT Practice Permit renewal period. The CMLTA will perform due diligence in testing each module and all components of the new software, but also encourages Regulated Members to access their CCP Activity Logs to confirm their data transfer was complete and accurate. As with any LIS update or ring release, there may be undetected and unpredicted glitches that are best remedied before the busy September renewal season. Stay tuned!

2018 BYLAWS

The CMLTA Bylaws have been updated and [posted to the website](#).

Regulated Members may submit feedback on the CMLTA Bylaws at any time throughout the year. Council reviews feedback and considers during the scheduled annual review of the Bylaws each January.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE PERSPECTIVES

GREY AREAS

Commentary on Legal Issues Affecting Professional Regulation

[The "I did Not Received the Email" Defence Fails](#)

PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS - IT'S A THREE-WAY STREET

In today’s mindset of “do more with less” and “work smarter not harder”, it is increasingly difficult to garner employer support for education and learning activities outside of the laboratory environment. Since the days of Premier Ralph Klein’s healthcare reform beginning in 1992 with decreased spending and a reduction of hospital facilities, our healthcare system

as it can get without severely posing significant risks to patient care. This “lean mindset” also affects employees of the healthcare system and requires them to devote their time and energy to simply getting the work done and not investing time in education advancement and fulfillment of their professional obligations.

One of the professional obligations of Regulated Members under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) is an adequate complement of volunteers to serve on the Regulated Member Resource List (RMRL). Pursuant to Section 15 of the HPA, a Council must appoint a minimum of four (4) Regulated Members to sit on Hearing Tribunals and Complaint Review Committees to adjudicate complaints of unprofessional conduct. It is imperative the CMLTA have the required number of volunteers to officiate at a hearing and to render written decisions regarding guilt or innocence and any corresponding penalties or other general orders. Individuals appointed to the RMRL play a crucial “judge and jury” role in matters of unprofessional conduct and are instrumental in the CMLTA fulfilling its regulatory obligation.

Regulated Members volunteering on the RMRL is a three-way collaboration between the employer, the employee, and the CMLTA. Over 98% of complaints of unprofessional conduct received are based on the employer fulfilling their obligation under Section 57 of the HPA to notify the CMLTA of employee terminations, suspensions, or resignations (if in their opinion) due to unprofessional conduct as defined by the HPA. The employer ultimately looks to the CMLTA for support to address unprofessional behavior and conduct, and to eliminate or minimize risk and harm to their patients and staff. But how can the CMLTA support the employer if Regulated Members cannot be relieved of their duties to educate, prepare, and serve on Hearing Tribunals?

The CMLTA does its part to support Regulated Members in fulfilling their professional obligation to volunteer on the RMRL by providing reimbursement for education and training (including registration, travel, accommodation, and meal per diems) and by offering wage replacement to attend Hearing Tribunal hearings at the CMLTA office in Edmonton. This ensures both the individual and the employer are not

and find coverage if needed. The biggest investment is on the part of employee as it is their time that must be invested in education and learning opportunities to hone their understanding and develop a comprehensive skillset in administrative law and to participate on Hearing Tribunals to put their knowledge into practice. Individuals that volunteer on Hearing Tribunals usually serve for many years as their specialized skillset takes time to develop.

The CMLTA encourages all employers to support their MLTs in fulfilling their professional obligation and to start a dialogue with staff on how to navigate this three-way street so it's a win-win-win!

NEW JURISPRUDENCE LEARNING MODULE AND ANNUAL EXAMINATION

The CMLTA incorporated a jurisprudence examination as part of the annual MLT Practice Permit renewal process since 2013. Jurisprudence is the study of theory, philosophy, and science of a body of laws, and also encompasses the discretion, foresight, exercise of good judgment, common sense, and even caution in the professional practice of an MLT. It is a Regulated Member's responsibility and professional duty pursuant to the CMLTA *Standards of Practice* and *Code of Ethics* to adhere to the mandated parameters and to practice in accordance with legislated requirements.

As a component of the new Helsby Drake software and registration platform which will be rolled out July 15, 2018, successful completion of a jurisprudence examination will be a requirement for all registrants of the CMLTA, including initial, reinstatement, and renewal applications. The CMLTA has created a jurisprudence learning module to assist new applicants, and current or reinstating Regulated Members to prepare for and successfully challenge the examination. The jurisprudence learning module is accessible by the public and Regulated Members as a resource to highlight pertinent elements of legislation, registration, the Continuing Competence Program (CCP), professional conduct and discipline, and general matters such as the principles of good governance. The learning module will be located on the CMLTA website under <http://cmlta.org/home/practice->

read the module when completing the online examination as part of the annual renewal process. As new developments in legislation or CMLTA policy arise, the learning module will be updated to capture this new data and reflect targeted information necessary to answer new jurisprudence examination questions.

Commencing with the 2019 MLT Practice Permit renewal process, the new jurisprudence examination is a criterion-referenced format used to ascertain an individual's competencies and a test score is a measure how well an individual performs in relation to domains represented by the examination as opposed to other individuals. The examination is designed to identify individuals who are capable of meeting accepted competencies and standards of professional practice. The new software will randomly assign a selection of questions to each applicant or Regulated Member from a comprehensive question bank covering a variety of subjects (legislation, registration, Continuing Competence Program, professional conduct and formal discipline, and good governance) all linked to the jurisprudence learning module. Arguably the most significant change to the 2019 jurisprudence examination is the shift towards a high-stakes examination format. There is a minimum pass mark of 80% and if an individual is unsuccessful in their first attempt, they will be required to review and affirm that they have read the learning module a second time and challenge a new examination questions. This process must be repeated until the examination is successfully challenged. The goal of the learning module and corresponding examination is not to penalize an individual, but rather to increase awareness of the duties and obligations of being a self-regulating profession.

The new jurisprudence examination will be evaluated statistically to determine the examination measures what it purports to measure, is appropriate for all Regulated Members regardless of experience and education, minimizes the degree of test error, and is coherent in style and format. As a component of criterion-referenced testing there will also be built-in algorithms and a matrix to assess question structure, content, and validity. The CMLTA encourages all individuals to provide feedback on the new jurisprudence learning module and on any areas that require clarification or supplemental information to

RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

Don't work for recognition, but do work worthy of recognition. - H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

The foundation for the Recognition Program is based on the vision, mission, core values, and regulatory role of the CMLTA. It is peer to peer recognition of Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs) who epitomize professional practice; who advance the profession; and who demonstrate to others the CMLTA's *Standards of Practice* and *Code of Ethics*.

To view the Recognition of Excellence parameters or to nominate a deserving MLT, please click [here](#).

The CMLTA welcomes all feedback and encourages Regulated Members to provide recommendations for continuous improvements to the mandated programs and services offered by the CMLTA. Regulated Member feedback is important to the CMLTA Council and any opportunity to implement your suggestions is mutually beneficial for all parties. Please send your comments/feedback to info@cmlta.org.

The College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Alberta (CMLTA) is a recognized leader in the regulation and governance of medical laboratory services. As a trusted partner in healthcare regulation, the CMLTA acknowledges self-regulation is a privilege and endeavors to enhance public protection and patient safety, promote high standards for professional practice, and contribute to the overall wellness of Albertans. The CMLTA protects the public by regulating Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs) and fostering excellence in professional practice.

The Commentator e-newsletter is the CMLTA's primary communication vehicle and is distributed February, May, and October. It provides MLTs and the public with current and timely information about CMLTA programs, services, and topics relevant to MLTs and which may have an impact on the healthcare continuum.

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