

October - November 2011

This report covers the months of October and November of 2011. With the hustle and bustle of conference preparations, I was unable to file at the end of November.

Human resources and office organization CDAA will be facing a number of fiscal challenges in 2012. An initial HR needs assessment has been undertaken and a review of employment contracts has been completed. In order to maintain the financial viability of the organization, the following initiatives have been completed and/ or are underway:

- Staff reductions have been announced from CDAA's current of three employees to 2 ½.
- The DAEC and CDAA have negotiated an administrative support agreement. In this agreement, CDAA is to provide a dedicated administrative support person. This announced support for 2012 means CDAA will be able to avoid further lay offs
- The search for new office space continues. A review of the Ottawa market shows that CDAA could save anywhere from 30% to 50% by moving. As one year is still left in our current lease, work is underway to find someone to take over our office space. Discussions with our neighbour, NDAEB, have however meant that they will be taking over a small portion of our space resulting in an approximate \$4000 reduction in operating expenses
- Calls for new telecommunications services are also expected to deliver budgetary savings

Conference 2011 went very well with over 100 attendees. \$1206 was raised for the Penny Waite Fund and the revenues generated from sponsorships and registrations have met expectations. The Corporate Members meeting provided the kick off point for coming governance reforms that will see CDAA complete its transition to a true federated governance model with more accountability, transparency and services that do not compete with existing CM services.

Work has already begun in the planning of next year's conference in Winnipeg.

National Unity and Governance This dossier continues to be the highest of priorities since starting. A discussion paper was circulated through the corporate membership describing the avenues available for CDAA: 1.) a strictly applied federated model with CDAA pulling out of continuing education and other service areas duplicating current CM services; 2.) a hybrid model; 3.) CDAA returns to individual memberships. The results of the presentation made at conference and subsequent discussions means CDAA will be reinvigorating its support for much stricter application of the federation. Consultations leading up the conference were also extensive and the consensus built indicates that CMs are more committed than ever to refocusing CDAA's efforts on:

1. Federal government relations/ advocacy to the Federal government
2. Pulling out of continuing education and transforming CDAA towards knowledge transference services to back up federal advocacy and CM needs for CDAA to be more policy based
3. Capacity building and revenue sharing to the CMs

CDABC's president and Managing Director also attended CDAA's AGM as an observer. The result of this initial opening has meant the two organizations have agreed to re-open dialogue, expected to continue in the New Year. Finally, as a means of keeping dialogue open, sharing information between the CMs and for CDAA to recommit to transparency, a regular monthly calls with chief staff officers have begun.

Website: Calls from CMs to improve CDAA's website have not been ignored. A complete overhaul of CDAA's website has begun. Our contracted designer is redesigning the back end of the site for use by CMs and to prepare the coming knowledge bank for use by Corporate Members. The front end of the website is also being amended to re-emphasize CDAA's position as a federated organization serving the needs of CMs.

New budget development and fee increase report of October was dedicated to developing the 2012 budget approved at the Conference. A total of 24% reductions in expenses were identified and additional reductions may also be announced in the near future. The current financial challenges confronted by CDAA combined with the need to keep up with inflation since the last increase (2004), mean that an increase in membership transfer fees will be needed. A discussion paper explaining CDAA's situation has been drafted and circulated to the CMs.

I will be working with the CDAA board and with CMs in calling a Special Meeting of the CMs early in the New Year for a vote to occur.

Governance: The conference produced three new committees that will assist in CDAA's recommitted focus to a federated governance model:

1. Knowledge transference
2. Task Force on Foreign Credentials and cooperation with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)
3. Government Relations

Terms of reference have been developed and subsequent to approval of the board, will be circulated more widely. During this time as well, preliminary recruitment efforts have also begun for the committees.

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Initial budgets have also been set aside for a complete overhaul of CDAA's bylaws and governance structure to better reflect the needs of a federated association and comply with coming federal non-profit organization incorporation requirements.

Stakeholder engagement Over the course of October and November, contact was maintained and/or established with the following organizations:

- AADA: An initial discussion with CDAA's US counterpart could result in their representatives coming to Canada in the New Year
- CDA: relations have been built with the Canadian Dental Association's knowledge transference department. Initial discussions are alluding to the possibility that CDAA could have a place in their journal to advocate the important role of dental assistants. CDA is opening the door to further discussions which could allow a place where CDAA could more actively advocate for the role of dental assistants.
- CDHA (Cdn. Hygienists) has also approached CDAA for future collaboration in a national oral health awareness month
- Keeping our ties with the military, I attended the transfer of command ceremony at CF Dental Services. This opportunity also allowed me to enter into contact with CDHA's new Executive Director for the first time
- In late October, I also attended NDAEB's annual conference in Ottawa

Government Relations Committed to making a place for CDAA in oral health and for dental assistants at the national level, an initial meeting with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) on a joint project on Foreign Credentials was held in early October. The result of the meeting was very productive. HRSDC appears quite keen on collaborating with CDAA in the development of a project to integrate foreign trained DAs into the Canadian workforce. The initial meeting also opens the door towards further studies to ensure DAs are counted across Canada.

A first of its kind, CDAA commissioned an environmental scan of all of the issues directly affecting DAs. In total, more than seven different areas of interest were identified. Each of these issues is uniquely federal in nature and re-enforce the need for CDAA to be active in federal government relations.

Upon the formation of the government relations committee, more news will be forthcoming.

Dental assistant benefit Discussions with a variety of different insurance and benefit providers was also underway. Meeting with 3 different insurance providers with experience handling the needs of national associations has produced quotes that will significantly reduce malpractice insurance premiums and create revenue generation opportunities between CDAA and CMs.

CANADIAN DENTAL
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New Auditor: The Frouin Group was announced as CDA A's new auditor for 2012. The announcement of this new auditor is expected to save CDA A significant professional fees over previous years.