

## ARCHIVIST

The 2010 National Education Conference was held in Vancouver, BC May 29 – June 3 with the theme *Golden Opportunities – Soaring to New Heights*. The attendance was excellent. The venue – Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre - the scientific program, and the hospitality were all first rate. The nationally appointed scientific program committee spent 18 months planning a program that addressed IP&C issues across the healthcare spectrum with many new issues addressed in the various sessions.

As we look ahead to being an organization of only 35 years of age in 2011 we can say that we have come a long way! In the beginning there were 39 charter members who met in Montreal in 1976. In 2010 membership was over 1600 strong and we welcomed our 21<sup>st</sup> chapter. CHICA-Peel Region received its charter at the Opening Ceremonies in Vancouver. In reviewing old minutes from the CHICA board back in the 1970s they were truly visionary about chapters being the key to CHICA's survival. In Gerry Hansen's editorial in CJIC Summer 2010 "Growing Chapters" she highlights the role of chapters and how some chapters - even with geographic challenges (CHICA-NL) - are increasing their membership by as much as 91%. Two other chapters – Renfrew County and CHICA-Eastern Ontario had increases of 56% & 62% respectively. Chapters are invaluable to members and vice versa. The pressure of work loads and at times the feeling of not being supporting can often be discouraging but being connected to peers through your chapter will replace doubts with renewed resolve to keep going. In addition to chapters, another area that is growing in strength is that of interest groups (IG) within our association. Many members are coming in early to attend these worth while networking opportunities. Many IGs meet by teleconference throughout the year to continue work on mutual areas of IP&C.

Numerous members were acknowledged for their achievements over the past year. The Best First Time Abstract Winner was: Linda Howard, Mona Williams, et al *Friends Helping Friends: Peer Auditing in the Central Supply Room: A Non- Biased Approach to Auditing the Central Supply Room*; Best Poster: *Partnerships and Collaboration Between Infection Control Professionals and Environmental Services* Helen Gibson & Nicki Saunders, et al. The Best Oral Presentation went to Laurie Boyer for *Academic Resource Kit for Infection Prevention and Control: Putting the Current Resources in the Hands of Instructors Educating Healthcare Students*. The Ecolab sponsored Infection Control Week Poster Contest was won by Melody Cordoviz, Alberta Health Services, Royal Alexander Hospital, Edmonton, Alberta with the theme "It's Simple". The 2009 Editorial Award went to Victoria Williams, Sandra Callery, Mary Vearncombe & Andrew Simor for their article *Utility of environmental sampling for the prevention of transmission of Vancomycin resistant enterococci (VRE) in hospitals* (CJIC Vol.24, No.2, Summer 2009). The CHICA Southwestern Ontario Chapter won the 3M Chapter Achievement Award.

Dr. Dick Zoutman became CHICA-Canada's newest Honourary Member. This prestigious award is acknowledgement of Dr. Zoutman's dedication to CHICA with 12 years of service on the CHICA board as the Physician Director. Among his numerous contributions to CHICA-Canada was lobbying governments (such as his input into the Romanov report) increasing the relationship of CHICA with Accreditation Canada and the Canadian Patient Safety Institute. He developed the model for the Corporate Membership policy and Corporate Relations Committee. All of these endeavors increased our profile within the healthcare arena and assisted in our financial positioning.

Another prestigious honour was bestowed this year for the first time – the Champion of Infection Prevention and Control was presented to Dr. Mary Vearncombe. Dr. Vearncombe has been a tireless advocate of infection prevention and control across all health care settings. She has been recognized for her extraordinary service to the profession. Mary has been a mentor to many practitioners and is recognized nationally as an expert on infection control issues. This award is sponsored by 3M and was presented to Dr. Vearncombe at the *Breakfast of Champions* by Dr. Maureen Cividino. The overview of Mary's career with intense dedication was both emotional and humourist. Mary's acceptance speech was inspirational and very humble.

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