REF Board of Directors Restructure Plan
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why has the REF decided to restructure the Board?

A: The time is ripe. The CFPC is currently in a transitory phase, with a staff capacity review in full progress as well as a board restructure near completion. These shifts have led REF to evaluate its current governance structure and develop a plan that will best support its mandate – supporting current and future family doctors in their pursuit of the best health for the population.

Ideally, the REF board restructure will:

- Build on the success that REF has achieved to date
- Enhance the REF’s effectiveness of raising non-membership fee revenue

We feel that we are better set to serve your needs, and our goals are more attainable, with a smaller, skills-based board. During the restructure, the REF remains committed to raising and maintaining funds for family medicine research and education initiatives. We will want to arrive at a plan to maintain and potentially increase the engagement of provincial Chapters in REF’s mission and efforts. This will be done in consultation with Chapters.

Q: What is the proposed new structure?

A: The current REF board has agreed upon moving to a smaller, skills-based board of 7-9 members, who together will provide expertise in fundraising, governance, and family medicine. The rationale for moving to a smaller, skills-based board includes:

- To be more nimble and agile
- To increase Board engagement
- To use other ways to engage Chapters
- To make best use of resources

While our current set up of provincial representation has led to a dynamic and engaging board, our priorities moving forward will be on a tight interface with solid governance, informed fundraising strategies, the maintenance of existing stakeholder relationships and the creation of new ones. Chapter relations remain crucial to REF’s success and we are looking to expand upon the methods we currently use for communication with the Chapters.
Q: Why now?

A: The REF has been on a path of growing success, raising more than $1 million in each of the past 3 years to support more than 200 awards, grants, scholarships, and initiatives. To build on this momentum, higher fundraising targets have been set to elevate overall Foundation contribution to the next level. Both the REF board and senior staff of the CFPC recognize that for REF to take its performance to the next level, a smaller skills-based board focused on fundraising is necessary.

Q: When will the new REF Board of Directors be in place?

A: A working group has been established, the Governance Restructuring Implementation Task Team (GRITT) consisting of the existing REF Officers, a Public Member, the CEO, the Executive Director of Corporate Services, and the Director of Awards and Development. The GRITT has been working towards a formal restructure for the fall of 2017, following AMM approval in November 2016. Time is required to ensure the changes are done legally, including amendments to our current by-laws, and in accordance with both the future goals and current needs of the Foundation. Meetings between the GRITT, the REF board, and the CFPC board are scheduled over the next year to facilitate the process of building both stronger relationships and support for the new governance directions.

Q: How will individuals be recruited?

A: The Governance Restructuring Implementation Task Team (GRITT) will be considering options regarding this in the upcoming months. Needed skills and abilities, including an understanding of family medicine would be the primary factor used to populate the board. Following that, other considerations such as balancing for diversity, geography, and academic linkages will be considered.

The Nominations Committee will develop and lead the process for developing the proposed slate of directors for the REF board and present the proposed slate to the REF board. The board would then bring it to the members of REF at the AGM. The voting directors of the CFPC board, who would continue to be members of REF, would vote to approve the slate with the opportunity for nominations from the floor, at the AGM.

Q: How will the board restructure lead to greater chapter engagement?

A: The GovernanceRestructuring Implementation Task Team (GRITT) will be dedicating attention to this over the coming months. Chapter relationships will continue to be important for REF’s success. The REF intends to use several strategies to engage with Chapters, including potential designated liaisons for REF in each chapter, the newly established Chapter Symposium, and working with the CFPC Member and External Relations Division. We are eager to hear any suggestions you may have as to how REF can best communicate with your Chapter.