



Dear CSTM Members,

As I write this I am heading to Prince George, British Columbia for the CSTM winter education day and board meeting. Once again the education day will include speakers from the CSTM board as well as local experts. Presentations will be webcast and archived on the CSTM website for later review – so if you missed us “live”, please visit CSTM at www.transfusion.ca to find this and other educational initiatives. We hold these education days in conjunction with our face to face board meetings two-times per year. We try to travel alternately to the west and east – and to visit communities which are a little smaller than those which typically host the CSTM annual meeting. If you think that your community or region would benefit from a CSTM education day, please let us know and we can try to include you in the planning process for a future meeting.

Since I last wrote, we have begun CSTM membership renewal for this year. Please visit the website and renew your membership soon. In addition to reduced registration fees for the CSTM annual meeting, there are many other membership benefits – including access to CSTM Standards and educational materials. Since you last registered, we have changed our registration software so you will note some changes to the look of the registration pages and will be required to set a password. Payments may be made by cheque or through PayPal.

Other exciting additions to our website include a new section on resources which will feature links to educational and practical resources created by your transfusion medicine colleagues across Canada. A CSTM volunteer will be checking content regularly to ensure it remains up to date and accessible. If you are aware of additional resources which could be shared through this page please contact one of the board members. (insert link)

Our annual CBS/HemaQuebec/CSTM meeting will be held in Winnipeg this year on May 21 – 24th. The preliminary program for Winnipeg – The Centre of Canada; Where Past and Future Meet - is available on the website and registration is now open. The conference venue is the Fort Gary Hotel and Conference Center. The planned workshops and presentations look to be very interesting and practical and the organizing committee has ensured a program with sessions that will appeal to nurses, scientists, physicians and MLTs. As always, the conference will be an excellent venue to share ideas with colleagues and to network with transfusion professionals from across Canada. It will also be a lot of fun. Look for the launch of our conference app which will allow you to keep track of your conference schedule, take notes on presentations and view the abstracts and exhibitors that are available at the conference.

The abstract deadline has been extended to March 31st and is accessible through www.transfusion.ca. We would love to hear about your projects through the oral abstract and poster presentations and I encourage you to submit your abstracts to the meeting. If you need assistance with preparing or editing your submission, click the “abstract help” link on the website.

Future conferences are in the planning stages for Vancouver (2016) and Ottawa (2017). We have submitted a bid, together with an excellent Toronto organizing committee headed by Dr. Katerina Pavenski, to host the 2018 ISBT conference in Toronto. We expect to hear whether we have been short listed in April of this year.

Our contribution to the Choosing Wisely Canada initiative has been a huge success. We have heard from many colleagues who have used the choosing wisely statements to spearhead successful transfusion medicine education and patient blood management initiatives. If you have been able to use the Choosing Wisely statements to focus attention on transfusion best practices in some way, we would certainly be interested in hearing about your activities and posting them on our blog or facebook page. If you are planning a local educational event, we may be able to provide your attendees with Choosing Wisely postcards - contact your board member if you are interested. Have a look at the Choosing Wisely Canada pages to see the transfusion medicine statements as well as those from related specialty societies. (insert website)

There may be an opportunity for CSTM to participate in a “third wave” of choosing wisely announcements so if you have some ideas for future statements pertaining to transfusion medicine, please do keep us posted and contribute your thoughts. The process we followed to devise the current choosing wisely statements is outlined within the Choosing Wisely document and can be accessed at both the CSTM and Choosing Wisely Canada websites.

The CSTM Standards committee is beginning the next revision of the CSTM Standards which will once again be focused on hospital transfusion services and will be compliant with the recently revised CSA standards and with Health Canada regulations.

Last month, as CSTM President, I had the opportunity to attend the Canadian Blood Services Blood Utilization forum. This two day event was a “meeting of the minds” and brain storming session for a wide variety of transfusion professionals. We shared ideas for improving transfusion practice and blood utilization and looked for ways to champion best practices, conduct research, disseminate information and educate health care professionals. Look for a summary of the discussions and plans for future initiatives on our website in the coming weeks.

On behalf of the CSTM board I wish you a happy, early spring – and look forward to meeting you at the annual conference in Winnipeg.

Gwen Clarke
CSTM President