

The future of urology in Canada

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Important changes are happening at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, in how they assess our trainees' competency and readiness for independent practice. For many of us already in practice, the changes that we are witnessing in how we manage patients, such as electronic patient records, evolving technologies and greater patient awareness of treatment options through the internet, mirrors what is happening in the world outside of urology. Patients read about self-driving cars, widespread use of robotics in industry, expansion of apps that can perform almost any function and the explosion of cell phone power, replacing desk top computers, expect advances in healthcare to be similarly rapid.

The CUA recognizes that these “advances” will be welcomed by most, but can represent a challenge for others and are poised to provide resources to help our membership deal with these changes. As an example, while on-line education is important today, its role in maintaining your competency and ability to continue to practice urology at the highest level, will undoubtedly increase rapidly over the next decade. It is with that understanding, that we have devoted many hours to our website and have asked our office of education team to enhance our current educational offerings, assess our ability to transmit educational programs from the live learning at the annual meeting to self-assessment learning accessible on the CPD site and look at innovative ways to provide continuing professional development to our membership.

Our annual meeting is being designed with interactive sessions focused on the needs of the practicing urologist, providing new treatment approaches, and interactive sessions that address controversial topics. The days of a social-first CUA Annual Meeting have passed, as we recognize that our membership wants high quality science, pragmatic lectures that are interactive and practice focused, with a first-rate social program to boot!

The needs and practice patterns of today's urology graduates will likely be very different than what many of us have asked of the CUA in the past. It isn't just the rapid progress of technology that is changing what we do and how we do it. Strauss and Howe

in 1991, laid the groundwork almost 3 decades ago, for our current understanding of how different generations approach life and their life-work balance. They popularized the notion that those of us born in the 60's and 70's, called Generation Xers have made it our life's goal to change what the boomers (the generation that preceded us) created, from politics to music. It was a transformation from soft/mellow rock and roll, to punk, metal, and grunge. Gen Xers are known for being cynical, understandable considering that we came of age just in time to experience the fall of the Berlin Wall, changes to communism, the AIDS epidemic, global warming, financial challenges and many other world crises.

Generation Y (people born in the 80s and 90s) are the current cohort joining the CUA. In contrast to previous generations, they are often thought of as the "Charmed" cohort, their parents had easy access to birth control, meaning they were chosen, wanted and nurtured. As a group, they are generally thought to be idealistic and have a desire to save the world. Looking at something like climate change or global recession, a Millennial won't blame the past but look forward to the solutions of the future.

Understanding our membership and their needs, developing the resources for all members, whether they be Generation X, Y or Boomers, is a key objective of the CUA. Over the past 25 years, I have served as a member-at-large, chair of the guidelines committee, , chair of the CUASF administrative counsel, Vice-President Education and now as President. The ability of the CUA to meet the needs of all of our members has never been greater or perhaps more essential. If there is one message I want all CUA members to hear, it is to be an active voice within our Association and let the leadership know how we can best assist you in your professional life.