

Message from the President

2020 was a year unlike any other. As the College of Massage Therapists of Ontario (CMTO)'s President, I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished together during these uncertain and challenging times. The College was able to successfully pivot to a remote platform and continue to prioritize the health and safety of Ontarians.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs/MTs) and other healthcare providers for rising to the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic presented during the past year. On behalf of the College, I would like to thank you for your continued commitment to providing the highest quality healthcare to your clients and for your unwavering dedication to upholding public health protocols.

I would also like to thank CMTO's Council, Non-Council Members and Committees for providing a tremendous amount of their time to participate in education and training, hearing matters, providing advice and making decisions to ensure that CMTO is able to continue to fulfill its public protection mandate. I want to thank staff for consistently delivering high-quality information, options and solutions amidst short deadlines that enabled the organization to remain flexible and nimble in its responses.

I'd like to express my gratitude to Evelyn Waters, CMTO's Deputy Registrar of nearly eight years, for her service and commitment to protecting the public interest. Without question, Evelyn has been instrumental in helping the College grow - through her inspirational mentoring capabilities and steadfast leadership. Evelyn is departing CMTO this Spring and will be thoroughly missed.

As we head into Spring, with a new vaccination program already underway in many parts of Ontario, I am feeling hopeful and optimistic about the future of Massage Therapy care in the province.

Work is well underway on a number of key initiatives that will advance the three interrelated goals of CMTO's [2019-2021 Strategic Plan](#):

- Ensuring the public is well-informed (i.e., Transparency);
- Ensuring clients receive high quality, evidence-informed Massage Therapy (i.e., Quality); and
- Protecting the public through relevant and modern regulation by assessing risk and targeting resources to areas of greatest risk, as well as engaging the public and RMTs by using evidence-based data to inform decision-making (i.e., Regulatory Modernization).

As I look ahead to this year, CMTO's Council will continue to provide input on the new Standards of Practice and other policies to ensure that RMTs continue to deliver safe and effective Massage Therapy care during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Council is also looking forward to providing guidance and advice on the implementation of the 2021 CMTO Workplan, which was approved at our February Council meeting.

On behalf of CMTO, I would like to thank those who put their names forward for Council nominations and all the RMTs who applied for non-Council Member positions this year. It is wonderful to see the depth of knowledge and skills that RMTs are willing to contribute to support the CMTO in fulfilling its statutory mandate.

I would also like to warmly welcome our recently elected and acclaimed Members to Council, including Dawn Oehring, RMT of District 2 (who is back with us for a second term), and Ravara Van Vliet, RMT of District 7, who will both help to shape the College's strategic direction over their three-year terms. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to our outgoing Council Member, Nevenko Jeftic, RMT, for his commitment and hard work on Council over the past several years.

I am incredibly grateful and humbled to have been re-elected as President of Council for this year. I am proud to have witnessed the planned growth and transformation of the College over the past few years, and I'm excited to continue contributing to CMTO's journey towards regulatory modernization. I am also pleased to be able to continue working with CMTO's knowledgeable staff to ensure that RMT's continue to receive clear, concise, and evidence-informed COVID-19 guidance.

Much has already been accomplished but there is still much more to do. By continuing to work together with our health system partners and stakeholders we will ensure that Massage Therapy remains a safe, effective, and affordable choice for Ontarians.

Yours in health,

Kim Westfall-Connor