

President's Message to 2022 Annual General Meeting
by Heather Shpak
May 18, 2022

It is my pleasure to address you on behalf of CASLPM Council. Thank you for taking time from your busy schedules to join us. I am pleased to speak to you today in my second year as president of the College.

2021 was a year of change for the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Manitoba. This was especially noted in staffing changes. At the beginning of 2021, CASLPM was served by Stephanie Gordon in the role of Registrar/Executive Director, Barb Kryzanowski in the role of Regulatory Services Manager, Dave Terrick as administrative assistant and bookkeeper, Sheryl Slosower as a consultant on special projects and Donna St. Vincent as temporary administrative assistant while Dave was on medical leave. In April, Barb accepted an opportunity to work at a different regulatory college, Stephanie left Manitoba in June for an opportunity in Prince Edward Island, and although Dave returned from medical leave in the summer, he too left for another opportunity in the fall. Sheryl and Donna stayed the course with CASLPM and were of great support to the College during our period of transition and Kristin Holt was hired as a part-time Acting Registrar from July to December.

Because the work of the College is significant, council and committee members also pitched in to ensure that the College met its mandate of protecting and serving the public by regulating and ensuring competent, safe, ethical practice of audiologists and speech-language pathologists in Manitoba.

Hiring for a small organization such as ours is never an easy feat. Hiring in a pandemic further complicates matters. In September 2021, we deliberately advertised for two positions: a Registrar and an Executive Director to see if that would garner an increased interest in positions. We were pleased to be able to interview strong applicants in October and early

November. In the end, we decided to combine the Registrar/Executive Director position again and allow the new Registrar/ED to hire a Deputy Registrar in 2022. We chose to hire Colleen J. Braun, whom you are meeting today. Colleen brings significant skills in the areas of management, finance, and communications which are felt to be an asset for CASLPM. We have been very pleased with Colleen's work at the College to date as she has identified several areas for improvement and has already solved many of the challenges identified.

Unless you are actively involved in the College operations, it can be difficult to understand the work of a regulatory body. Registrant knowledge is often limited to registration and renewal and the continuing competency obligations such as the Self-Assessment Tool and the Jurisprudence module (as per an email sent to you just last week). As CASLPM President in a year of very limited staff, I had the opportunity to see firsthand the numerous and complex tasks the college is required to engage in. These include, but are not limited to:

- responding to a wide range of questions from registrants, potential registrants, and members of the public
- reporting to the Manitoba Government and the Fair Registration Practices Office
- working on special projects with other regulated health colleges through the Manitoba Alliance of Health Regulatory Colleges
- collaborating with the speech-language pathology and audiology colleges and associations across Canada
- engaging in discussions with representatives from universities that provide speech-language pathology and audiology degrees
- addressing complaints about registrants through informal or formal processes
- and developing or redeveloping policies and procedures in response to requirements of the Regulated Health Professions Act and as a result of feedback from registrants and staff.

One of the new tasks that began in late 2021 was to begin re-evaluating the processes for obtaining and holding advanced competencies. We also began the process of updating the website but have deferred completion of this project to later this year or next.

As you may recall from discussions at last year's AGM, CASLPM asked university graduates to write the inaugural Canadian Entry to Practice exam for the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology in November 2020. While it is CASLPM Council's desire to make participation in this exam mandatory for new applicants to the College, in early 2021 a review of the Practice of Audiology and Practice of Speech-Language Pathology Regulation revealed wording that does not permit CASLPM to make the exam mandatory at this time. Therefore, the College began working towards a review of the Regulation and hopes to work with the government in the future to revise the Regulation to better fit the needs of the College.

CASLPM Council believes strongly in the value and integrity of the Canadian Entry to Practice exam as part of an assessment process for our professions. Most Canadian regulators have now mandated or are in the final stages of mandating the use of the exam in their provinces. At the present time, Provisional Registrants in Manitoba are encouraged to write the exam.

Registrants will be updated when additional changes arise.

Council met regularly during 2021 through virtual platforms. Due to the number of meetings needed, we have increased the number of regularly scheduled meetings for 2022. At every regular Council meeting, the Registrar and President report on operations of the College and correspondence with local and national regulatory bodies. The financial condition of the College is reviewed and discussed, and all committee chairs provide updates on committee work. These committees include the Complaints Investigation Committee, the Inquiry Committee, the Continuing Competency Committee, the Practice Advisory Committee and any other ad hoc or working groups which are created as needed to address special projects. Members of the public are welcome to observe Council meetings. A schedule of Council meetings is posted on our website. Should you wish to observe a future meeting, please contact College staff to make arrangements.

This year, the terms of three Council members are set to expire. Two of these Council members may choose to reapply for another term, while one Council member, Leslie Goerzen, cannot renew her term as she will be completing the end of her third term with CASLPM. We are very grateful for Leslie's commitment to the college these past nine years. At minimum, the Council will be looking for a speech-language pathologist in the rural district. The rural district is defined as living outside of Winnipeg city limits. Please watch for the call for nominations in your email inbox and consider if you would be available to fill a term on Council. If a Council position seems too great, applications for committee members are accepted throughout the year.

I would like to extend my thanks to all the Council and Committee members who served CASLPM this past year and would especially like to thank Caitlin Brown, who completed her three-year term on Council in 2021 as a public representative appointed by the government. Caitlin's business and financial expertise was invaluable to the College.

In closing, I thank each of our registrants for your professionalism and dedication to your clients, and colleagues. The province of Manitoba is well-served by the audiologists and speech-language pathologists in this community.

I now invite Colleen J. Braun to address the meeting.