



AGM 2015

Executive Director's Report

Another year has flown by as we at MPS have continued to be extremely busy with advocacy efforts, and with improving and increasing services to members.

Although as your Executive Director I have been involved in advocacy initiatives, those have been well-documented in our President's Report and will not be repeated here. As Dr. Piotrowski recounted, we actively have been pursuing opportunities for advocating, in accordance with our strategic plan to increase access to psychological services for families. New this past year, Dr. Alicia Ordonez, as Diversity Coordinator, developed a thorough proposal for outreach and research to diverse cultural and ethnic groups in Manitoba, and has begun meeting with them to determine how psychologists can partner with them or be of assistance. As well, we have been increasing the visibility of MPS and of the profession of Psychology through the media, Psychology Month, and participation on advisory committees. Psychologists have much to bring to the table on matters related to mental and behavioral health, and we are willing and able to make that contribution.

From an administrative perspective, there have been exceptional demands this year as related to the development of our new website, the membership registration and renewal system, and the Find a Psychologist directory. We have had very positive feedback about the new website from our members and the public (and two associations in the U.S. have contacted us with rave reviews about our website and interest in hiring our webmaster to create their new sites). In less than one year, there have been 41,070 page views and 30,934 unique page views to our website.

Once designed and developed, the new registration and renewal system generally has worked smoothly, apart from a little confusion about the need to register in the new member portal for this initial year of the new system. Online registration for our continuing education events also has been developed and has been well-utilized.

With these new online systems, all information about our membership, registrations, and fees paid is readily available to administrative staff. As a result, more efficient and cost-effective support services are facilitated (and Heidi Tucker, our administrative assistant, is eternally and enthusiastically grateful!).

Additionally, in working with our new registration system, our webmaster, Mokhtar Joundi, and I have been able to obtain information about the status of our members, to ensure that those who have not renewed have been contacted, and to eliminate long out-of-date information on our membership rolls and email list. We now can accurately report the numbers of our active members by category.

I am very pleased to report that our new search engine, which allows searches for psychologists by name and by many other factors, has been highly utilized. Of our membership, 146 psychologists have registered to be in the search engine. Since it went live in August, 2014, the Find a Psychologist search page has had 7,850 page views and 5,184 unique page views. We have had an increased number of emails and calls by those wanting to find a psychologist, and many of our members have been contacted by potential clients who have utilized our web service.

I also am delighted to report that we are poised imminently to begin offering an ethics consultation service to our members. I am pleased to have been able to “hand off” this particular pet project to a group of knowledgeable and experienced psychologists, who have taken the ball and run with the new “Ethics Resource Service.” My deep thanks and appreciation to this dedicated group: Drs. Len Greenwood, Bruce Tefft, Jaye Miles, Don Stewart, and Norah Vincent. Stay tuned!

MPS continues to offer opportunities for education and networking. Organized by Dr. Lesley Ritchie, our top-notch, bi-yearly continuing education workshops have had increasing response from members and the public. As well, our Annual General Meetings, which have included free continuing education, have been well-attended by a good portion of our membership. The Board chose not to offer a Member’s Night this fall but the possibility of an informal awards get-together is being considered for the coming term. It is always a delight to have opportunities to see our fantastic colleagues in this very special Manitoba Psychology community. Throughout this country, Manitoba is known for punching above our weight in working for, and representing, the profession of Psychology.

The part of this report that I most value is the opportunity to thank some of the remarkable people who are involved with MPS. The entire Board has been exceptionally supportive, and I appreciate the great enthusiasm and good humour with which they see to the work of MPS. I always look forward to our spirited and energizing meetings.

The Executive Director and the President work closely and cooperatively on many of the initiatives of MPS, and I am fortunate again to be able to work with an excellent, committed, and hardworking President, Dr. Andrea Piotrowski. Thank you, Andrea, for your partnership and support. Thanks, too, for the continuing support of our past-President, Dr. Rehman Abdulrehman.

Thank you, as always, to our highly efficient, organized, cooperative, and pleasant Administrative Assistant, Heidi Tucker, my other partner. Thanks in particular to Heidi for her plentiful assistance in organizing this AGM, although she participates throughout the year on many other tasks for MPS. Working with Heidi is a pleasure and she is indispensable— I am saying this now – if she goes, I go!

As well, I want to highlight the contribution of our student representative, Julie Erickson, in assisting with planning the AGM. Thank heaven for students and thank heaven for Julie! Her efficiency, enthusiasm, and "let's get this done" attitude deserves kudos.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation for the work of our webmaster, Mokhtar Joundi. He has continued to provide exceptional creative and technical solutions for our website and membership services. He is readily responsive to requests and questions, shows initiative in generating suggestions, and seems to know everything! I think that he never sleeps.

As documented by our President, there are many tasks done by our Board members and the need for an active Board is increasing, as the initiatives adopted by MPS continue to expand. With the formation of a number of new committees, we have increased opportunities for members who may not be able to participate on our Board to participate in key tasks of our association, which enables us to expand the reach of our advocacy and member service efforts.

We are delighted that many of you, including new student members, have indicated that you would like to volunteer in some way with MPS committees or events. Now that our registration for this year is complete and we easily are able to search for members who have indicated that they wish to volunteer, we plan to make a concerted effort to approach potential volunteers, with warm welcome. Be prepared to receive an email or call – and if you don't, just pick up the phone and call me.

To close, I will repeat my exhortation from last year: The successes and progress of MPS are dependent not only on the work of the Board, but also on the support and action of our entire membership. It is critical that the membership responds when MPS champions a cause, particularly when it involves requests for political action. The more that MPS members are involved, including by volunteering with MPS, the more successful we will be in ensuring adequate access to Psychology for the public and effective use of psychologists in health care.

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve as your Executive Director as MPS approaches its 50th year of service to Manitoba Psychologists.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Sztaba, Ph.D., C. Psych.
Executive Director