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1. **PARA - Know Your Contract:**

• Banking Vacation

Vacation is intended to be taken in the (contract/academic) year in which it is earned. Article 12.05 states:

Vacation shall be taken within the period of engagement. Provided the Program Director and the appropriate representative of the Authority gives prior approval, if a Resident is unable to take their vacation in one year because of service commitments, the unused time may be banked except in the situation where the Resident is in their final year of training, in which case the Resident will be paid in lieu of vacation time. Any dispute or disagreement between an affected member of **PARA** and a Program Director or Authority representative may be referred to the relevant Associate Dean who will consult with **PARA** before making a final decision.

Rolling vacation into the upcoming PGY year is discouraged; this option is possible, but only under a *very* selective set of circumstances. To bank vacation for the next year, resident physicians must be unable to take their vacation time in the correct year because of service commitments *and* have the prior approval of their Program Director *and* an appropriate representative of AHS to bank this vacation. Resident physicians with outstanding vacation time from their final year of training will have this vacation paid out rather than rolled over. **If you think you may end up having unused vacation time this year, make sure you get prior documented approval from your Program Director and AHS.** Program Directors should be notifying PGME when resident physicians have been unable to use vacation.

• Health Spending Account Changes

Effective January 1, 2011, expenses for purely cosmetic procedures will no longer be eligible for reimbursement under your Health Spending Account.

A cosmetic expense will continue to qualify for tax free reimbursement from a Health Spending Account if it is required for medical or reconstructive purposes. Examples would include surgery to address a deformity related to a congenital abnormality, a personal injury resulting from an accident or trauma, or a disfiguring disease.

Examples of expenses that will generally be *ineligible* after January 1, 2011 include:

- augmentations and body modifications shaping, contouring, or lifts;
- botulinum treatments, filler injections;

- hair removal or replacement procedures;
- liposuction;
- teeth whitening, tooth contouring, reshaping.

Note:

You should contact a tax expert to confirm the tax status of any Health Spending Account reimbursement(s) you received for cosmetic procedures performed after March 4, 2010. For more information on which medical expenses can be reimbursed through your health spending account (because they qualify as Medical Expense Tax Credits), see <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/gncy/bdgt/2010/mdcl-eng.html> or contact the Revenue Canada Agency at 1-800-959-8281.

For more contract tips, visit the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/agreement/know-your-contract>.

2. Call for **PARA** Executive Nominations

PARA will be accepting nominations for the 2011/2012 Executive from now until January 15, 2011. Members of the 2011/2012 **PARA** Executive will have the opportunity to attend the executive retreat in Canmore or Banff on the weekend of June 4th - 6th. Executive members are responsible for implementing direction set by the Board of Directors; through this role, resident physicians can access opportunities to fulfil a number of CanMEDs roles: develop their leadership skills, liaise with health and medical education stakeholders, and represent Alberta's resident physicians at the regional, provincial, and national levels.

Elections for positions on the Executive Committee shall be held as follows:

- Nominations for Executive positions shall be solicited from the Board and from the entire membership; only general members are eligible for nomination. The nomination deadline is January 15th.
- If there is more than one nominee for a position, an on-line ballot will be mailed to each member of **PARA**. These ballots shall have the names of all nominees listed with a brief biography and platform description from each of the nominees. Elections will close on February 15th.
- The ballots will be tabulated by survey software. The candidate with the most votes for each position will be the "Director Elect" for that position. The names of the Directors Elect shall then be posted in the next communiqué to the membership. The new executive will take office July 1st.
- In cases of electoral dispute, a ruling shall be made by the Past President who shall act as the Chief Returning Officer, unless he/she is running for another executive position, in which case, the President shall take on this role.

A copy of the **PARA** Executive Nomination Form is attached. Additional information about elections and position descriptions can be found on the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/board/para-executive/executive-nominations>.

3. **PARA** Negotiation Update

PARA continues to prepare for Arbitration on the monetary articles in the Collective Agreement. The Arbitration hearing is expected to take place in the new year; once dates have been set, **PARA** will inform members of the timeline for arbitration.

For past negotiation updates, visit the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/news-and-events/negotiations-update>.

4. Infrastructure Feedback

PARA is committed to making certain that you have access to the infrastructure you need when you need it, both now and into the future. If you know of a shortage or pending shortage of facilities including, but not limited to, on-call rooms, or have issues to report in some other area, we want to hear about it. Please visit the Members' Feedback Forum on the **PARA** website:

<http://www.para-ab.ca/board/para-members-feedback-forum>.

5. PARAdime

PARA's Second Annual PARAdime - Give Your Backpack Back charity event is underway. This event provides another avenue in which our members can give back to their communities. **Last year, with the help of our members, PARA donated close to thirty fully stuffed backpacks.**

Please consider stuffing a bag or backpack, old or new, with items for the needy this winter -- remember your old AMA backpack from medical school days? --that bag you received at your last conference? We will take them!

Collection will run until December 31, 2010. PARA will be donating the collected bags to those in need as part of Resident Physician Awareness Day on Tuesday, February 22, 2011.



University of Alberta:
3 Bags

University of Calgary:
4 Bags

PARA Staff
6 Bags

6. Your *PARAphrase* Magazine

Your *PARAphrase* magazine was mailed out during the middle of October. If you have not received your copy or would like an additional copy, please contact **PARA** at para-ab@shawbiz.ca.

7. Upcoming Events

• **PARA Board Meeting and Annual General Meeting**

Date: Monday, November 22, 2010
Location: Varscona Hotel on Whyte (8208 – 106 Street, Edmonton, AB)
Rutherford Room (Main Floor)
Time: Board Meeting: 12:00 – 4:30 PM
Annual General Meeting: 4:30 – 5:00 PM

- Lunch will be provided at 11:30 AM.
- **RSVP to para-ab@shawbiz.ca by Thursday, November 4.**

• **Accreditation Workshop – experience a mock accreditation presented by the RCPSC and CAIR**

The goal of this workshop is to understand accreditation, the process, the standards, and the resident physician's role on the survey team. The workshop involves an interactive mock accreditation review conducted by the survey team. The mock survey team will meet with the Program Director, the Resident Physician Group, and the Faculty and Resident Training Committee. This mock-up also includes a report-back session to determine the category of accreditation.

Date: Monday, November 22
Location: Varscona Hotel on Whyte (8208 – 106 Street)
Thomas Bennett Room
Time: 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Workshop

To Register: Email your name, program, and postgraduate year to cair@cair.ca by **noon, Monday, November 8, 2010**. Please note: Some preparation is required – documents will be emailed to you by Friday, November 12, 2010.

Late registrants, staff, and Program Directors are welcome to observe. For more information, visit the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/events/para-workshops-and-seminars> or contact the **PARA** office.

- **PARA Yoga Afternoon**

Date: Saturday, November 27
Location: Yoga Loft (2nd floor, 10309 Whyte Avenue)
Time: 2:00 – 3:00 PM
Class maximum: 20.

To register, please **RSVP** to para-ab@shawbiz.ca by **Thursday, November 25**.

- **PARA Grey Cup Beer 'n Nacho Night**

Date: Sunday, November 28
Location: The Pint Public House (10125 – 109 Street)
Time: 4:00 PM

To add your name and those of your guests without hospital id, contact PARA at para-ab@shawbiz.ca by **Thursday, November 25**.

For more information on upcoming events, visit **PARA**'s events calendar online at <http://www.para-ab.ca/calendar.aspx>.

PARA has a new facebook page to allow resident physicians to RSVP for **PARA** events. You can find our page at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=185755111347>

Feedback on the site is welcome.

- **U of A Resident Well-being Committee Family Planning in Residency Seminar**

Location & Date: Royal Alexandra Hospital, November 23
University of Alberta Hospital, November 25
Time: Lunch, 12pm to 1pm
Food: Pizza and pop provided!
Room: TBA

Seminar topics include Maternity & Parental Leave and your Collective Agreement as presented by **PARA** and the personal and professional highs and lows of having a baby during residency as presented by a panel of your peers. Children are welcome!

8. Spot the Stethoscope Contest

Check out the **PARA** website at <http://www.para-ab.ca> and win. Each month until March 2011, a stethoscope will be hidden somewhere on **PARA**'s website. The first 14 resident physicians who correctly reply by email detailing where on the **PARA** website the stethoscope is hidden will win!!!*

The Spot the Stethoscope Contest was established to encourage **PARA**'s resident physician members to get familiar with the **PARA** website and the resources available there. Since its overhaul last year, www.para-ab.ca has had more than 28,500 visitors!



October 2010 First Prize Winners

Drs. Mark Ballard and Rahim Kachra, University of Calgary
Drs. Momoe Hyakutake and Justin Hsu, University of Alberta

Second Prize Winners: The next five resident physicians from each university to email **PARA** with the URL of the stethoscope will win a pair of tickets to the movies.

October 2010 Second Prize Winners

University of Calgary
Dr. Alison Walzak
Dr. Laura Stinton
Dr. Suresh Subramaniam

University of Alberta
Dr. Kerri Chung
Dr. Tarun Sehgal
Dr. Chris Fung

Dr. Vishal Sharma
Dr. Janel Nadeau

Dr. John Walker
Dr. Maryana Duchcherer

*Resident physicians are eligible to win hockey tickets only once per academic year; runners-up prizes will not be awarded to any resident physician two months in a row.

For more information on **PARA** Contests, see <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/contests>.

9. **PARA's October 2010 Resident Physician of the Month**

Dr. Rahim Kachra, Internal Medicine, PGY1, University of Calgary

A fellow resident physician had this to say about Dr. Kachra:

Rahim is a great example of a well-rounded resident. He strikes the perfect balance between being professional and having fun while at work, and he always takes the time to include other members of the multi-disciplinary team. He's very keen to share his knowledge with medical students as well as other residents, and his bedside manner with patients is fantastic. Rahim takes on a natural leadership role and is also involved in a number of different research projects within the department. He is a real team player, both on the wards and the soccer field, and an asset to the IM program.

For this and past months' Resident Physician of the Month announcements, visit **PARA** online at <http://www.para-ab.ca/news/news-and-events/awards>.

Regards from,
Your **P**rofessional **A**ssociation of **R**esidents of **A**lberta