

MAHCP Members met with Theresa Oswald Minister of Health October 4th, 2012

Three MAHCP members along with President Wendy Despins and Executive Director Lee Manning met with Health Minister Theresa Oswald, and Assistant Deputy Minister Beth Beaupre. The members gave presentations on their respective occupations and the unique and common challenges that each are facing.

President Despins presented the Minister with supplemental materials relating to previous meetings discussion of Ultrasound. “Addressing a 91% injury rate for ultrasound technologists – Health Sciences Association of British Columbia” and “Brief Ergonomic Review – Cardiac Ultrasound” by Carmel Murphy, MSc. CCPE June 2012

Registered Dietitian (RD), Vanessa Hamilton spoke about the issues facing Manitobans in sustaining and improving health and the important role played by dietitians. Ms. Hamilton stressed the importance of community development, health awareness and advocacy, assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating programs that address health determinants. Other points covered included; the epidemic of childhood obesity in Canada and the 48,000 Manitobans who rely on food banks every month. Ms. Hamilton stressed the extreme need for more dietitians citing many settings where there is either limited or no access to dietitian services.

Registered Cardiology Technologists (RCT) Colleen Bemister raised concerns about the limited opportunities for training Cardiology Technologists in Canada. She explained with low numbers of graduating students to draw from it is more difficult to retain sufficient numbers of graduates. Ms. Bemister explained that retention of staff is also of concern, “absence of career laddering and diversity along with stagnant wages in our profession are causing our current technologists to return to school to pursue alternate careers”. Of even greater and more pressing concern are the situations where unqualified staff, are performing the work. Ms. Bemister presented results of a study conducted by the Department of Medicine, University Hospital of Alberta, “Multitasking and the technical quality of the electrocardiogram”. The conclusions reached in the study were “multitasking has resulted in a high rate of unacceptable ECGs. There is a significant difference in the effectiveness and quality of ECG acquisition performed by ECG technologists and non-ECG technologists. Poorly acquired ECGs impede proper diagnosis for patients, subject the institution to potential medical legal consequences and add an unnecessary burden to the health care budget.”

President Despins explained that these concerns have been raised in the past by MAHCP members both from EKG Technologists and non-EKG Technologists alike. Both Ms. Bemister and President Despins provided the Minister with several examples of varying patient outcomes and the high duplication of services required to address them, when the tests were performed by non-EKG staff.

President Wendy Despins and Treasurer Bob Moroz spent several minutes with the Minister discussing MAHCP’s recent member and public survey and focus group results. The results while not surprising affirmed the message that MAHCP has been raising with her. President Despins told her that MAHCP would be publishing a more detailed report with our membership

in the near future. Mr. Moroz and President Despins also discussed future changes at MAHCP and that the Union would be announcing a new president at the 42nd annual general meeting on October 11.

Minister Oswald once again has committed to continue with ongoing meetings with MAHCP.