

AHPCA Chair's Report on Behalf of the Board

It is my privilege to present the Chair's report on behalf of the AHPCA Board for this past year.

I want to start by thanking Jennifer – her work as our Executive Director really engages our membership and our partners, and ensures we accomplish our strategic goals for the year. Thanks, also, to Wendy Kurchak and Theresa Bellows for their work this past year – without the three of you, we wouldn't have the successes we do. Finally, I wish to thank all our Board members for their dedication to AHPCA and its mission. Not only do you work tirelessly to advocate for Albertan's but your creative approach to our work allows us to continue to be innovative and bring new ideas to life every year. Jennifer will speak more to the work we have accomplished in her report, including our recent opportunity to present at the national conference.

This past year the hospice palliative care world has been turned upside down by the passing of Quebec's Bill 52. It has been the focus of media and the public, alike. In order for physician assisted death not to be confused with palliative care, the hospice palliative care community has worked tirelessly to step up our message even louder and clearer– to educate policy makers and providers, as well as the public, to ensure access to universal palliative care comes first. Inadvertently, Quebec's decision has placed hospice palliative care discussions at the forefront of many Canadian conversations – it has opened a door we can use to our advantage while everyone is listening. Many of us have been, or will be, involved in this messaging as we move forward in 2016 and beyond.

Hospice palliative care in Alberta, and across the country, feels like it has taken leaps and bounds lately. We have a provincial framework developed by our major healthcare provider and Alberta Health, with support and input from many, to guide forward movement within Alberta. The projects coming out of that are already beginning to serve Albertans and fill some of the gaps we have here in our communities. We have new governments, both provincially and nationally, who say they want to improve hospice palliative care as well – let's support them to do that and continue to hold them accountable to the people they serve. For the first time, the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association and the Canadian Nurses Association published a joint position statement. Groups like the medical associations, the nursing colleges and other healthcare regulatory bodies are collaborating in completely new ways. Let's not waste these opportunities that have opened up to us.

Here at AHPCA, we have spent another year building stronger connections to community groups, to government, and to our membership. We will continue to do so in 2016. Thank you for your support.

Pansy Angevine,

Chair, Board of Directors, AHPCA