



## Family Medicine Forum, October 2010 in Vancouver

### *Who will own the podium?*

Cal Gutkin MD CCFP(EM) FCFP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The 2010 Winter Olympic Games in British Columbia are history. Despite the tragic accident on opening day, weather challenges, and a few technical flaws, Vancouver hosted an exciting and memorable event, which did all Canadians proud. Even the kerfuffle about the appropriateness of the Canadian Olympic Committee's "Own the Podium" theme provided opportunity for otherwise humble Canadians to openly demonstrate their patriotic fervour and to focus, as has never happened before, on *winning*. Canada's athletes responded to this challenge, achieving impressive medal finishes and best-ever performances. Despite these accomplishments, however, it might have been more gracious—more Canadian—if, as hosts of a global event, we had selected a more welcoming theme that at least suggested equal opportunity for all competitors. Perhaps "Loan the Podium" might have delivered the message that, although we were planning to do some serious winning, we were also willing to share the stage with others (albeit temporarily) when their moments of glory arrived. Or maybe we should have chosen "Clone the Podium" to let the world know that, while we expected some short-term triumphs, what was really being unveiled was a scientifically advanced strategy that would lead to Canada's future Olympic domination.

Whatever the effects of these Olympics on our nation's sporting and ethical-political psyches, the reality is that the 2010 Games are over. Canada and Vancouver must now turn their attention to the next major event that will grace our nation's stunning West Coast city: Family Medicine Forum (FMF) 2010, to be held at the beautiful new Vancouver Convention Centre from October 14 to 16. Just as the Canadian Olympic Committee before us, as hosts, the College of Family Physicians of Canada, the British Columbia College of Family Physicians, and our Sections of Teachers and Researchers must now be prepared to answer the question that is on everyone's minds: At FMF 2010, who will own the podium?

Thankfully, it is not difficult to respond to this query: 80% of the presentations at FMF will be made by family physicians and those who work with them on primary care teams, with the remainder made by colleagues in other specialties who have been recommended by our members. The growing audience at FMF (more than 2400 registrants in both Toronto in 2008 and Calgary in 2009) has made FMF one of the largest annual medical meetings

in the country. The practising family physicians, teachers, researchers, medical students, residents, family practice nurses, and other primary care professionals who attend FMF report that they favour sessions presented by family doctors and other members of family practice teams. Fortunately, our call for presentations provides us with a large number of submissions from precisely these individuals. Our Scientific Program Committee does a superb job reviewing these and selecting the right blend of clinical, teaching, and research sessions to meet the needs of most of our members who provide comprehensive continuing care, while also addressing the priorities of those with special interests or focused practices.

This year's keynote presentations will be delivered by 2 outstanding family physicians. On Thursday, October 14, the Opening Ceremonies will feature the 2010 CFPC-Scotiabank Family Medicine Lectureship Award presentation to Dr Robert Thirsk, whose keynote address will be "Exploring Space: The Adventures and Research Findings of a Canadian Family Physician Astronaut." Bob is a College member who has just completed his third mission in space, this one a historic 6-month experience on the International Space Station, where he lived and carried out his important ongoing medical research.

Dr Jack Taunton, a family physician and one of Canada's sports medicine leaders, will deliver the keynote address on Friday, October 15. Jack will share his experiences as Chief Medical Officer for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games—another presentation not to be missed!

The scientific program will be filled with large and small group clinical, teaching, and research sessions requested by our members, covering mental health challenges, pediatric urgencies, topical anesthesia, advanced life support in obstetrics, diabetes guidelines, viral infections, adolescent medicine, asthma, emergency department and in-hospital care, global health, environmental medicine, palliative care, and hands-on practical skills workshops (eg, joint injections, casting, endometrial aspiration biopsies).

The 2010 FMF will be well worth attending for continuing education and professional development. But it will also once again provide the environment and special events that encourage attendees to network, rekindle old friendships, and make new ones with colleagues from across the country. It is a meeting for those whose main focus is family practice and primary care. This is who has helped us develop the program that makes FMF the success it has become—and this is who will own the podium. 🌸

Cet article se trouve aussi en français à la page 499.