

How is Doctors of BC doing in meeting your needs? You told us and we are listening

Better together. You will often hear me repeat these are two words when I'm communicating with our members. Quite simply it means that when we are united as a profession and working together, we really can make a meaningful difference. You have probably also seen the two words associated with our Doctors of BC logo (Better. Together.). That's because they form the foundation of the work we do with and for our members. Though to do this work, we need to know your thoughts on how we're meeting and addressing your needs—where we are doing well and, even more importantly, how we can improve in the areas that are a priority for you.

To garner this information we conducted a comprehensive member survey earlier this year to measure engagement—how we are engaging and interacting with you and how you are engaging and interacting with your health authorities. We also asked some overarching questions on your impressions of how we are doing as an association. We received a response rate of 20%, which is an excellent response for this kind of survey and what now provides the basis for a statistically sound analysis. The almost 2500 responses were also demographically and geographically representative of the broader membership.

In general, most of our physician members feel we are doing a good job, but we can do better. We want to do a great job in serving and addressing your needs.

The majority of respondents said they are pleased with the work we do in representing you, consulting with you, and advocating for your issues with government. You identified three

key areas of priority: negotiations, policy development to support members on ministry and health authority initiatives that impact you, and member consultation.

Respondents further identified two additional key areas where you think we can do a better job. You told us that you want us to be more timely and proactive, and you want us to provide more ways to share and communicate your views on issues that are important to you. The association commits to giving these areas high priority and attention as we move forward.

We also asked members about how well they are engaging with their health authorities. Many of you feel your professional voice is not being heard at that level, nor do you have the opportunity for credible input into health authority decisions. You will find detailed information about this in the survey results available in the Members Area of the Doctors of BC website. Doctors of BC is communicating these results to the health authorities and to government to help foster stronger and more positive professional relationships that benefit our patients, the health care system, and the profession.

I can assure you that work is already underway to address your areas of concern, especially with regard to health authority relationships. We have been and continue to support physicians to better engage with their health authorities through the creation of the medical staff associations (MSAs), created by our most recent Physician Master Agreement. In many respects the MSAs will play a key role in helping to achieve these objectives by fostering two-way communication and open dia-

logue between facilities-based physicians and health authorities. This will help provide the opportunity for our physicians to not only have a stronger and legitimate voice, but to have a voice that is also authoritative. We now have 77 sites involved at various stages of development, with a target of having 50 of those sites approved for full operational funding by January 2017. Whereas the MSAs will strengthen the physician voice and professional leadership in our province's facilities, the divisions of family practice are already providing a strong voice for family doctors working in the community.

The information we gathered through the Member Engagement Survey will help develop our 2017 3-year strategic plan. The data and responses will be used by staff as they adapt and enhance our member programs and services.

I want to thank the many members who participated in the survey, and I encourage all members to speak up and provide your input, not just through our surveys, but continually.

Doctors of BC is committed to providing the best professional value to you, and your input enables us to do just that. Your voice is important to me and to our association, so please don't hesitate to connect with me at president@doctorsofbc.ca and follow me, like many of your peers do, on social media via Twitter @awruddiman.

—Alan Ruddiman, MBBCh,
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Doctors of BC President