



## HEALTH CARE OF THE ELDERLY COMMITTEE – SUMMER 2016

### COMMITTEE INITIATIVES

[Click here to participate in our Models of Care project!](#)

### UPCOMING CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

- [Family Medicine Forum 2016](#)  
Vancouver Convention  
Centre  
Vancouver, BC  
November 9–12, 2016

### TWITTER RESOURCES

- [Canadian Geriatrics Society @CanGeriSoc](#)
- [Dr Chris Frank, Committee Chair @ChrisFrankCOE](#)

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Dr Chris Frank**, Chair  
**Dr Pravinsagar Mehta**, MB/SK  
**Dr Sidney Feldman**, ON  
**Dr Jody Woolfrey**, Atlantic  
**Dr Fred Mather**, Long Term Care Subcommittee  
**Dr Robert Lam**, CGS Representative

### UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

“With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come”  
—W. Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*

Dear colleagues,

The Health Care of the Elderly committee met on May 11, 2016. These meetings are one of those rare beasts, a meeting I actually look forward to! It is a great group of people who work very hard to improve the care of older Canadians.

### DISTINCTION IN HEALTH CARE OF THE ELDERLY AWARD

The 2015 award went to Dr Jody Woolfrey, who is a family physician in Botwood, Newfoundland and Labrador. Dr Woolfrey was recognized for his work caring for seniors, and also for leadership provincially and nationally in family medicine and care of seniors. The committee is currently reviewing the 2016 nominees and they are as amazingly outstanding as in previous years.

### MODELS OF CARE SUBMISSIONS

We received a number of models used by family physicians. You can still submit your ideas and experiences! Here are two examples:

- In a community hospital in Ontario, frail and complex inpatients are identified and assessed by a nurse practitioner, with supervision by a family physician. They work with the patient's family physician to develop a discharge plan and arrange follow-up after hospitalization. The hospital-based services provide telephone follow-up after discharge and even home visits when necessary, in coordination with the family physician and community providers. This approach reduced length of stay and readmissions, improved patient satisfaction, and had an impact on the number of medications.
- Another submission reminded us of the importance of interdisciplinary care in all settings. A family physician described how an interdisciplinary approach is helpful for residents in an assisted living facility in Alberta. The care is provided by a wide range of disciplines and specialists, with the family physician as the main coordinator. This approach helps reduce polypharmacy, minimize errors at time of transition, and optimize function from the moment of arrival. The take-home messages from the approach are: we work better when we work together—team effort is the key; better care happens with a patient-centered approach; care that is inclusive of patients' needs, with their involvement in the management and treatment plan, is what makes seniors care a comprehensive model.

### **SENIOR-FRIENDLY OFFICE**

By now you will have received a request asking you to describe your ideas for making family medicine offices as senior friendly as possible. We will share your ideas once they are collated. Older patients generally like their family physicians but we can always improve the experience they have with the care we provide.

### **INPUT FOR DEMENTIA RESEARCH**

The Alzheimer Society of Canada needs input for a research agenda for dementia. Because family physicians are crucial in dementia care, they want to hear from you. The questionnaire is online and takes 5 minutes to complete (I know, because I did it myself). If you would like to provide your expert input, contact me at [frankc@providencecare.ca](mailto:frankc@providencecare.ca) and I will send you the link.

### **LONG-TERM CARE**

Although there has been some discussion about long-term care (LTC) physicians developing their own community of practice, the Health Care of the Elderly committee continues to focus on this aspect of seniors' care. There will be an excellent Top of Scope session at FMF 2016 designed for physicians working in LTC, which will focus on quality improvement in long-term care. Given the growth of LTC, this is an important topic and one in which family physicians are the leaders.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

We have several outgoing members of the Health Care of the Elderly committee. Thanks to Paul Kivi and Marcel Arcand who have contributed greatly to our work.

#### **Humanities Link:**

It is the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's death this year. It is a sobering thought to think that Shakespeare was my age when he died... which reminds me of the satirist Tom Lehrer, "It is a sobering thought that when Mozart was my age, he had been dead for 10 years" .... [Here is an interesting blog post about Shakespeare's writings about aging.](#)

Sincerely,

Dr Chris Frank