



**AHPA**

ARTHRITIS HEALTH PROFESSIONS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023





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## 2023 Board of Directors

**Past President: Paul Adam**

**President: Samantha Holmgren**

**President-Elect: Michelle Bridge**

**Treasurer: Mary Ellen Marcon**

**Secretary: Lisa Robinson (until Oct 20, 2023)/ Vacant**

**Sponsorship and Marketing Chair: Petra Kodeda**

**Research Chair: Dr. Karine Toupin-April**

**Communications Chair: Sue MacQueen**

**Professional and Career Development Chair: Vacant**

**Membership Chair: vacant**

**Member at Large: Vacant**

**Webmaster: Ron Yong**

**[www.ahpa.ca](http://www.ahpa.ca)**

**[connect@ahpa.ca](mailto:connect@ahpa.ca)**

# ARTHRITIS HEALTH PROFESSIONS ASSOCIATION

We are a Canadian organization of health professionals, researchers, and administrators who, through knowledge translation, engagement, and inter-professional collaboration, aim to advance our ability to provide excellent patient care.

## VISION AND MISSION

### **Vision**

Optimal care and quality of life for every Canadian living with arthritis.

### **Mission**

To build and sustain a community of professionals who provide the best possible care to Canadians with arthritis through knowledge translation, engagement, and inter-professional collaboration.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2023 - 2028

### **Knowledge Translation**

To generate, share, and disseminate the evolving body of arthritis care knowledge by creating opportunities for research funding, collaboration, and education for our members.

### **Engagement**

To maximize the engagement of our members and external partners, leveraging our positive impact on individual professionals and the healthcare system, and better positioning AHPA to fulfill its mission.

### **Sustainability**

To build the resources, organizational structures, and capacity to achieve our goals and provide excellent value to our members.





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In 2023, we thankfully had more chairs filled than the previous year. However, we were still short of a full board. Specifically, we operated without the Professional and Career Development and Membership Chairs, as well as the Member-at-Large position being vacant.

Despite this, we were able to continue to offer our pre-course, research grant competition, regular communications for members, launch the discussion forum, and even put together a hybrid education event. We have observed a decrease in attendance in the webinars and an increased desire from members to network and connect in person. This event allowed members to connect at two hubs where there was the most interest. We also revamped our sponsorship strategy and created our next 5-year strategic plan this year.

Additionally, we discovered a need to improve the security of our website. The first attempt to fulfill this created an unfortunate glitch in our system. With the combined efforts of the cybersecurity committee, our webmaster, the communication chair, and the presidential officers, we were able to resolve it.

The 3 presidential officers frequently collaborated to move projects forward. Each presidential officer is responsible for a portfolio that stays with them as they move through the three offices, from president-elect to president and then past president. When a chair is not filled, this work falls to the presidential officer responsible for that chair. This has meant a heavy workload for Paul Adam, without a Professional and Career Development Chair, and highlighted this chair's essential nature.

*Optimal care and quality of life for every Canadian living with arthritis*

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT, CONTINUED

**Michelle Bridge**, President-Elect, was responsible for the Engagement Portfolio, which focuses on engaging our current members and connecting with external professional and patient organization partners. This portfolio includes the Communications Chair, website committee, liaison positions, and Member-at-Large. The Sponsorship and Marketing Chair started the year as part of the Engagement Portfolio; however, during strategic planning, it was moved to the Sustainability Portfolio as it better aligns with this pillar. This also better balances the workload as the Engagement president is responsible for forging and maintaining relationships with external agencies.

**Samantha Holmgren**, President, was responsible for the Sustainability Portfolio, which focuses on internal processes and the viability of the organization, including funding and marketing to new members. This portfolio includes the Membership Chair, and the Sponsorship and Marketing Chair, as well as the Treasurer and Secretary positions. Over the past year, the primary focus has been on strategic planning.

**Paul Adam**, Past President, was responsible for the Knowledge Translation Portfolio, which focuses on research and education. The Research Chair and research committee fall into this portfolio along with the Professional and Career Development Chair, which was vacant this year; therefore, Paul led the education committee directly. This workload has highlighted the need for the Professional and Career Development Chair going forward to maintain our commitment to education opportunities for our members.

We have found that distributing the roles among the three presidential officers helps distribute the work of AHPA leadership. As noted, we moved the Sponsorship and Marketing Chair this year to further improve the distribution of responsibility. We have continued to explore the use of micro-volunteers over the past year and creating the structure for this will be a priority in the coming year.

The 2023-2028 Strategic Plan was a major project this past year for the board. This plan will help the future boards continue to support healthcare professionals, administration, and researchers as we work towards achieving our vision. More details of the strategic plan will be included in the annual report.

*Optimal care and quality of life for every Canadian  
living with arthritis*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



As a working board, we are dependent upon the efforts of our Board members who volunteer their time to AHPA. Because of their passion, experience, and insights, we are able to continue to support our community and move toward our vision of excellent arthritis care for all.

**Mary Ellen Marcon**, Treasurer, for coordinating all things related to insurance, including cybersecurity, and our budget.

**Lisa Robinson**, Secretary (until Oct 20), for her efforts to maintain our minutes, complete government documentation, and work to refine systems.

**Sue MacQueen**, Communications Chair, for her regular newsletter updates, systems improvements, work with the website committee, and her wealth of knowledge.

**Karine Toupin-April**, Research Chair, for coordinating the review of abstract applications.

**Paul Adam**, Past President, has continued to showcase his management experience and leadership skills in the AHPA. He continued in his role of leading the education committee and supporting the research committee. His input and knowledge were highly valuable over the past year and we will miss his wisdom in our meetings as he completes his term as Past President.

**Michelle Bridge**, President-Elect, has brought her connections, enthusiasm, and leadership skills to the AHPA. She forged and nurtured relationships with many arthritis organizations, and provided considerable insight during meetings and planning. I am certain that we will be in excellent hands during her turn as President of AHPA in 2024.

In addition to our board, we extend our acknowledgments to all the volunteers on our committees, our liaisons, and every member who has contributed to the AHPA community.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Website Committee:** The website committee is led by Sue MacQueen and is responsible for ensuring processes are in place for regular updates and reviews of content on the website. Thank you to Anne MacLeod and Rashmi Mandhane for their support.

**Professional & Career Development Committee (aka the Education Committee):** In addition to our always popular pre-course, the education committee piloted a hybrid virtual event, with 2 in-person hubs. Thank you to Paul Adam, Kim Hall, Sue MacQueen, Diane McGall, and Jane Prince.

**Research Committee:** The research committee had a whopping 9 abstract submissions and 5 research grant submissions to review this year, so we thank them for all their hard work reviewing each submission thoroughly. Thank you to Karine Toupin-April, Susan Bartlett, Linda Li, Laura Passalent, Diane Tin, and Marie Westby.

**Cybersecurity Committee:** This committee was formed out of a need identified in 2022 for increased cybersecurity protections. We sincerely thank Kristin Dillon and Phil Bertrand for their support in straightening out the tangles of technology with us.

**Liaisons:** In addition to our various committees, we also have AHPA members who raise our voice with other organizations as our AHPA Liaisons: Osk Jenkins with the Ontario Rheumatology Association, Julie Herrington with the CRA Transition Working Group, and Jennifer Burt with the CRA Human Resources Committee.

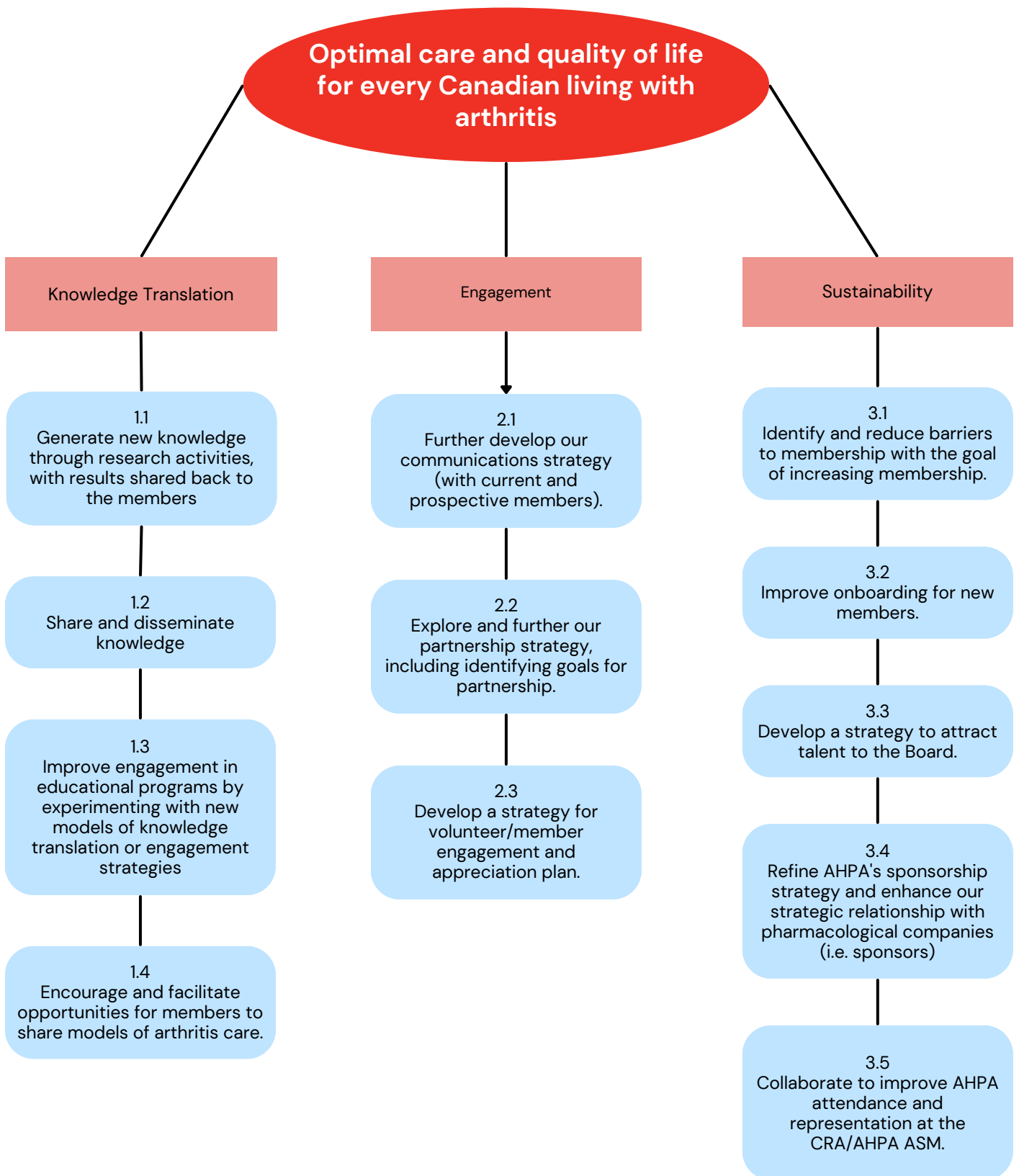
Additional thanks go to our **webmaster, Ron Yong**, who has helped us during our live events as well as ongoing support with our technological needs behind the scenes.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Samantha Holmgren, RD, BSc Nutrition  
AHPA President





# 2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan



# 2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan

In our full strategic plan, we have identified several projects and activities that will contribute to each of these strategic directions. We have these broken down into tasks that we can complete each year of the strategic plan, as a form of prioritization. We know that both exciting opportunities and unforeseen challenges will arise; however, this type of planning will allow the board to respond *strategically* to both the opportunities and challenges.

In the next year, some of the tasks and projects that we will pursue include:

## **Knowledge Translation**

- Continue promoting research opportunities, disseminate research findings, and support members seeking outside funding
- Conduct annual needs assessment
- Encourage participation in the discussion forum
- Plan, host, and evaluate education events that promote networking and foster practice behaviour change
- Pursue co-development and co-sponsorship of education events (e.g., with CRA)

## **Engagement**

- Establish key performance indicators to evaluate communication initiatives
- Utilize multiple channels to engage members (e.g., email, website, and discussion forum)
- Collaborate with the Membership Chair to form a committee of AHPA members with an interest in communications and social media
- Reach out to current and new stakeholder organizations to foster relationships
- Define volunteer opportunities including micro-volunteer roles
- Develop recognition programs for volunteers and members

## **Sustainability**

- Establish or expand online presence (e.g., set up LinkedIn account)
- Create or refine documentation regarding member benefits, and create an orientation series for new AHPA members to improve satisfaction and create a sense of community
- Improve orientation for new board members
- Improve tracking of responsibilities and tasks of board members, including strategic planning-related projects and tasks
- Host the first annual sponsor townhall to connect with current and prospective sponsors, share the value of sponsoring AHPA, and hear sponsors' concerns and needs
- Refine our corporate sponsorship strategy and related ethical framework
- Assess opportunities to improve attendance by AHPA members at the CRA/AHPA Annual Scientific Meeting

# Strategic Progress and Priorities

## Knowledge Translation

### Progress in 2023

- Successful virtual Pre-Course in February 2023
- Piloted a new hybrid education format titled: “*Virtually Connecting the World of Arthritis Care*”
- Evaluated and awarded 3 research grants and 3 abstract awards totalling \$26,000



### Priorities in 2024

- Continuing our most popular event: the virtual AHPA Pre-Course
- Learning needs assessment early 2024
- Experiment and refine education offerings to increase member attendance
- Collaborate with the Engagement President to increase relationships with research organizations



# Engagement

## Progress in 2023

- Engaging Our Members
  - Regular Communication: weekly updates, monthly newsbriefs, and newsflashes to keep members informed about everything AHPA
  - Discussion Forum: We launched the discussion forum, allowing all members to initiate and participate in discussions
  - Strategic Networking: We intentionally included opportunities to network during live virtual events, based on member feedback
  - Kahoot Gamification: To let members know that board nominations were open and include an element of fun, we held a contest in Kahoot
  - New Events: In collaboration with AstraZeneca, we held a virtual education open to both members and non-members allowing us to spread the word about AHPA!
- Engaging our Partners
  - Strengthening our Partnerships: Introductions to professional and patient organizations from Michelle as the new Engagement Portfolio President laid the groundwork for the relationships
  - Strategic Partnership Expansion: We have also begun initiating relationships with research organization partners, most notably the Canadian Early Arthritis Cohort (CATCH)
  - Elevating Our Impact: AHPA is present at the Arthritis Ecosystem Champions meetings hosted by Arthritis Society Canada, which has a goal to develop a nationwide Arthritis Action Plan

## Priorities in 2024

- Expand and strengthen relationships with our external partners
- Create opportunities for virtual engagement and networking among members
- Involve our membership in time-limited tasks and working groups



# Sustainability

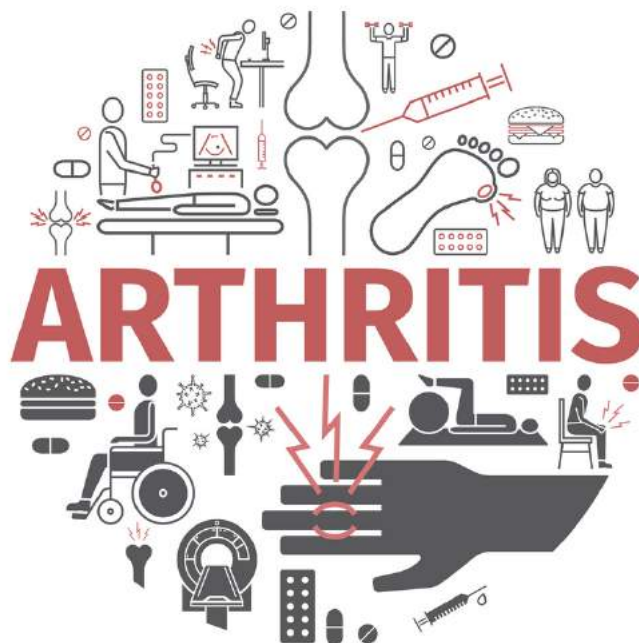
## Progress in 2023

- Restructured our accountabilities so Sponsorship falls into the Sustainability Portfolio
- Lead the Strategic Planning process, with the support of Delaney Engage
- Developed an onboarding checklist for new board members
- Collaborated with the Communications Chair to distribute messages to encourage members to renew membership



## Priorities in 2024

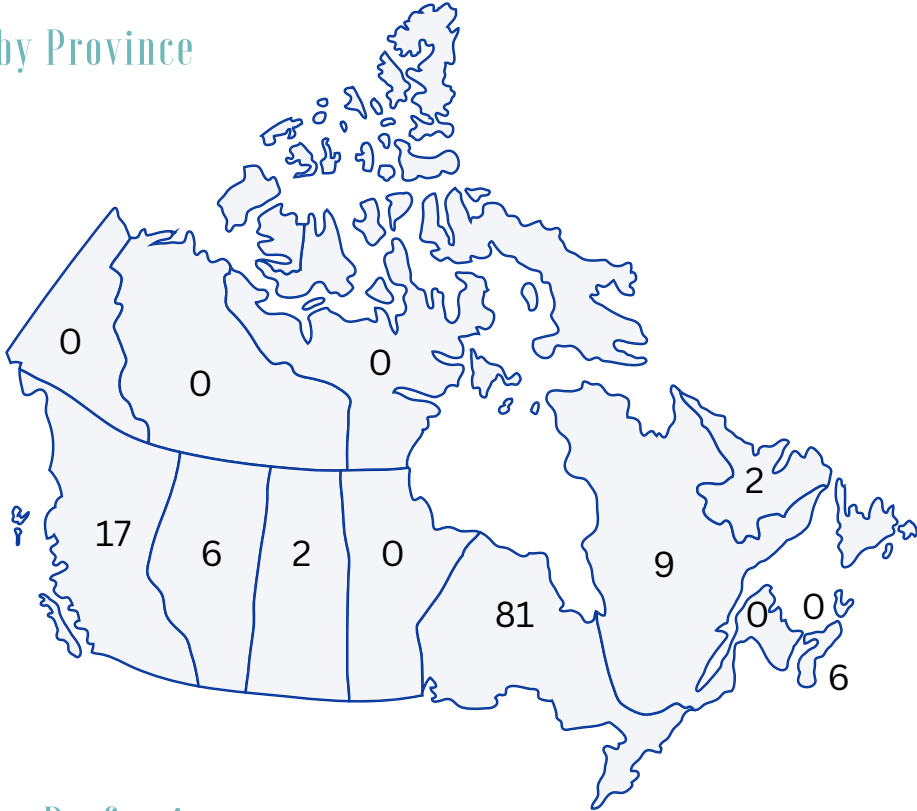
- Improve onboarding of new AHPA members and new board members
- Improve our ability to connect with non-members and increase brand awareness of AHPA by establishing social media profile(s)
- Connect with sponsors via a virtual Townhall to refine our corporate sponsorship strategy
- With the support of the Secretary, refine, and implement the micro-volunteer strategy



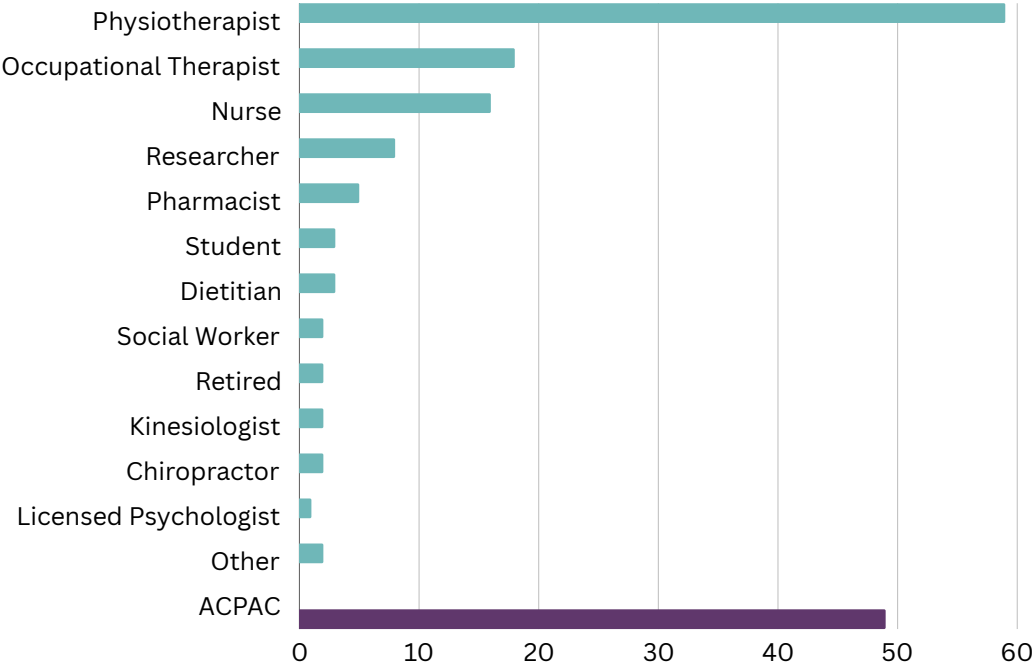
# Membership 2021

123 Members

## Membership by Province



## Membership by Profession



ACPAC SIG members are also included in PT, OT, RN, and Chiro numbers.

## Chair and Committee Reports

**Professional and Career Development:** Vacant  
Lead by Paul Adam and the Education Committee

**Sponsorship and Marketing:** Petra Kodeda

**Communications:** Sue MacQueen

**Research:** Dr. Karine Toupin-April

**ACPAC SIG Report:** Julie Herrington

### **Liaison Reports:**

**CRA Transition Working Group:** Julie Herrington

**ORA:** Osk Jenkins

**CRA HR Committee:** Jennifer Burt



# Professional and Career Development: Vacant

## Lead by Paul Adam and the Education Committee



### Mandate

The Professional and Career Development Committee identifies and addresses the learning needs of the AHPA membership, as well as promoting and administering the Clinical Innovation Award.

### Achievements in 2023



- The 2023 Education Committee, comprising Paul Adam (Chair), as well as Kim Hall, Sue MacQueen, Diane McGall, and Jane Prince, worked hard to produce a range of education events. Note that the 2023 pre-course was organized by the previous year's Education Committee.
- The annual virtual pre-course took place on Friday, February 3rd and Saturday, February 4th. Sixty-five individuals attended the Friday session and fifty-five individuals attended on Saturday morning.
- Annual learning needs assessment was conducted in April based on topics suggested by the membership in the prior 12 months.
- Joint Education Event, a hybrid education session titled “*Virtually Connecting the World of Arthritis Care*”, was piloted in October 2023. The 3-hour event included networking, plenary sessions, a panel presentation by health care providers and a patient, and a facilitated discussion. Twenty-five individuals either attended in-person in Vancouver or Thunder Bay, or virtually.
- Two 1-hour AHPA OnlineED webinars, one in November 2023 and one in January 2024, closed off the year's educational offerings. Both webinars featured arthroplasty-related topics.





# Professional and Career Development

## Priorities in 2024

- ✓ • As our most popular event, the annual pre-course continues to be a major cornerstone of AHPA’s educational offerings. The two half-day sessions will take place on Friday, February 9 and Saturday, February 10, 2024. Topics fall into one of two themes:
  - Theme 1: Maintaining a healthy “balance”: strength training and fall prevention.
  - Theme 2: What’s your gut telling you: Nutrition, obesity, and gut microbiota.
- Low attendance numbers at non-pre-course education events continues to be an ongoing challenge. In the hope of increasing member attendance, a short series of sessions on Models of Care, co-planned with the CRA Education Committee, is being considered. This event would potentially spotlight innovative arthritis Models of Care in Canada.
- It is unclear at this point whether the AHPA OnlineED webinar series or the Joint Education Event (hybrid or not) will take place in 2024.



# Sponsorship and Marketing: Petra Kodeda



## Mandate

- Concern itself with external communication/marketing, and the development and evaluation of fundraising targets and strategies for the purpose of generating revenue to support the activities of AHPA
- Develop fundraising campaigns targeting corporations, foundations, individuals, and government
- Participate in the development of a plan, budget, and agenda for the annual Pre-Course
- Liaise with the Treasurer as part of the annual budget process

## Achievements in 2023



- Developed a new Sponsorship Prospectus with the aim of securing corporate sponsorship over event-specific sponsorship
- Secured \$25,000 using the new Prospectus
  - Celltrion \$12,500
  - AstraZeneca \$5,000
  - UCB \$5,000
  - Novartis \$2,500
- Held our first co-sponsored public event with AstraZeneca on December 18th: Over 20 people attended the virtual post-ACR lupus update; half were non-members. One of those non-members subsequently joined AHPA.



## Priorities in 2024

- Refine and promote the Sponsorship Prospectus
- Secure more funding for both knowledge-translation-specific activities and Corporate Partnerships, including re-approaching Pfizer, Sandoz, GSK, and Organon
- Host a Partner Townhall to engage current and potential partners



## Communications: Sue MacQueen



### **Mandate**

- Manage internal communications
- Keep members informed of advances in rheumatology, AHPA activities, etc. through the production of a regular newsletter
- Encourage other AHPA members and AHPA partners to write articles for the newsletter, review current books or literature, and note important upcoming dates of interest to the AHPA membership
- Be responsible for maintaining and updating the AHPA website, in collaboration with the AHPA Webmaster



### **Achievements in 2023**

- Chaired the Website committee with ongoing updates to the website in collaboration with the Webmaster
- Updated the yearly membership renewal form
- Reformatted the Weekly Update and Monthly Newsbrief

### **Priorities in 2024**



- Work with volunteers to re-establish a social media presence for AHPA
- Solicit articles of interest for the Newsbrief from AHPA members
- Continue to liaise with partner organizations to share pertinent information of interest to AHPA members.



# Research: Dr. Karine Toupin-April



## Mandate

- Concern itself with research and research training in rheumatology
- Undertake the peer review of all AHPA-submitted abstracts for presentation at the CRA/AHPA annual scientific meeting
- Coordinate competition, submissions, and peer review of AHPA grants

## Achievements in 2023



- Coordinated review of 9 abstracts by 6 committee members. As Karine Toupin-April submitted an abstract, she recused herself from the selection and asked Paul Adam to lead the decision-making process.
- 3 Abstract Awards were awarded
  - Carolyn Thomas Award for Best Scientific Abstract – Susan Bartlett
  - Barbara Hanes Memorial Award for Best Abstract Submitted by an OT – Karine Toupin-April
  - Best Trainee Abstract Award – Ellen Wang
- Coordinated review of 5 grant applications by 4 researcher reviewers and 1 patient reviewer. As Karine Toupin-April was a co-applicant on an application, she recused herself from the selection of reviewers, selection of winners and asked Paul Adam to lead the decision-making process.
- 3 Research Grants were awarded
  - A \$10,000 grant (in addition to a \$1,500 dissemination of findings award) was awarded to Laura Passalent and Sinead Maguire
  - A \$5,000 grant (in addition to a \$1,500 dissemination of findings award) was awarded to Rose Martini
  - A \$5,000 grant (in addition to a \$1,500 dissemination of findings award) was awarded to Julie Herrington



## Priorities in 2024

- Collaborate with the Engagement President to increase relationships with research organizations
- Solicit articles of interest for the Newsbrief from AHPA members
- Continue to liaise with partner organizations to share pertinent information of interest to AHPA members



# ACPAC SIG Report: Julie Herrington



## Mandate

- The Advanced Clinician Practitioner in Arthritis Care (ACPAC) Special Interest Group (SIG) has been under the umbrella of AHPA since May 2019 and is composed of graduates and students of the ACPAC program. The pillars supporting all our activities are Advocacy, Research, and Education, all underpinned by Leadership. Objectives of the SIG include fostering collaboration between graduates and trainees, supporting program graduates and trainees, providing strategic direction to those interested in extended-role practice careers, maintaining a collaborative relationship with the ACPAC program, and supporting research and professional development activities.



## Achievements

- Forty-seven members were registered with the SIG in 2023, down 2 members from 2022
- Subcommittees include Advocacy, Research, and Education
- Gillian Grant completed her term as Chair in June 2023. Julie Herrington started her 2-year term as Chair in September 2023.
- As of September 2023, the Education subcommittee has been inactive
- New subcommittees as of September 2023 included: Advisory, Welcome, and Orthopedic
- Communication to the broader membership was achieved through regular e-newsletters, called:

## **ACtion PACked NEWS**

- Since September, we have not had a formal Communications Chair; however, Sue MacQueen has been helping with this role. She receives updates from the current Chair, Julie Herrington, and formats these messages to send out to the membership.

# ACPAC SIG Report: Julie Herrington

## ✓ **Priorities in 2024**

- Continue welcome and reach out efforts to the membership (OT, Nurse, Chiro, specific graduation years, and current students)
- Complete the needs survey and review responses to prepare for planning
- Provide bursaries for ACPAC SIG members who are presenting or sharing research at designated national or provincial conferences
- Continue with short education offerings held at regular ACPAC SIG meetings
- Advisory committee to determine next big project according to membership needs - “a manual of who, what, where, why ACPACs exist”
- Ongoing advocacy work in the north-Transition of leadership in this role will be required in 2024
- Research committee continuing to work on scoping review
- We are uncertain of our capacity to plan and host a large-scale event in June (formerly known as the “Annual ACPAC SIG Education Event and General Meeting”) as there is currently no Education Chair or committee. This may have to change to an event held every other year.



## Liaison Reports

### CRA Transition Working Group: Julie Herrington

Canadian Clinical Practice Guidelines for Transition – Delphi process to get consensus on the statements will start in March 2024 and should be complete by May 2024. Final writing of the document will be completed during the last half of 2024 and should be ready for submission within this year.

National Transition Committee – Chaired by Dr. Michelle Batthish (pediatric) and Dr. Stephanie Garner (adult). The group meets approximately 3–4x/year.

The chairs will do a workshop at CRA geared to adult Rheumatologists educating them on what they need to know when receiving patients with pediatric onset diseases.

### Ontario Rheumatology Association: Osk Jenkins

ORA and the ACPAC SIG have collaborated to move forward on a model of care project with Ontario Health, expanding the project to include Thunder Bay. The project seeks to improve access in underserved regions. AHPA members continue to be welcomed and participate in ORA's Annual Scientific Meeting. In addition to these collaborative efforts, the ORA Liaison also represents AHPA members on The Benson Model of Care Project Funding selection committee, which aims to advance access to quality rheumatology via novel team-based models of care.

### CRA Human Resources Committee: Jennifer Burt

The CRA HR Committee has focused on addressing burnout and improving access to rheumatology care, particularly in remote and underserved areas and populations. One committee member completed and published a meta-systematic review titled “An Overview of Reviews to Inform Organization-Level Interventions to Address Burnout in Rheumatologists.” Outreach care is one method for improving access and the committee will focus on gaining a better understanding of the landscape of outreach care across the country over the next year.

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

AHPA expenditures in each of the 3 strategic priorities: Knowledge Translation, Engagement, and Sustainability. Our overall expenditures totaled \$50,235.60 with \$23,000 deferred to next year.

## ENGAGEMENT

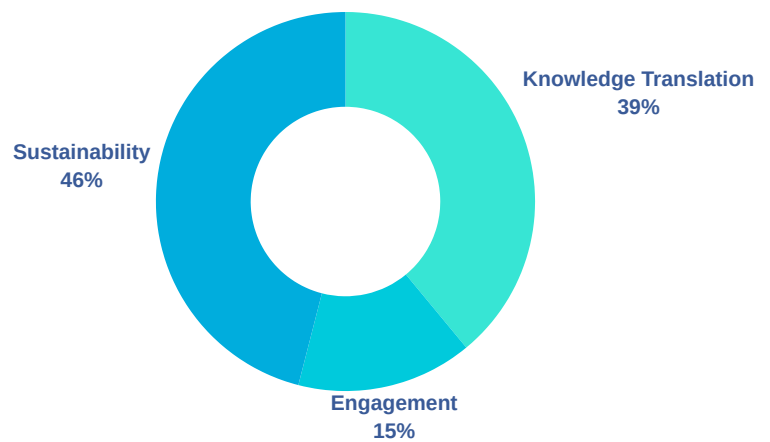
Expenses in this category include costs associated with collaboration with our external partners and marketing our organization. One specific expense this year was strategic planning.

## SUSTAINABILITY

This includes costs associated with running an organization such as bookkeeping and accounting fees, insurance, bank fees, and website maintenance.

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

Expenses in this category cover our annual Pre-Course, AHPA OnlineED offerings, and all educational and research initiatives. Some of our research grants were deferred to the 2024 budget due to payout logistics.



100%  
VOLUNTEER  
RUN



# SPONSOR SUPPORT

Thank you to our sponsors who supported our Annual Pre-Course and other educational activities in 2023:





**AHPA**

ARTHRITIS HEALTH PROFESSIONS ASSOCIATION

