



President's Letter

November 5, 2004

Highlights of the UCFA AGM 21st October 2004. This was a highly successful meeting and amongst the regular business, the following important issues were discussed.

Academic Freedom – who will represent you?

Dr. Nancy Olivieri gave an engaging and enlightening presentation outlining the events surrounding her desire, as principal investigator, to disclose patient safety information during the clinical trial of an oral iron-chelation drug, deferiprone in the 1990's in Toronto, and the subsequent censure and legal process resulting from the threats and actions of the University of Toronto, the Hospital for Sick Children, and Apotex, the sponsoring pharmaceutical company. Dr. Olivieri was supported by a few colleagues during this difficult time. The report of an enquiry commissioned by the Council of University Teachers can be viewed at: <http://www.caut.ca/en/issues/academicfreedom/olivierireport.asp> and a book entitled "Nancy Olivieri and the Public Interest" was written by the members of enquiry panel: Jon Thompson, Patricia Baird and Jocelyn Downie. *There is a lesson for us all in this!.....*

New UCFA Board elected

The new board of the UCFA was elected – check the web-site www.ucfa.ca for details and please contact board members with concerns and ideas to support Clinical Faculty.

How do we get our messages across?

The UCFA retained Cascadia Communication Associates to assist us in developing our communication strategy. Mr. John Barr, of Cascadia gave a presentation on strategies to enhance communications. He will be working with the board over the coming months to help develop strategies for UCFA to achieve its' objectives in the short and medium term.

Contracts with UBC – do we need them?

The outgoing and incoming Presidents' reports highlighted the successful outcome of some groups who, supported by the UCFA, have been paid for their teaching based on the invoices submitted to UBC. Initially UBC refused to pay but following successful arbitration Dr. Brad Munt was paid. This set the precedent for the Paediatric Emergency Physicians and St. Paul's Anaesthesiologists. to receive funds following the threat of arbitration by UCFA. Over \$350,000 has been paid as a result of receipts submitted to UBC and through less transparent departmental channels more funds for teaching have been provided to Clinical Faculty. These payments are the direct result of the Appointments/Offer letter which was negotiated between UCFA and the Faculty of Medicine

following the signing of the "Mutual Responsibilities and Obligations Document" in 1999. ***However, over the past year the Faculty of Medicine has unilaterally changed the Appointments/Offer letter and UCFA recommends that Clinical Faculty seek independent advice before signing any contract with UBC*** (more information on the UCFA web-site <www.ucfa.ca>). ***If members have submitted invoices to UBC but have not been paid please contact the UCFA.***

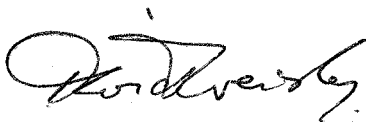
The expansion of the Medical School will require a significant increase in new Clinical Teachers, particularly in communities outside of the traditional teaching hospitals. ***The Board of the UCFA will support Physicians who request help to develop a contract with UBC for teaching.***

Is the Faculty of Medicine responsive to its members?

A motion was passed at the Full Faculty of Medicine meeting in May 2004 requiring that the Medical School Expansion be delayed until the detailed financial report for expansion is approved by the full Faculty, and that this motion would be taken to the University Senate. The past President of the UCFA, Derryck Smith wrote to the President of the University in May requesting that this motion be brought before the Senate. Despite three meetings of the Senate, this has not been discussed there. Following communications with staff in the President 's office, Dr Smith received a letter in October from the President of UBC stating that as Chair of the Senate, she was unable to bring motions to this body. Dr. Smith then wrote to the Dean of the Medical School requesting that he bring this motion from the Faculty before the Senate. No reply has yet been received. The UCFA wants to ensure that the expansion of the Medical School is undertaken with appropriate resources to support the teaching required to train the future doctors of BC.

Come to the Full Faculty Meeting on Monday, November 15th 2004 at 5.00 pm in the Chan Auditorium, C&W, 4500 Oak Street to ask why this motion has not been acted on and hold the Faculty of Medicine accountable to its members!

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Wensley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the beginning.

David Wensley, FRCPC
President