

CHICA-NORTHERN ALBERTA

2009 Executive

President: Samantha Woolsey RN BScN CIC
President-elect: Denise Sorel RN BScN CIC (resigned August 2009)
Secretary: Melody Cordoviz BSc RN BScN CIC
Treasurer: Shelley Winton RN BScN

2010 Executive

President: Alan Hope
President-elect: Ralph Ennis-Davis RN BN
Secretary: Mary Kristel RN CIC
Treasurer: Marie Judd RN

Number of Members: 101

Geographic Area Served: Northern Alberta

Membership

CHICA-Northern Alberta has representatives from all sectors, including acute care, continuing care, community, first responders, dental health, public health, rehab, industry, environmental health etc. Approximately one quarter of our membership hold CIC designation.

Meetings

CHICA-NA meets ten times per year, once per month excluding July and August. We prefer to have a one hour education session followed by a one hour business meeting. Our December and June meetings are social events where a luncheon is held. Currently, we meet on the second Wednesday of the month from 1300 -1500. Attendance this year has been excellent with approximately 25 attendees at each meeting. Our 2009 Christmas luncheon was particularly well attended with 44 members present.

Highlights

2009 was a very active year for CHICA-NA. In April, the healthcare structure in Alberta changed dramatically. We went from seven health regions to a single region under the umbrella of 'Alberta Health Services'. Many programs that were regionally organized or even site-based, were reorganized under a provincial banner. Many ICPs were affected as most of us work directly for Alberta Health Services. Our organizational structure changed, many leadership roles were changed or created, and funding issues have become a primary concern. We are still reorganizing and developing innovative ways of serving our patients and clients, and providing service to our sites and/or sectors.

CHICA-NA was very well represented at the 2009 CHICA Canada National Conference in St Johns, NL. We had members from across Northern Alberta in attendance and several of our chapter members made oral and poster presentations. We also had a member attend the conference as a Virox Scholarship winner. We all enjoyed the social activities and tours as well. Some of us even kissed a communal cod - infection control be damned!

CHICA-NA held a very successful two day education conference in September entitled 'Vision and Ventures: Infection Control in the Real World'. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Michael Gardam who spoke on positive deviance. Sessions on construction, sterile reprocessing, syringe reuse, and surveillance were presented and were very well attended. Our yearly conjoint meeting with CHICA-Southern Alberta that coincides with the education conference was held for the first time using the Telehealth system.

Of course, 2009 will be remembered as a pandemic year- it was a huge challenge that we faced while dealing with the complete restructuring of our healthcare system. Northern Alberta was hit hard with H1N1. Our ICUs were stretched to the limit and responded well to the sudden influx of critically ill patients. All sites and sectors faced challenges, from vaccine issues to bed management to PPE recommendations- it was an experience that most ICPs will remember for a long time to come! I am confident that we can handle what the future brings, be it 'the third wave', or which ever disease entity next makes an appearance (or reappearance!).

The future of healthcare delivery in Alberta is still somewhat unclear; however the role of Infection Prevention and Control will remain unchanged- Safer care for all.

*Samantha Woolsey RN BScN CIC
Chapter President*