

MARITIME  
RESIDENT DOCTORS



**Annual Report**  
**2023-24!**



# President's Report

## by Dr. Patrick Holland

As we turn the page on summer and head into fall, another academic year is in the books and as has been my experience every year over my five years of residency, it was a productive year at Maritime Resident Doctors. Under the excellent leadership of our CEO Sandi Carew and her dedicated staff of Daniel Bonner, Leanne Drake, Verlie Tyson and Cristy Atwood, MarDocs continues to make strides to improve working conditions and the learning environment for the over 600 residents working across Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

On a national level, MarDocs punches above its weight and our contributions on national issues are respected and sought out. We continue to have a collective agreement that other PHOs strive towards and should only improve in the ongoing negotiations.

At the local and regional levels, I can confidently say that our relationships with PGME, Resident Affairs and the Office of Professional Affairs are stronger than ever and that we have

partners at Dal who are interested in working with us. We have solid working relationships with each of the provincial Colleges and Medical Associations, and while there is still a long way to go with resident recruitment in the Maritimes, we have certainly made inroads with each of the provinces.

Over the past year within MarDocs, we are proud to have instituted dedicated representation for Visa trainees, Black & African Nova Scotian residents, as well as Indigenous residents. We have revised and improved our financial aid process which will be rolled out later this fall. We have continued collaboration with our Distributed Sites and Central Zone advisory committees to try and improve conditions for residents at all sites and in all programs.

We recognize that there remain significant challenges to be addressed including increasing compensation, improving work hours, logistics of distributed rotations, ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment including dedicated spaces for

residents in all hospitals and clinics. Among many other issues, these will be some of our priorities this year and beyond.

Being a part of MarDocs is a rewarding experience but it certainly takes dedication in an already busy schedule. I want to recognize the Board who volunteered their time over the 2023-2024 year to improve residency at Dal including our Executive: Drs. Brett Ells, Manal Sheikh and Herman Stubeda; our Board: Drs. Sarah MacGregor, Adele Orovec, Kristin Ko, Kathleen MacMillan, Ryan Densmore,

Mo Karkada, Adrienne Borrie, Mohammed al Qatani, Hawa Nurdin; and DMSS rep Becca Chapman. If you see these folks around, please thank them for their contributions!

As my term as MarDocs President comes to a close, I am happy to pass the torch to the more than capable hands of Dr. Brett Ells. I can honestly say that it has been a pleasure to serve our membership over the past two years and I would like to thank you for everything that you do in caring for patients across the Maritimes.



Residents enjoying a complementary coffee break during Resident Wellness Week in May 2024.

# *CEO's Report*

## by Sandi Carew

It is with great pride that I reflect on another successful year at MarDocs. We continue to make strides in advocating for our members and advancing the causes that affect resident doctors across the Maritimes. None of this would be possible without the dedication and hard work of our Board members, who have once again gone above and beyond in their service. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to all outgoing Board members for their commitment and tireless efforts to support our community. Your time and energy, especially given the demands on your own schedules, truly make a difference for all residents.

### **Preparing for Collective Agreement Negotiations**

As we look to the year ahead, one of our top priorities remains the successful negotiation of a new collective agreement. However, as we all know, successful negotiations don't happen overnight. Last year was an important year of preparation. We gathered valuable insights through our membership survey and

negotiations poll, carefully analyzed data from other provinces, and reviewed the experiences of other bargaining units. This research has allowed us to craft proposals that reflect the needs of our members, and we are determined to secure the best possible agreement for everyone. Rest assured, we are working diligently and tirelessly on your behalf to bring about a fair and equitable outcome.

### **Advocacy & Collective Agreement Compliance**

In addition to negotiating a new collective agreement, much of our focus in the past year was on advocacy and ensuring compliance with the current collective agreement. Our team has been working on the ground every day to support members, ensuring they have access to the services and benefits they are entitled to under the agreement. Whether it's providing direct support, answering questions, or resolving issues, we are always striving to help our members get the most from their contract.

### **Wellness Initiatives**

Supporting our members' well-being continues to be one of our highest priorities. This year, we hosted a variety of wellness initiatives and events across all of our sites. I had the pleasure of visiting each site personally, providing updates, answering questions, and connecting with our distributed members. These visits continue to be an invaluable way for me to hear directly from members and ensure we are addressing your concerns.

### **National Advocacy with Resident Doctors of Canada**

On the national stage, MarDocs continues to work in close collaboration with Resident Doctors of Canada and our colleagues across the country to push for meaningful changes and improvements that will benefit all resident doctors. Our collective efforts have helped amplify the voices of residents across Canada, and we will continue to work towards policies that support both the well-being of residents and the broader healthcare system.

### **Advisory Committees**

Our two key advisory committees, the Central Zone Advisory Committee and the Distributed Site Advisory Committee, played an integral role in ensuring that we are hearing from all members across the Maritimes. These committees meet regularly to discuss the issues that matter most to residents, and their input has been essential in shaping our actions and communications throughout the year. We deeply value the perspectives and contributions of these committees as they help guide our work and improve member engagement.

### **Volunteer Representation**

I would also like to highlight the incredible contributions of our volunteer members, who serve on numerous committees that influence important decisions within our healthcare system. These dedicated residents represent us on critical bodies such as the Postgraduate Medical Education Committee, the Resident Affairs Committee, One Patient One Record (OPOR), the Education Advisory Board, and many

## CEO Report continued:

more. Their involvement helps ensure that resident doctors have a voice in the major decision-making processes that affect our members.

### **A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Team**

None of the successes from this year would have been possible without the hard work of the MarDocs team. I am fortunate to work alongside such a dedicated and talented group of individuals. A heartfelt thank you to Leanne, Cristy, Verlie, and Daniel for your unwavering commitment and support throughout the year. Together, we have accomplished so much, and I look forward to continuing our work together.

Once again, I want to extend my deepest thanks to each of you—our members—for your ongoing support and commitment to the work we do. MarDocs is here to serve you, and we are always striving to improve the lives and work conditions of resident doctors. We have an exciting year ahead, and I look forward to continuing our shared journey together.

# *Well-Being Report* by Mardocs Staff

## **ACTIVITIES**

Mardocs continued to prioritize resident wellness throughout the 2023-24 year, offering a wide range of engaging activities. Weekly fitness classes, including the Evolve Fitness boot camps and Tuesday Yoga at Halifax Yoga, were well attended, helping residents stay active and connected. This year, we introduced a six-week boxing program, which was met with great enthusiasm and will return for another session in 2025. Additionally, Mardocs organized several wellness events, encouraging residents and their families to enjoy quality time together. Notable outings included ticketed events to local sports games like the Mooseheads, Thunderbirds, and Wanderers, along with activities such as trips to Playdium, family movie matinees, and apple-picking in the Annapolis Valley. Resident-led initiatives, such as the Running Club, were also supported and continue to foster community engagement.

## **CHALLENGES**

The rising costs associated with our

group benefits program presented a challenge this year. In response, Mardocs' Trustees initiated a review of the plan design and administration, aiming to find a balance between maintaining a comprehensive benefits package and managing financial sustainability. These changes are critical to ensuring that we can continue providing valuable support to our residents while maintaining financial stability.

## **ADVOCACY**

Advocacy efforts remained a key focus during the academic year, with the Negotiations Team meeting regularly to prepare for the upcoming contract discussions. With the expiration of our collective agreement approaching, we have been working diligently to ensure that our residents' needs are addressed in negotiations. Key issues include improvements in wellness provisions, ensuring that terms in the contract are aligned with Mardocs' goals of fostering a healthy and supportive environment.

## **WELLNESS WEEK**

To promote resident wellness,

Mardocs hosted a dedicated Wellness Week. The week featured a variety of fun and rejuvenating activities designed to enhance community spirit and well-being. These included pizza parties hosted by different programs, the popular Drift coffee truck, which made stops at hospitals in Halifax, and fun events like board games night and prize draws. These activities not only provided opportunities for relaxation but also encouraged collaboration and friendly competition among residents.

## **AWARDS**

Mardocs was proud to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to wellness within the organization:

### **Excellence in Teaching Award:**

Presented to Dr. Michel Chiasson of the Dalhousie Family Medicine Program in Cheticamp, Nova Scotia, for his outstanding contributions to education and wellness.

### **Dr. Kitt Turney Well-Being Award:**

Awarded to Dr. Jeana MacLeod from the Annapolis Family Medicine Program for her commitment to fostering wellness in her practice and

among her peers.

In addition, our Resident of the Month (ROTM) Program continued to spotlight residents who exemplify wellness and serve as role models to others. A special thank you to the Resident Wellness Committee for their ongoing efforts in selecting these deserving recipients in 2023-24:

- Andrew Fenwick (PGY5, Radiology)

- Karen Cholmondeley (PGY3, Internal Medicine)
- Saly Halawa (PGY3, FM Emergency Medicine)
- Fares Al-Jahdali (PGY5, Orthopaedics)
- Fares Al-fares (PGY5, Pediatric Oncology)

**HEALTHY RESIDENT PROGRAM (HRP) & WELLNESS INITIATIVES AT**

**DISTRIBUTED SITES**

Through the Healthy Resident Program (HRP), Mardocs continues to support wellness initiatives. This year, we funded wellness activities across 63 residency programs, ensuring that wellness was integrated into the daily lives of residents at hospitals and satellite clinics across the Maritimes. Each site was provided with a dedicated budget to support

initiatives that met the unique needs of their residents. Some examples of activities funded this year include dinners, bowling, and healthy snacks.

Thank you Manal Sheikh, Mardocs' Well Being Chair for your commitment to resident wellness for the 2023-2024 academic year, and to the Wellness Committee for their time and ideas throughout the year.

## *Resident Doctors of Canada Report* by Leslie Cuthbertson, RDoC CEO

Resident Doctors of Canada (RDoC) is Canada's only national independent organization dedicated to championing healthier ways for residents to learn and work. Through its membership with RDoC, MarDocs ensures the effective national representation of residents in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island on issues that impact their medical education. This report highlights achievements during the 2023/24 fiscal year. RDoC's work falls within three major areas of focus outlined below.

### **Strengthening the National Network**

RDoC supported collaboration among member Provincial Housestaff Organization (PHOs) to share successful practices, and tools and resources to help them in their contract negotiations and the critical services they provide for their residents.

RDoC provided leadership and advocacy with impact training to the resident volunteers from across Canada who were heavily involved in our advocacy work with our national partners.

RDoC's optimal self workshops champion healthier ways to learn

and work by providing residents with evidenced-based skills and resources to help them manage stress and improve performance.

### **Inspiring the System with Vision**

Everything RDoC does is rooted in the resident lived experience.

In February 2024, RDoC launched an initiative to collect, synthesize and communicate the diverse lived experiences of residents and identify the **determinants of health of residents** with particular emphasis on those most adversely affected by challenges within the medical education system. Information from

this research initiative will help RDoC refine principles and positions on issues, and will inform ongoing advocacy on issues of national importance to residents.

In 2021, RDoC partnered with the Royal College to formally gather the resident lived experience with CBD through the **CBD Resident Pulse Check Survey**. There have now been two iterations of the Resident Pulse Check Survey completed, with the second occurring in 2023. The results from those surveys are directly informing the College's adaptations aimed at optimizing CBD.



### Driving System Change

As a strong national network informed by the lived experience of all residents - we drive system change. Over 40 specially trained resident volunteer advocates representing the national voice of Canada's resident doctors on over 50 committees with 14 national partners. Through the work of these volunteers, RDoC advocates for system change in the following areas:

#### **CBD - The Resident Experience**

RDoC provided the Royal College with a framework for rethinking how to build adaptations to the implementation of CBD and address the key issues faced by learners, specifically the intense burden of assessment through the collection of EPAs. RDoC remains active on the Royal College CBD National Advisory Board and contributes to discussions on the adaptations from a resident's perspective.

#### **Education Reform - Family Medicine**

RDoC directly influenced the halting of the CFPC's stated intention to extend family medicine training to three years and successfully steered discussion in the direction of optimizing family medicine education. RDoC ensures the family medicine

resident voice is fully engaged in discussions and decisions made relating to family medicine education reform.

#### **IM/GIM Length of Training**

RDoC proactively engaged with members of the Committee on Specialties making sure they were aware of RDoC's position on extensions of training and ensuring that no decision that results in the removal of the four year IM pathway is made without a solid evidence-based argument.

#### **Governance of the Match**

After a two-year hiatus from this issue, in June 2024 the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada's (AFMC) announced once again its plan to tender the Canadian Resident Matching Service (CaRMS) contract. CaRMS was established (originally as CIMS) under an agreed upon shared governance model that was inclusive of all four national learner organizations, other national partners and the AFMC. As the AFMC was only one of twelve organizations sharing that governance model, the AFMC did not own the match and tendering the CaRMS contract fell outside of the shared governance agreement.

Please note: After a rigorous campaign, the AFMC board announced its decision to pause the tender process and honour the shared governance model for the match. RDoC is working in partnership with all stakeholders in the match to ensure stability of the match, data stewardship, a state-of-the-art algorithm and financial transparency.

#### **Exams**

The Royal College's recent announcement to return to an in-person exam format presents significant concerns around equity and the integrity of the exam experience. RDoC continues to advocate for better incorporation of resident-developed key principles on optimizing exam experiences.

#### **CanMEDS 2025**

RDoC supported the goals of anti-racism and anti-oppression, and the goal of building equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility within the medical system through its participation in the CanMEDS 2025 project.

#### **Accreditation**

RDoC played a critical role in ensuring resident representation and engagement in accreditation and

continuous quality improvement of their programs. Resident volunteers were engaged in 16 external reviews and two regular reviews. Nine hundred residents were directly engaged in pre-accreditation workshops and another 300 residents benefited from pre-external review workshops.

#### **Resident Physician Mobility**

In June 2023, RDoC provided the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada's (FMRAC) Executive Director with a call to action for Medical Regulatory Authorities to act on this issue. RDoC had representation at the FMRAC annual meeting and conference in late June and will continue to identify and pursue all avenues that lead to lower barriers, and national licensure for resident physicians.

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# Maritime Resident Doctors Statement of Operations (General Fund)

For the year ended June 30, 2024  
- Unaudited -



New doctors, new ideas

for better health care

	2024 Budget \$	2024 Actual \$	2023 Actual \$
<b>REVENUES</b>			
Dues	640,000	674,027	634,674
Employee Life and Health Trust Fund administration (Note 10)	60,000	60,000	60,000
Resident Trust Fund membership events (Note 10)	40,000	40,000	40,000
Resident Trust Fund administration (Note 10)	<u>20,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>	<u>20,000</u>
	<u>760,000</u>	<u>794,027</u>	<u>754,674</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Accounting	7,900	9,314	7,849
Amortization	2,500	1,789	1,398
Bad debts	-	26,258	-
Bank charges and interest	2,000	1,178	1,263
Board - office insurance	3,500	4,262	3,299
Board - staff development	14,000	17,251	12,435
Board - staff functions	9,000	8,669	8,235
Board meetings	2,000	105	1,720
Consulting	-	148	1,842
Dues, licenses and fees	15,000	15,325	14,706
General legal	2,000	167	2,368
Grievances	-	60,220	4,984
Miscellaneous	2,000	782	2,376
Negotiations	20,000	2,868	-
Occupancy	34,000	25,910	28,722
Office	15,000	17,174	17,689
Publications and promotion	4,000	853	2,036
Resident Doctors of Canada	90,000	104,224	68,557
Salaries and benefits (Note 9)	476,600	410,800	396,308
Telephone and internet	8,500	7,675	7,803
Travel	12,000	16,102	10,340
Well-being and membership events	<u>40,000</u>	<u>43,530</u>	<u>61,128</u>
	<u>760,000</u>	<u>774,604</u>	<u>655,058</u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,423</u>	<u>99,616</u>

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