Notes from Neil and Eddy

September 13, 2022

Dear colleagues,

As summer is drawing to a close it is our sincerest hope that you all enjoyed some time off and were able to spend precious time with loved ones and rejuvenate. We are also fully aware that nearly all of you worked incredibly hard when not on vacation to fill the high staffing demands and patient needs despite very challenging working conditions. This issue of Notes from Neil and Eddy will highlight some key issues and priorities in our department and for our Zone and province at this time.

Nurse Staffing

Calgary is experiencing marked ED RN staffing shortages. This has resulted in frequent ED bed closures and has contributed to access block for ED patients. Many other departments in Calgary as well as other jurisdictions in Canada and around the world are in a similar situation.

Senior AHS leadership has developed a task force to address this urgent issue. Hopefully this will highlight difficult working conditions for our RN colleagues and improve recruitment and retention by concentrating on issues such as workplace violence, scheduling flexibility and vacation requests. For our part we can continue to enhance our collegial relationships with ED RNs as we strive to keep the care team intact.

Interprovincial comparisons on ED operational performance.

This summer has seen some of the most severe crowding and access block that we have seen in recent history. The causes are multifactorial and relate largely to staffing shortages among both RNs and MDs, continued sick leaves, and reduced access to primary care. High levels of boarding and EIPs with a full resumption of the Alberta Surgical Initiative to catch up on delayed surgical care is also driving strained resources. The result has been high levels of bed block and EMS offload delay. By comparison to other provinces, Alberta still fares well on key measures of operational performance for both discharged and admitted patients,


Furthermore, Calgary fares well in comparison to other Zones in Alberta other metrics related to access and quality of care. See:

https://focus.hcca.ca/emergencydepartments/
**Integrated Operational Center**
The Calgary Integrated Operational Center or IOC was launched in May of this year to serve in many ways like an air traffic control to optimize EMS destination decisions and create capacity and load-level acute care needs in the Zone. While a full assessment of its impact is ongoing, one encouraging observation has been a marked increase in carefully selected patients being transported to Urgent Care as opposed to emergency departments with little or no effect on secondary transfers after assessment. This alone is believed to have reduced the burden of EMS offload. The Medical Director for the Calgary IOC will also be announced shortly.

**The use of diversions to manage gaps in the specialist call schedule**
There have been disruptions in the ability of some specialist services to meet their obligations for covering on-call responsibilities at Calgary Zone hospitals. This has occurred with General and Orthopedic Surgery as well as Cardiology but may not be limited to these services.

Calgary Zone Medical Affairs, AHS and Alberta Health are all working to ensure that there is a resolution to this physician resource problem, however we can expect to encounter gaps in the call schedule for the foreseeable future. Systems are in place to communicate these gaps to the appropriate staff.

RAAPIID and the Integrated Operations Center (IOC) work behind the scenes to divert patients from the “reduced capacity hospital” Emergency Departments.

Site chiefs are working with their specialist colleagues on protocols for managing walk-in patients. Generally, these protocols involve the use of a RAAPIID-facilitated consult with a specialist at a “full capacity hospital” and subsequent transfer to that hospital for patients with a clear diagnosis and disposition. (ie. appendicitis).

Specialists remain available on-call to discuss and manage urgent cases or cases where the disposition is unclear and transfer could possibly be avoided. If you are concerned that harm could come to the patient as a result of a diversion, then consultation with the on-site specialist to share the responsibility for this decision is absolutely indicated. Holding consultations for a few hours until a diversion is over may also be an option in select stable cases. In the absence of an applicable protocol, we may be left managing these cases on an individual basis using principles of patient safety and collegiality to guide us.

As always, happy to have feedback on any issues affecting the Emergency Departments.

Eddy and Neil

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**Operations**

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**First Seizure driving guidelines**

Please see this update from the Neurology Strategic Clinical Network and local neurologist Dr. Katie Wiltshire regarding first time seizure and driving restrictions.

Both PDF’s are worth a quick review:

- [First seizure driving guidelines](#)
- [Infosheet](#)

Bottomline. If you believe that your patient has had a first time seizure, you must advise them to report themselves to the Alberta Driver Fitness and Monitoring program. Also provide them with the Patient Handout from Myhealth.ab. We also need to refer them to a neurologist, usually through the Urgent Neurology Clinic.

Feedback/questions to me please.

Neil

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**Connect Care Update**

We are now less than 2 months away from Connect Care Launch 5 at FMC (November 6, 05:00!) so I wanted to send a friendly reminder about a few points:
1) For those of you who are new users practicing at FMC, you should by now have signed up for your basic training - if you have not, please do so ASAP! This is a mandatory step, along with the proficiency test (EUPA) which must be passed for you to be allowed to work clinically.

2) New and old users alike will find the Connect Care physician resources page at the following link: https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/cis/Page16847.aspx

This contains a number of useful links and documents, including the Bytes Blog, which can be found under the 'Physician Resources' tab.

3) I would like to strongly recommend that any new or current Connect Care users who have not attended a personalization training session should sign up for one prior to the launch date. These sessions have a ton of immensely useful information about how to streamline your use of the EMR, and even though they aren't mandatory they should be considered a key component of your training. You must have completed your basic training to attend one of these courses; they can be found on the myLearningLink page: https://mylearninglink.albertahealthservices.ca

And, as always, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to me.

**Chris Hall**
Emergency Physician and Medical Informatics Lead, AHS Calgary Zone

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**PSF application is open**

See attached PSF mandate and PSF Application guidelines.

- [PSF Application Guidelines](#)
- [PSF Mandate and Process](#)

**Deadline for PSF Application submission:** September 30, 2022

**EFT Next withdrawal:** October 12, 2022

**Note:** April 2022 contribution receipts have been emailed in July – Aug 2022.

**PSF Seeking new committee members**

The PSF is looking for two more interested members to diversify our team. It's a great way to provide some of your service hours to the department, and requires only ~10 hours of virtual meeting/work per year.

Come help us disburse money to support the awesome projects our members contribute for!

Thanks everyone for your support.

If interested in becoming a member please email: Maria.Petrosyants@albertahealthservices.ca

Thank you!

Maria
On behalf of the PSF Committee

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**Opportunity to interview new candidates in the Calgary Zone Department of Emergency Medicine Fall Hiring Cycle. Oct 12/13**

We will be hiring a number of new physicians this year and this is your chance to participate in the process of choosing your future colleagues.

We are hoping to attract a motivated group of interviewers who can use their diverse backgrounds to help the CZDEM choose the candidates that are best suited to help us achieve our long-term goals. We are looking for 3 members-at-large who will join this year’s hiring committee.
The commitment would be for applicant file review, and then interviews on Oct 12 and 13th (two partial days) and participation in a dinner event to rank the candidates.

This is volunteer work but the dinner event is on us! (well, the PSF anyway. Hopefully…)

Please send an expression of your interest to Maria Petrosyants Maria.Petrosyants@albertahealthservices.ca

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**YYC ED Specific**

*Simulation Assessors Needed*

We are seeking 3 staff facilitators for a day of simulation for assessment for the FRCPC program on October 5th from 8:00-14:30. As facilitator on this day, you will be paired with another physician and will be assessing our PGY-1 residents’ performance on EPA 1.1 as they cycle through 10 rapid simulation cases.

If you have simulation facilitation experience and are interested in helping with this important part of resident assessment, please contact Anjali at anjali.pandya@gmail.com.

Thank you for considering!

Catherine and Anjali

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**Opportunity to be a Buddy for potential applicants in the Calgary Zone Department of Emergency Medicine Fall Hiring Cycle.**

We will be conducting our fall hiring cycle Oct 12&13. and this is your chance to help a future colleague by being a resource to a candidate leading up to the fall interviews. This may include providing information about working in Calgary, insider tips about our city or other information the candidate may have questions about.

If this is something you are interested in, please send an expression of your interest to Maria Petrosyants Maria.Petrosyants@albertahealthservices.ca

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**Instructors required: EFAST (Nov 3: 12-5 pm)**

Department of Critical Care Medicine is looking for 2 instructors to help with the EFAST course that is running on Nov 3 from 12-5 pm. This is a hands on, basic (and largely scripted) US course that is provided to the R1 surgery residents as part of their Foundations of Surgery training stage. It is held in the ATSSL at Foothills. If interested, please contact Dr. John Kortbeek at John.Kortbeek@albertahealthservices.ca. Thanks!

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**PRIHS IV study is looking for ED physician feedback to improve the process to utilize RAAPID for LTC to ED transfers for stable patients:**

PRIHS IV grant funded the implementation of a process to reduce potentially avoidable transfers from LTC to the ED. If a patient has an urgent concern and they are deemed medically stable with GOC that would permit a transfer to ED, the LTC staff will call the LTC MD and a call through RAAPID to the ED physician will be initiated. If a patient has a change in condition and is considered unstable the LTC staff will initiate a call to EMS directly. Please see the attached one-page background document and process map.

What is the study about?

- Every day nearly 28 LTC residents in Alberta are transferred to an Emergency Department (ED).
- Many acute changes in a resident’s condition could be addressed at the LTC facility if appropriate supports were available.
- When ED visits are inappropriate, poor communication between the ED and LTC facility can lead to poor outcomes and patient/family dissatisfaction.
- This study involves implementing a new care pathway for use by LTC facilities, along with tools to help detect changes in resident’s status earlier.
- This pathway uses RAAPID to link the LTC doctor and nurse to an ED doctor, before transfer of non-emergent LTC patients.
What is the purpose of the study?

The PRIHS IV research team is looking to recruit ED physicians to participate in one-on-one interviews or a focus group to provide feedback on how to improve this process, looking specifically at barriers and facilitators of successful use of this care pathway. See poster.

If you are an Emergency Department Physician who has received a RAAPID call from LTC within the last 24 months, you are invited to participate in an online focus group or one-on-one interview.

The aim of the interview is to try to understand the barriers and facilitators faced by health practitioners in using the new care pathway. Participation is completely voluntary. A CDN $50 gift card will be provided as reimbursement for a participant’s time.

If you have any questions regarding this study or are interested in participating, please contact the study team at nuclear@ualberta.ca or 780-492-5026.

Study Title- Improving Acute Care for Long-Term Care Residents: A Better Way to Care for the Frail Elderly in Times of Medical Urgency.

Principal Investigator- Dr. Jayna Holroyd-Leduc University of Calgary

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by the Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board (CHREB REB190106) at the University of Calgary and the Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta (Pro00090932). If you have questions about your rights or how research should be conducted, you can call the Research Services Office at University of Calgary at 403-220-2297 or the Research Ethics Office at University of Alberta reoffice@ualberta.ca. This office is independent of the researchers.

ED – Trauma Sims Sign Up

EM Physician Participants: Level 1 Trauma Process Sims (signupgenius.com)

ED Staff Simulations

Please sign up for ED Staff Simulations.

EM Physician Participants: 2022 ED Staff Simulation (Sept- Dec 2022) (signupgenius.com)

Searching for ED Gearheads

The department sometimes gets approached about new tech/supplies that someone is trying to sell to the ER. We would love to see if anyone is interested in looking at these items to see if they would be of use to our dept. Commitment is low - just people who like new gadgets (and sometimes the lunch that comes with it) and is willing to try them out and report back. Currently we need to look at a new epistaxis packing that does not require a repeat visit to the ER for removal as well as new airway devices. We are hoping for a few folks representing a few sites. Let one of the site chiefs know if you are interested.

Dr Meira Louis, PLC ER site Chief

plicer@ahs.ca

Wellness

Parenting & working as a physician during COVID - resources from CSM

Wellness Supports

1. Call your Peer Support Team. HERE are their phone numbers (updated October 2021). The Peer Support Team member can provide an empathetic ear, screen for safety and guide you to resources that exist in our community (i.e PFSP).
2. Call Physician and Family Services (PFSP) – 1877SOS4MDS. THIS LINE IS AVAILABLE 24/7. You have free hours of counselling for yourself and for your family members.
Welcome Back To the Department of Emergency Medicine Grand Rounds

- **Date:** Thurs, Sept 15, 2022
- **Time:** 0900 – 1015 (1.25 Education Credits)
- **Room:** In-Person – Clara Christie Theatre - HSC
- **Zoom:** [https://albertahealthservices.zoom.us/j/66383702969](https://albertahealthservices.zoom.us/j/66383702969)
- **Passcode:** 037024
- **Eval:** [https://cutt.ly/xT82kgH](https://cutt.ly/xT82kgH)

**Session #1 (0900 – 1000)**

**Moderator:** Dr. Kelsey MacLeod, MD FRCPC Emergency Physician

**Speaker:** Dr. Pauline Head, MD FRCPC Emergency Physician

Medical Director Calgary Sexual Assault Response Team, Forensic Sexual Assault Physician Examiner, Clinical Assistant Professor, University of Calgary

**Topic:** CSART and Forensic Medicine:

**Description:** Brief discussion of When and Why to call CSART, and what CSART does and what to do if patients don’t want to see CSART. Trauma Informed care and why it is important in these cases

How Forensic documentation is different than what we do every day, and tips for successful forensic documentation including what and how to document in cases involving Non-Fatal Strangulation.

**Recording Link:** Archived Rounds Recordings can be found on our website.

**Last Week’s GR Pearls**

**September 08 - Grand Round Pearls**

A new salaried EMS Online Medical Control (OLMC) role was developed in response to the overwhelming call volumes to EMS during the COVID 19 Pandemic. New EMS Assess, Treat and Refer, Community Paramedic and Specialized Treatment Plans were developed and utilized to allow unprecedented volumes of patients to stay at home during the COVID 19 Pandemic. Globally the trend is for EMS to play a larger role in our healthcare system and less a role as first responder. Further development and utilization of these protocols could help address some of the care gaps that are currently resulting in unprecedented volumes of patients in our Emergency Departments.

Thanks and please feel free to contact Fareen if you need further direction or clarification, fzaver@gmail.com

**Journal Club - Sept 15**

You are invited to attend the **In-Person Emergency Medicine Journal Club** on Thursday, September 15th, 2022.

- **Date:** September 15, 2022
- **Time:** 18:00 to 21:00
- **Presenters:** Drs. Julia Madill and Duncan Simmonns
- **Preceptors:** Dr. Kasia Lenz
- **Hosted by:** Dr. Fareen Zaver

Please RSVP to Tris TriSurendra.Malasani@albertahealthservices.ca by this Monday September 12, if you would to attend this Journal Club.

**Opportunities**
**MD Wellness Lead**

Dr. Sarah McPherson will be departing on a sabbatical starting September 1, 2022, and as a result the MD Wellness Lead role is available for a term period of time from September 1, 2022, to December 31, 2023. We would like to thank Sarah for her ground-breaking work & contributions to the role this past year.

**About the Position:**

The MD Wellness Lead is considered a 0.1FTE position, compensated at the rate of $23,199 annually. If you’re interested in applying for this exceptional opportunity, please email me a cover letter highlighting your interest and skillset for this position, and an updated CV.

The occupational wellbeing of physicians is recognized as an important factor in professional fulfillment and growth, and directly impacts the provision of care to patients. This is especially relevant in the COVID era and applicable to emergency physicians as they report the highest rates of burnout within all physician groups:

29 physician specialties ranked by 2021 burnout rates (beckershospitalreview.com)

This position will focus on the importance of emergency physician health, and will ensure that there is protected and supported time to advocate for physician wellbeing on important department decisions, to innovate and incorporate change into the Emergency Department, and to strive to become a center of excellence for physician wellbeing within our province. Multiple MDs in our department have specialized training in MD wellness and have been engaged in wellness projects.

This role will work collaboratively with the members of the Department of Emergency Medicine community to foster a culture of physician wellness and lead the planning, development, implementation, evaluation and continuous monitoring of department well-being initiatives and to make physician wellbeing a department priority and address issues on system level.

For further details about the role, please feel free to call or email me or Neil/Eddy or contact Sarah directly at sjmcpcher@gmail.com.

Thanks!

**Scott Banks**

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**Senior Associate Dean, Health Equity and Systems Transformation**

The Cumming School of Medicine invites applications (Cumming School of Medicine, only) for the position of Senior Associate Dean Health Equity and Systems Transformation.

Please see the [complete terms of reference for the position](#).

The successful candidate will hold an MD or PhD; be a member of the CSM faculty; have leadership experience in health equity and administration; be a respected educator and scholar; and have proven ability to collaborate and sustain relationships within the Faculty and across the province with government and professional organizations.

The position is 0.5 FTE. The initial appointment will begin December 1, 2022 for a five-year term.

Please submit a statement of interest and curriculum vitae by September 30, 2022, to:

Dr. Todd Anderson
Dean
Cumming School of Medicine,

c/o sperry@ucalgary.ca

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**Associate Research Director**

After serving for two successful years as the Associate Research Director, Katie Lin has decided to step down and focus on other things effective September 30, 2022. Katie has done an exceptional job in this role, and has helped to make the research area very successful. We would like to thank her for the many contributions to research within the Calgary Zone Emergency Department. We are now in the process of recruiting a new Associate Research Director.
About the Position: The Associate Research Director is considered a 0.2FTE position and is paid from the University of Calgary. It is compensated at the rate of $41,790.50 annually inclusive of vacation pay and there are no benefits associated with it. If you’re interested in applying for this exceptional opportunity, please email me a cover letter highlighting your interest and skillset for this position, and an updated CV.

Innovation in emergency care and development of new evidence is critical to informing process and operational improvements, and in improving patient outcomes. This position is essential for the development of new evidence using local Calgary data. The Associate Research Director Scientist will also act as a scholarly mentor for graduate and postgraduate trainees, and participate in Calgary Zone ED quality improvement activities. They will also act as a collaborator with researchers from outside of the Department of Emergency Medicine whose research will impact the care of ED patients.

Key Responsibilities:

- Primary research/evidence generation leading to operational and practice change in Calgary Zone EDs.
- Mentoring graduate, postgraduate and undergraduate medical trainees engaged in research and/or quality improvement projects.
- Coordinating with the Calgary Zone Emergency Medicine Division Chief of Research regarding research projects involving collaborators outside of the Department of Emergency Medicine.
- Attend meetings as required and the departmental annual retreat.
- The Associate Research Director scientist will be expected to compete for additional peer-reviewed salary support.
- Assisting the Division Chief of Emergency Medicine Research in organizing the annual EM Research Day.
- Supervision for our Research Coordinator.
- Co-chairing the EM Research Advisory Committee.
- Developing original research ideas and leading in the performance and publication of these research ideas,
- Assisting with other collaborative research that occurs in the department.
- Teaching EM residents and other trainees about research methodology, abstract submission, poster design and oral presentation skills.

The selected candidate will work closely with EM Research Section Chief. For further details about the role, please feel free to call or email me, Eddy or speak directly to Stephanie and Katie at katielinmd@gmail.com

-Scott Banks

EM Effectiveness & Clinical Excellence Coordinator

This position allows for improved resource stewardship in the Emergency Medicine Department, as well as, improvement in the quality of care we deliver and continuous work to increase physician engagement by utilizing feedback with physician performance measures.

The EM Effectiveness & Clinical Excellence Coordinator is responsible for optimizing clinical decision support and quality improvement audit and feedback activities within ConnectCare.

In addition, the Coordinator reviews/changes/updates the EM Order Set for SCM EM users. This role develops and creates reports on quality indicators of clinical effectiveness at the provider level in conjunction with the Department of Emergency Medicine Data Analyst reflecting optimal care, i.e. % of hemodynamically stable upper GI bleed patients receiving transfusion for Hgb >80, use of expensive antibiotics when less costly alternative is available.

This position is essential to continue and lead innovation & quality improvement projects/activities in the department. If the position is not filled, coverage would be at risk on ongoing projects/developments & core responsibilities in general, including but not limited to identifying areas of need for clinical effectiveness or quality improvement support, training and education for ED physicians.

Applicants are to submit curriculum vitae & cover letter (in pdf format) to Scott Banks at ScottH.Banks@albertahealthservices.ca
UME Simulation Lead for ED

Melanie (UME EM clerkship director) and I (electives clerkship director) would like to invite all interested candidates to apply for the position of UME simulation lead for the emergency department. We thank Kevin Haley for taking on this role and all of his great work in the past.

This position would involve creating, organizing and maintaining a simulation program for core and elective clerks that rotate through the ED (approximately 6-12 clerks per 2 week rotation). Our goal is to offer a 2-3 hour simulation session every 2 weeks (1 session per clerk block) covering commonly encountered EM topics (ACLS, trauma, toxicology, etc). The renumeration is $125/hour.

If you have any questions regarding the role, please feel free to email Melanie (Melanie.Sohn@albertahealthservices.ca) and I (calgaryreflectives@gmail.com), or Kevin (khaley@ualberta.ca) as the outgoing UME sim lead for more information.

For interested candidates, please email a your CV and a letter of interest to both Melanie and I by September 30.

- Claire Acton and Melanie Sohn

Provincial Medical Director - Virtual Health
See posting here.

CME & Learning

Dept of Family Medicine: 56th Mackid Lecture
ED Physicians are invited to the 56th Mackid Lecture on Sept 27, 5-9pm.

$20 - includes reception and dinner
1.5 Mainpro+ credits

Improving safety in health systems: Identifying and challenging our anti-Indigenous bias as physicians.
presented by: Dr. Pamela Roach & Dr. Lindsay Crowshoe

More info and agenda here.

Email family.medicine@ahs.ca to register.

SAVE THE DATE!!! CAEP 2023

Come reconnect with the Canadian Emergency Medicine Community at

CAEP 2023 which will be held May 28 - May 31, 2023 in Toronto.

The planning committee is already busy putting together a stellar program and implementing many changes that will make the conference more desirable for all EM physicians to attend.

https://caepconference.ca

(program details are typically available in early January)

PS: if there are improvements or things you would like to see at conference feel free to reach out to catherine.palocka@gmail.com with any ideas!
Geriatric EM CME opportunity

CAEP is offering a **four-hour virtual course** covering the core clinical topics in *Geriatric Emergency Medicine* on **Thursday October 27th** at 12pm EST. The course is highly interactive with ample opportunity for learning from Canadian emergency physicians focused on geriatric care AND your peers. Registration includes free access to **14 instructional videos** covering core Geri EM topics. It is accredited by both the CFPC and the RCPSC.

[Register here.](#)

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**Practicing Cultural Competency: Indigenous Themed Simulation**

The AHS Indigenous Wellness Core (IWC) and eSIM Provincial Simulation teams would like to invite you to participate in a simulation project, *Practicing Cultural Competency: Indigenous Themed Simulation*.

As part of the ongoing work to improve the health and health care of Indigenous Peoples in Alberta, we aim to build on the current AHS ROL *Indigenous Awareness and Sensitivity Training* modules with hands-on practice for health care providers focusing on applicable skills in communication and inclusion, specific to Indigenous Peoples.

Simulation provides an opportunity for the exploration of communication skills and meaningful discussion about the impact of improved practice in an Indigenous frame for those accessing emergency departments and urgent care settings. This experiential learning is broadly applicable to all patients of any culture or marginalized group accessing a variety of rural and urban health care settings.

Simulation session on Oct 13 at RGH from 08:30 -12:00

Section 3 credits for 4 hours

Please contact Gord McNeil ([gord.mcneil@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:gord.mcneil@albertahealthservices.ca)) if you are interested or have any questions.

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**Upcoming EDI events, opportunities, activities and resources**

[Click here to read.](#)

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**The Alberta SimPosium**

eSIM Provincial Simulation is proud to host the inaugural Alberta SimPosium on October 25th & 26th, 2022.

The Alberta SimPosium is an interprofessional simulation education conference which targets simulation educators, researchers and healthcare professionals, and students engaged in the field of simulation.

With options to attend in-person in Calgary, Edmonton, and/or virtually, eSIM aims to offer a unique opportunity for simulation expertise to be shared broadly with healthcare professionals across the province.

[Click here to register.](#)

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**Canadian Physicians Financial Wellness Conference**

A philanthropic conference focused on physical wellness and finances. Hosted by Jane and Paul Healey (from the well-known Physician Financial Independence FB group) and featuring notable speakers including Mark Soth, Ben Felix, and Rob Carrick. Residents and staff physicians with an interest in these areas are encouraged to attend.

[https://www.physiciansficonference.com](https://www.physiciansficonference.com)
Looking for a conference this fall?

The International Conference on Physician Health is being held in Orlando Florida Oct 13-15, 2022. This conference is a collaborative meeting of the AMA, CMA and BMA.

The cut off date for reservations is Sept 22, 2022 and can be found here.