

Volume 7, Issue 3 - December 2018

PRESIDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

As I write the last President's message of 2018, I reflect on a year of change. But of course if you are a medical laboratory technologist, a year with change is really just a typical year. On the operations side we welcomed a new Executive Director, Dr. Maggie Fulford. Maggie hit the ground running on November 1 managing changes to legislation while wrapping up the 2019 membership renewal and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the CMLTA office.

Our 2019 membership renewal process changed this year as well, behind the scenes. Every fall we have a large number of renewals to process in a short period of time. This year the CMLTA hired two temporary staff from Diversified Staffing to assist with the 2019 renewals. Irmina Szpil and Gina Salvador joined us in early September and assisted with renewals and general office procedures. As you read this message we are saying farewell to both of them. We extend our sincere appreciation to Irmina and Gina for their assistance over the last three months.

On the legislation side, the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) was revised on July 1, 2018. Three months later, Bill 21, *An Act to Protect Patients*, was passed by the Alberta Legislature. Bill 21 applies to health professionals regulated under the HPA and was passed to protect patients from sexual misconduct and sexual abuse. Regulated members found guilty of sexual abuse by a hearing tribunal will have their practice permits cancelled permanently. Regulated members found guilty of sexual misconduct will have their practice permits suspended and the member will be prevented from applying for reinstatement for a minimum five years. Regulatory colleges will be required to post the member's discipline history on a public facing website and colleges will provide funding for treatment and counselling for victims.

Abuse of a sexual nature is a significant betrayal of trust and Bill 21 sends a clear message that it will not be tolerated. Alberta is the second province in

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RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

DEADLINE: December 31, 2018

[Click here for details](#)

Canada, after Ontario, to take action to protect patients from sexual abuse and sexual misconduct. The mandate of regulatory colleges is to protect the public and Bill 21 reinforces that. Colleges will be required to establish training for health professionals and college staff to prevent and address sexual abuse and misconduct. Programs to inform Albertans about the college's complaint process will also be required and colleges will need to provide additional training for hearing tribunal members. For more information on Bill 21, including definitions of sexual abuse and sexual misconduct, visit the Alberta Government Website at <https://www.alberta.ca/protecting-patients-against-sexual-abuse.aspx>

Despite the year of change, some things have not changed. The CMLTA's Executive Assistant, Avaleen Petryk, continues to be your point of contact when you send your inquires to info@cmlta.org or call the general office line. This is Avaleen's sixteenth year with the CMLTA. Thank you, Avaleen!

Furthermore, the reason the CMLTA exists has not changed. The CMLTA protects and serves the public, patients, and our regulated members by setting entrance to practice requirements, creating and enforcing a Continuing Competence Program, and instituting a formal process for the adjudication of complaints of unprofessional conduct. The recent changes to legislation highlight the importance of professional regulation and the assurance we provide to the public that Alberta MLTs will continue to provide safe, competent, and ethical healthcare services.

It's been an honour to serve as your president over this last year. Although it has been busier than I anticipated, it has been a fulfilling year. In closing, I extend my sincere appreciation to the 2018 CMLTA Council and CMLTA staff for supporting me in my role as the 2018 CMLTA president.

Sincerely,
Shelly Stevens

ALBERTA PUBLIC LAB AND SUBSTANTIAL EQUIVALENCY

Continuing on the theme of change, the office has received several inquiries about change of employer status under the new Alberta Public Lab structure.

All publicly-funded laboratory services in Alberta will be delivered by one wholly-owned subsidiary of Alberta Health Services, called Alberta Public Laboratories (APL). The transition of laboratory services into APL will involve the consolidation of five (5) groups of employees from AHS, Calgary Lab Services (CLS), DynaLIFE Dx, Covenant Health, and Lamont Healthcare Centre (Lamont).

Substantial Equivalency (SE) MLT registration is restricted to your approved area of practice/department, position description/job title, and employer and is not portable under current legislation. The CMLTA recognizes that with the transition of lab services into APL, the employer name and employment address will change over the next few years. This change will not affect your SE designation with the CMLTA and will not require SE re-assessment. If you are in possession of a restricted SE MLT practice permit, please notify the CMLTA, by email, when your group has transitioned to APL. The CMLTA will update your records with the information provided.

If at any time there are any changes contemplated in your approved area of practice/department, position description/job title, or employer, you must notify the CMLTA in writing immediately, in order that your registration status be re-assessed based on the information you provide. Your MLT SE registration is not portable under current legislation.

REGISTRAR'S REVIEW

Helsby-Drake and Organizational Matters

The implementation of the new Helsby Drake database is underway. Under the agreement, the CMLTA has various responsibilities that include participating in the design of the process definition, data conversion, training, and acting as a subject matter expert. To ensure compliance with the contract and ensure the best outcome for the CMLTA, a full-time Director of Regulatory Affairs will be joining the team in 2019.

As our members will be completing their 2019 learning plans using the RSmart platform but will be audited in 2020 on their 2019 learning plans using the Helsby Drake platform, the ability for members to enter information on their 2019 activity logs will be disabled until we go live with Helsby Drake in the

spring of 2019.

Registration

A total of 2375 regulated members renewed their registration for the 2019 year and 2217 practice permits have been issued, as of December 1, 2018.

INTERPROFESSIONAL LAUNCH

Introducing Students to the Health Professions

Act - Valentin Villatoro, CMLTA Vice President

This September, Councilor Karen Matejka and I had the honour of representing the CMLTA at the University of Alberta Interprofessional Learning Pathway Launch, a three-hour learning session that starts health professions students off on their journey to learning how to work collaboratively with each other. The Pathway Launch takes place each year in September and typically includes students from Medical Laboratory Science, Medicine, Nursing, Nutrition, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, Physical Education, Physical Therapy, Radiation Therapy, and Speech Language Pathology. This year, a total of 1045 students participated in the full-day event, rotating through the activities in small interprofessional groups.

These interprofessional student groups participated in group learning activities including case studies and discussions with patients and regulatory bodies. "The Launch", as it's known at the University, is often their first exposure to the profession, and provides an early glimpse into the unique role of their profession within the healthcare system. This experience allows them to begin to build an understanding of a patient's role in a healthcare team and how interprofessional communication, coordination, and collaboration affect their care.

Regulatory bodies, professional associations, and societies are invited each year to participate in The Launch, in order to highlight professional standards of practice and how they support ethical, safe, and patient-centered care. Interprofessional student groups were given 35 minutes to interact with over 23 professional organizations, each with their own booth set up at the event. Students were asked to approach booths and explore how their profession works with other professions, and how the foundational principles

of each organization impacts collaborative practice (standards of practice, code of ethics, etc.).

This year, the CMLTA invested in banners and pamphlets in order to attend the event and represent the regulatory body in a way that would appropriately convey the work the CMLTA performs on behalf of the public, patients, and our Regulated Members. Our discussions began with a bit of background about the role of Medical Laboratory Technologists, but mainly focused on the *Health Professions Act*, and the privilege of self-regulation. We discussed how regulatory bodies like the CMLTA set entrance to practice requirements, create and enforce a continuing competence program, and institute a formal process for the adjudication of complaints of unprofessional conduct. We compared and contrasted the mandates of regulatory bodies vs. professional associations/societies, and the fact that a regulatory body's primary mandate is the protection of the public.

Many students were unaware of these distinctions and the role of their professional bodies. Having this exposure early-on in their education will help to lay the foundation for their future professional practice. The organizers of The Launch provided some student feedback regarding their experience. One student remarked: "It was really cool to have these kinds of experiences so early on in my degree. I think it will be something that sticks with me for a long time, and it also made me even more excited to pursue this career." Another student said: "This is exactly what healthcare professionals need early on in their journey!"

Council made the decision to formally take part in The Launch this year, as it was deemed an appropriate activity for the CMLTA to be involved in as part of its mandate. I am grateful to have participated this year in an official capacity alongside Karen, and I look forward to our continued involvement in The Launch at the University of Alberta, in order to introduce ourselves to future healthcare professionals, and begin building a sense of professional identity with our

future colleagues.



CMLTA OFFICE CLOSURE

Reminder - the CMLTA office will be closed December 24, 2018 - January 2, 2109

RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

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

This award 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.

You are receiving this email as you are a Regulated Member of the CMLTA in 2018.
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All Regulated Members are responsible for receiving The Commentator and being aware of its contents.

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