

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 2009

MARIE M. SMITH

It's hard to believe we are already in the second month of 2009. Valentine's Day and Family Day are our two days this month to celebrate. What have you planned for Valentine's Day for your club? Write and tell us what you did and send some pictures to *The Voice*.

It is such a relief to be out of pain from a pinched nerve and finally able to write again. I had two cortisone needles yesterday so let's hope I won't need any more needles. Being a senior has its problems as we all know!

The government has been talking about electronic health records for years so let's hope they soon do it. Here are some statistics that I found interesting:

For every 1000 in Canada...

- ▲ Hospital admissions – 75 people will suffer an adverse drug event
- ▲ Patients with ambulatory encounter – 20 people will suffer a serious drug event



Patients discharged from hospital – 90 people will suffer a serious adverse drug event

- ▲ Laboratory test performed –up to 150 will be unnecessary (range 50 -150)
- ▲ Emergency department visits – 320 patients have an information gap identified, resulting in an average increase stay of (1.2 hours)
- ▲ Canadians recommended for influenza protection – 370 -430 are not vaccinated. Did you get yours?

We need to put pressure on the government to implement electronic health records to save money and for each one of us to do our part.

An immediate priority is to be the Ontario Diabetic Registry. It is a comprehensive tool for diabetes management and self-care – accessible to providers, case managers, patients and their families to support health promotion, disease prevention and better care. It provides information to health planners, LHINs and system stewards to enhance system management. Ontario is to have a Diabetes Registry actively used by patients and physicians to manage diabetic care and it is to be in place by Spring 2009.

If this Registry is in your area and working this spring, would you please let us know in *The Voice*.



We often blame drug companies for the high cost of drugs and usually rightfully so. But in some cases, in the USA, the fault clearly lies with the pharmacies themselves. For example if you had to buy a prescription drug, and bought the name brand, you might pay \$100 for 100 pills. The pharmacist might tell you if you get the generic equivalent they would only cost \$80 making you think you are saving \$20. What the pharmacist is not telling you is that those 100 generic pills have only cost him \$10.

Apparently Costco consistently charges little over their cost of generic drugs. Costco is a membership type store. You do not have to be a member to buy prescriptions there as it is a federally regulated substance. Tell them at the door that you wish to use the pharmacy and they will let you in. This is also true in Canada. Let The Voice know if you have a problem. Thanks to Len Harrison for this information.

We are all interested and worried about the cost of electricity. Did you realize that:

- ▲ Humidity: can add up to 3000 MW due to increased air conditioning load?
- ▲ Cloud cover: can reduce heat and demand by 1000 MW, but can increase demand for lighting.
- ▲ Time of day: Daytime electricity can be 10,000 MW higher than during the night.



- ▲ Temperature: each degree above 16°C incrementally raises demand by as much as 150 MW a degree and 150 MW a degree below 10°C
- ▲ Days of the week: A Monday peak is generally 2100 MW higher than a Sunday peak.
- ▲ Holidays: Thanksgiving demand drops 2500 MW and Christmas demand drops 4400 MW.
- ▲ Winds: strong winds (30 km/h and up) on cold days (-10°C) can increase demand by 800 MW.

Municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals will move from paying the Regulation Price Plan (RPP) to market rates on May 1, 2009. Many have moved to market rate already.

We want to wish you each a very Happy Valentine's Day and do something together with your family (club, church or friends) to enjoy your Family Day.

*Enjoy each day  
and  
God bless.*

