The Canadian Professors of Dermatology (CPD) association has grown tremendously in numbers, activity and scope in the past years but may still be relatively unknown to CDA members who are not directly involved in residency training. In the past, the CPD almost became extinct as its members gradually retired, due to a lack of promotion and active recruitment. The current group has grown over the past decade from just a handful to an impressive assembly of Canadian dermatologists all sharing a passion for dermatology and dermatologic education. The CPD has been nurtured during its resurgence by the remarkable enthusiasm and efforts of Dr. Neil Shear as president (from 2005-2013), and Dr. Harvey Lui, secretary.

The CPD provides a forum for the discussion of all levels and aspects of dermatologic education in an independent, informal and collegial setting. It is considered an official advisory group to the Royal College and the CDA, but it is not bound by the regulations of either of these bodies and is free to give an unbiased opinion regarding educational issues, based on the learned comments of its members. Its opinion is sought for issues of national significance, such as the Royal College Core Competency project, appointments to the Chair of the Royal College Specialty Committee on Dermatology, and advice re corporate support of residents.

Directed by a small executive consisting of a president (currently myself), and a secretary (currently Harvey Lui), its voting members include all Canadian dermatology program directors, residency research directors, and undergraduate dermatology directors. Non-voting members include the Chairs of the Royal College Specialty Committee and Examination Board, and two residents. Non-voting membership is open to any Canadian dermatologist with a university affiliation and an interest in dermatology education. Meetings are held twice yearly – at the AAD and CDA annual meetings. The CPD receives no official funding for its operations, and there are no membership fees.

A major accomplishment of the CPD in the recent past was the development of a national curriculum for undergraduate dermatology teaching, which has been disseminated to all undergraduate university teaching offices across the country and also to the MCC to be used as a guide for the content of their dermatology teaching. This was a two-year project produced by a hardworking committee chaired by Dr. Laurie Parsons, with input from the CPD membership. The curriculum is available on the UBC website via a link from the CDA website until the CPD hosts its own site.

Ongoing undertakings of the CPD include overseeing the administrative aspects of the much appreciated (by the residents) DRIVE practice exam program, held in March for all R5 residents and the more recently (since 2011) introduced BoSS basic science course, held just before the CDA annual meeting. The faculty involved in these programs are recruited from across the country, while financial support (travel and hotel primarily) are provided by generous non-directed educational grants provided by the pharmaceutical industry. These programs are now under the umbrella of the CPD, which feels that they provide a very worthwhile educational experience to our residents. The planning and organization of the programs is accomplished by a dedicated group of dermatologists from across the country, led in recent years by Drs. Laura Finlayson, Gilles Lauzon, and Neil Shear with the assistance of many others.

On a final note, for several year the CPD has awarded prizes at the CDA annual meeting for "best" resident presentations, both oral and poster, judged by a panel of its members, with generous financial support provided by a pharmaceutical grant. Recipients of awards at the 2013 CDA meeting included: Jonathan Levy, Ivan Litvinov, Anna Chaplin and Paul Kuzel. This is a very difficult but enjoyable task given the number and high quality of resident presentations each year. We hope that the awards will encourage the residents in the pursuit of excellence in dermatology research.