As 2018 winds down, I want to take a moment to thank everyone who is involved in the MD Program--faculty members, instructors, staff, community stakeholders, and of course, students. Without you, our program would not exist and we are grateful for your ongoing contributions that help make the program what it is today.

This year has been a successful and busy one. Some highlights include:

- Appointing three new Assistant Deans to help lead the work in the program.
- Hosting several opportunities throughout the year for faculty and students to engage with the MD Program's leadership team through conversation circles and other leadership forums.
- Piloting the first cohort of a social justice community of practice in collaboration with the
Division of Community Engagement.

- Launching the new Indigenous Health curriculum across all four years of the program.
- Hosting the inaugural Excellence in Medical Student Research event in November in response to student requests to share their scholarly work with one another and with the faculty.
- Making changes to DMED 511, Foundations of Medicine & Dentistry, and continuing to evaluate our courses and clerkships in our effort to engage in continuous quality improvement.
- Receiving continued high levels of satisfaction from our graduates through the 2018 graduation questionnaire results.
- Completing a successful interim accreditation site visit in March and an equally successful Quality Assurance Review in October, putting us in good standing for our full accreditation in 2022.

This, of course, is a small sample of the many things that were accomplished throughout 2018. We look forward to another year of collaboration and innovation with all of our partners and are excited to see how other new initiatives will be implemented throughout 2019.

As always, my door is always open to faculty, staff, and students who have questions or would like to provide feedback about the program. Together, we will continue to make this a great place to learn and to teach.

On behalf of everyone in the MD Program, I would like to wish you all a happy holiday season and send you our best wishes for a happy new year!

Dr. Tracey Hillier
Associate Dean, MD Program

Update on Admissions

Following FoMD Faculty Council approval on June 26, 2018 and extensive community and faculty-wide engagement, General Faculties Council approved the motion to remove the upper limit on Indigenous Admissions to the MD Program. The motion stated:

**THAT** General Faculties Council approve the proposed changes to the Doctor of Medicine (MD) Program Admissions for Aboriginal Applicants, as proposed by the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, as recommended by the GFC Academic Standards Committee and the GFC Executive Committee, and as set forth in Attachment 1, to take effect as soon as possible.

By implementing this decision, the Faculty

**Significance and Outcomes**

An increase in the number of Indigenous physicians has an important impact on Indigenous health outcomes. Indigenous health professionals are a vital part of supporting improved health outcomes of all people, but to Indigenous peoples specifically as Indigenous physicians understand lived-reality of Indigenous patients and provide culturally-safe care that reduces mistrust, anxiety, and fear that arises from historical mistreatment of Indigenous peoples within the healthcare system and as a result of Indian Residential Schools. Perhaps most significantly, they contribute to important shifts across the healthcare system and are experts and are leading edge change agents in Indigenous health. Indigenous
The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry (FoMD) is positioned to become one of the most responsive programs in Canada to the issue of the underrepresentation of Indigenous peoples among health professions - a mandate advanced by the Indigenous Health Initiatives Program (IHIP) and through the special admissions status in the MD, DDS, Dental Hygiene (DH), and Medical Laboratory Sciences (MLS) programs. "With the removal of any upper limit, the University of Alberta becomes one of the few universities in Canada to open admissions up to all Indigenous candidates who meet the requirements to medical school," said Shirley Schipper, Vice-Dean, Education, FoMD.

Although the FoMD and the IHIP have supported nearly 200 First Nation, Metis, and Inuit students as they enter into and graduate from the MD Program, it was recognized that we have the capacity to advance a more meaningful response to the persistently poor health outcomes experienced disproportionately by Indigenous peoples and to the national change agents and change imperatives such as Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015) and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) (1996). Through that lens, actions taken by those who can affect change within systems (such as the removal of the upper limit on Indigenous admissions) work to meaningfully redress the legacy of Indian Residential Schools and advance the process of reconciliation.

The University of Alberta and the faculty remain committed to a respectful, meaningful, and sustainable response to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, and specifically to #23 (i) which states: "We call upon all levels of government to: (i) increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the healthcare field."

students admitted to the MD Program support in the advancement of a "critical mass" of students that work to reduce alienation and isolation of Indigenous peoples, and contribute to student success within the FoMD. Dr. Shirley Schipper notes that "our faculty is committed to address the Calls to Action across our education programs as part of a larger mandate—to meet the health needs of our communities."

Admissions Processes

There are currently two streams for entry into the MD program for self-declared Aboriginal applicants.

Applicants may choose to apply to the program through the general admission process, or alternatively through the Indigenous admissions selection process. The Indigenous admissions process maintains the same学术 requirements of the general process and includes alternate assessment methods that are more culturally responsive. Applications are considered by the Indigenous Health Admissions Subcommittee (a fully constituted subcommittee) which subsequently makes determinations about successful candidates advanced to the MD Admissions Committee.

Currently there are up to five positions set aside for students applying through the Indigenous admissions selection process. There is no change proposed to the current admission processes. Rather, the decision removes the upper limit (formerly 5) on the number of students admitted through that process thus allowing a greater pool of potential Indigenous candidates for admission to the MD Program.

Submitted by
Tibetha Kemble,
Director, Indigenous Health Initiatives
Dr. Sita Gourishankar,
Assistant Dean, Admissions

MD Program Office Hours
In response to student requests, the MD Program will be extending regular office hours, effective January 2, 2019. The new office hours will be:

Monday to Thursday: 7:30am to 5pm
Friday: 7:30am-4:00pm

Appointments after 5pm may be available upon request. Please contact Lucia Popovici, Executive Assistant, to arrange an after hours meeting.

Good News from the MD Program

We are pleased to announce that Julia Sawatzky, MD 2021, has been selected as a 2019 Rhodes Scholar. She will be going to Oxford University in the fall to study tropical medicine and public health policy. You can read more about Julia in this article originally published in the University of Alberta’s Folio. Congratulations, Julia!

What's happening in the MD Program?

Here are some of the things that are happening in the MD program this month:

- Year 1 students are continuing their second block, DMED 513 (Endocrinology & Metabolism)
- The third block of year 2, MED 523 (Musculoskeletal System) continues into the New Year
- Year 3 intersession weeks takes place December 17-December 20
- Year 3 students will be participating in a full day Indigenous Health conference organized by the Indigenous Health Initiative program on December 20
- Year 4 intersession week begins January 2, 2019

Excellence in Medical Student Research

On November 26, the MD Program hosted the inaugural Excellence in Medical Student Research event for medical students to showcase their research and scholarly work. The evening started with a panel discussion featuring Dr. David Eisenstat, Chair, Department of Oncology; Dr. Finlay McAlister; Department of Internal Medicine; and Dr. Alan Underhill, Department of Oncology & Director, MD/PhD Program. Following the panel discussion, 65
Exhibits of student research excellence were on display at the 2nd annual Excellence in Medical Student Research event held on November 20, 2019. Over 60 student research poster presentations were displayed and visitors to the evening had a chance to meet our student researchers, learn about their work, network, and enjoy food and conversation.

All the abstracts for this year’s event are available on the website. Information about the 2nd annual Excellence in Medical Student research event will be available later in 2019.

![Image of poster presentations and visitors]

News from the Library

**Library Intersession & Winter Term Hours**
All University of Alberta Libraries will be observing reduced business hours between December 21 and January 7. Library hours, at the John W. Scott Library, during this period are as follows:

**Intersession Hours**
- December 22-23: Closed
- December 24: 8am-4pm
- December 25-January 1: Closed
- January 2-3: 8am-6pm
- January 4: 8am-5pm
- January 5-6: Closed

Winter term hours begin on January 7. Visit [https://library.ualberta.ca/hours](https://library.ualberta.ca/hours) for a complete summary of all UAlberta library hours.

**OUTBREAK! Exhibit now on at the John W. Scott Library**
The nature of pathogenic illness and disease epidemics is explored in - OUTBREAK! Featuring panels created by the Smithsonian Institute, OUTBREAK explores the nature of infectious-disease outbreaks: focusing on the origins of zoonotic diseases, the role of humans in spreading animal-borne viruses and how health professionals help stop the spread of disease.
This exhibit will be on display at the John W. Scott Library from November 26, 2018 until January 25, 2019.

**Introduction to Systematic Review Searching**

Thursday, January 17, 2019 9:00am-12:00pm  
Location: WMC 2F.102  

Systematic Reviews are a specific research methodology, primarily used in the health sciences. This session will provide an overview of the requirements for systematic review searches. This session will consist of lectures, practical exercises, and hands-on database searching. [Click here to register.](#)

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### Upcoming Events

The Local Officers of Indigenous Health (Medical Students Association) and Tibetha Kemble, Director, Indigenous Health Initiatives, are pleased to announce the first of three engaging and informative Lunch & Learn Series to help build awareness and understanding of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous Peoples' health.

The first session will be held on January 9, 2019 from 12-1 p.m. and will focus on Indigenous women's health and will be led by Dr. Cassandra Felske-Durksen.

The event is free of charge and open to all students, staff, and faculty. [To help us plan hosting for the event, we ask that you RSVP by visiting this site.](#)

For more information please contact:  
Jr/Sr. Local Officers of Indigenous Health: [msaloih@ualberta.ca](mailto:msaloih@ualberta.ca) | Indigenous Health Initiatives: [ihi@ualberta.ca](mailto:ihi@ualberta.ca)

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**LUNCH & LEARN SERIES**  
**Indigenous Women's Health**

**Dr. Cassandra Felske-Durksen**  
**Edu North, Room 254**  
**January 9, 2019**  
**12 Noon - 1 P.M.**

**Event is free of charge and open to all students, faculty, and staff.**

**Please RSVP:** [https://indigenouswomenshealth.eventbrite.ca](https://indigenouswomenshealth.eventbrite.ca)

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**WPATH**  
**WORLD PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR TRANSGENDER HEALTH**

**Registration opening soon.**

[https://www.wpath.org](https://www.wpath.org)
The Gender Program at the University of Alberta Hospital is pleased to announce the WPATH Global Education Initiative training program in Edmonton, Alberta. Training with global leaders in transgender healthcare, you will get the most up to date knowledge to care for the transgender population.

February 1-3, 2019 in Edmonton, Alberta

For more information, please contact Sarah at sarah.alexander@ualberta.ca

SAVE THE DATE!!

Join us for the 11th Annual Addiction Day Scientific Conference and Networking Fair "Addiction: Addressing Diversity"
June 7th, 2019
Edmonton, Alberta
Executive Royal Hotel - Edmonton international Airport

Check the website regularly, as we update and confirm conference details: AddictionDay.ca

Abstract submissions are now being accepted. If interested, we encourage you to please review the abstract submission criteria and form: AD2019AbstractSubmissions

The vision of the Addiction Day Conference and Networking Fair is to increase public awareness of addiction and mental health problems, and to enhance knowledge, competencies and treatment care. Through a combination of diverse presentations, workshops and networking opportunities, we hope to bring together healthcare professionals from across the care continuum for a day of learning and discussion.

Past conferences have been approved as Accredited Group Learning Activities (Section 1) as defined by the Maintenance of Certification program of The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, and accredited by the University of Calgary Office of Continuing Medical Education and Professional Development. Participants claimed up to a maximum of 6.5 study credits. This event (2019) will also be submitted for CME Accreditation.
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E1

Website: https://www.ualberta.ca/medicine/programs/md

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