

Complex, challenging, and (sometimes) messy

To promote a social, economic, and political climate in which members can provide the citizens of BC with the highest standard of health care while achieving maximum professional satisfaction and fair economic reward.

—**BCMA mission statement**

All organizations, no matter what their size or objectives, need to have a strategic plan. The purpose is simple: to help the organization do a better job. More specifically, a strategic plan allows the organization to focus its energy, to ensure that everyone is working toward the same goals, and to assess and adjust its direction in response to a changing environment. The strategic planning process is a disciplined effort to generate decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future.

Each year the BCMA Board undergoes a strategic planning process designed to take a hard look at the association's strategic goals and to determine their current level of effective-

ness and what changes need to occur. Some of you who are familiar with this type of work may imagine Board members racing for the exits. Such planning is challenging and involves tough decision making—some of us relish the process, others want to buckle down and get on with the work.

The BCMA has a dual purpose: to advocate for our physician members and for our patients. With a membership that varies greatly by region, specialty, remuneration option, gender, and experience, this can be a challenging endeavor in its own right. However, the strategic planning process takes place with the BCMA mission statement clearly up front and in focus at all times.

In the upcoming 1-day strategic planning session in which the BCMA Board will be engaged, decisions and a course of action will be determined for a number of goals:

- Ensure implementation of the LOA. This is a very detailed agreement with many different elements that need to be coordinated.
- Enhance two-way communication


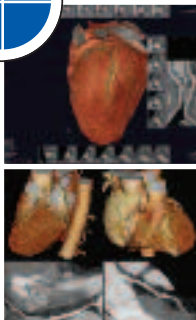

between the association and its members. No organization works well when communication flows in only one direction. In the last few years, improvements have been made to the e-mail system and to the BCMA web site in order to make it more interactive. Work is ongoing for further communications improvements.

- Conclude successful negotiations of the Master Agreement. The Master Agreement is the blueprint that governs the role of physicians in providing medical care. Among other things, it protects against prorationing, guarantees a binding negotiations process in the event that agreements cannot be reached, obligates government to consult with the BCMA on key issues affecting health care, and guarantees that physicians cannot be compelled to change the nature of their practice or how they are paid.
- Provide IT/practice support and change management. Arising out of the Letter of Agreement, the Physi-

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NEW

Coronary CT Angiography

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|  | <p style="margin: 0;">64-SLICE CT</p> | <p style="margin: 0;">NON-INVASIVE</p> | |
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Canadian Information Technology Office (PITO) will coordinate the implementation of information technology products and services with vendors and physician practices and will disburse the IT funds to physicians as defined in the agreement. Decisions need to be made regarding a PITO office and staff, relevant committees, the RFP process, applications for funding, program length, physician vs program costs, and privacy and security issues.

- Expand benefits and Club MD. Even though negotiated benefits, insurance services, and Club MD opportunities provided to BCMA members are extensive and well utilized by a majority of members, work is ongoing to improve and expand upon them.
- Ensure that the BCMA is considered the authoritative voice on major health issues. The underlying issue

for each policy paper is patient safety and patient access to health care. This past year the BCMA called on government to establish wait-time benchmarks for all major medical procedures. This year, two projects are in the works. The first project will examine prescription drug policy in British Columbia with a particular focus on the financing and administration of Pharmacare and will address the question of what makes an effective prescription drug program. The second project will assess the state of LTC services in BC and provide recommendations for long-term, systemic changes and for immediate resolution of critical short-term issues.

As dry as some of these topics may seem, I find them most interesting, but more importantly they are integral to the progress and continual growth of the BC Medical Association. The strategic planning process can be com-

plex, challenging, and sometimes messy. Because it is impossible to do everything that needs to be done in this world, strategic planning implies that some organizational decisions and actions are more important than others and that much of the strategy lies in making the tough decisions about what is most important to achieving organizational success.

—Margaret MacDiarmid, MD
BCMA President

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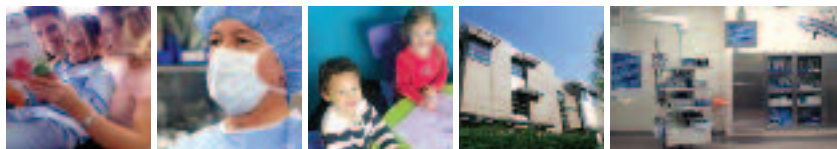
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