

CAEP, COVID and our Annual Conference-Part 2

March 27, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Since I last wrote to you, we have continued to work with the Shaw Centre in Ottawa on the cancellation of our conference. After meeting with them (at an appropriate distance) early this week, I am pleased to inform you that we have reached a mutually satisfactory settlement. Suffice to say we are very satisfied with the terms of this agreement, thank you for your forbearance during this period of uncertainty, and are now officially announcing the cancellation of the 2020 CAEP conference.

In the coming days, you will be informed about the refund process for those who have registered for the conference and associated activities. In lieu of a full refund, you can choose to donate all, or a portion, of your refund to CAEP to assist its work as the Canadian voice of emergency medicine. Alternatively, you can donate to our Emergency Medicine Advancement Fund, which supports emergency medicine research.

Some of our members, understanding the economic impact of the loss of our conference, have suggested that an increase in membership dues would be in order. For now, we have far more important issues to confront. Our 2020 budget will be reconciled over the next month and we are confident in our ability to sustain CAEP through this turbulent time and into the future.

I encourage you to join our Tuesday Town Halls on COVID-19. If you cannot be there in real time, all sessions will be housed on our website at <https://caep.ca/covid-19-town-hall/>

At our inaugural Town Hall, last week, it was suggested that CAEP aspire to be the “single, authoritative source for dissemination of information” related to COVID for emergency physicians. We will do our best to meet that challenge, leveraging the collective knowledge of our members, while recognizing that such information is ever changing and often in dispute. Already on our website are statements on COVID in relation to rural EDs, the homeless and vulnerable, and surge capacity, among others. Our bioethics experts are fast-tracking articles and statements on decision-making in the context of this pandemic and its attendant resource limitations.

On the subject of scant resources, we are all too aware of the serious concern about supplies of PPE and need for practical guidelines on their use. If we cannot protect our front-line workers from infection, our patients will have no one to look after them. As of this writing, we are planning to facilitate a discussion on this complex, controversial and contingent (on available supply) subject at an upcoming Town Hall, followed by release of consensus guidelines.

Time is the most precious of commodities and, in much of Canada, we have been given a modest gift of time to prepare for the COVID onslaught, while witnessing the havoc it has wreaked in Europe and just across our border. It is heartening to witness the cooperation of government, private industry and individual citizens (including our medical students) in producing and procuring supplies for the upcoming battle. The leadership within and between physician groups is nothing short of inspiring.

I was shown this brief video (below) by my wife, whose pediatric anesthesia group, like my emergency group in Winnipeg and countless others across this country, is demonstrating the very best of the human

spirit in the most challenging of times. Take a few minutes to listen to the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra; find yourself and your colleagues in their faces; know that, across this country, in our collective skill, creativity, and commitment, we also play a symphony, physically apart, but connected in purpose. And together, we will succeed.

Regards,



Aleks Chochinov
CAEP President

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3eXT60rbBVk>