

## Opening Ceremonies: Welcome and Presidential Address

*Speakers: Andrew D. Baker, MD, FRCPC, Consultant, Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, Queen Elizabeth II Campus; Consultant, Geriatrics, Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, University Campus; Active Staff, Internal Medicine and Geriatrics, St. Joseph's Health Centre, Chair, Section of Geriatric and Long Term Care, O.M.A Toronto, ON; Jennifer Ingram, MD, FRCPC, Founder, Kawartha Regional Memory Clinic, Peterborough, ON; Consulting Geriatrician, Whitby Mental Health Centre Memory Clinic, Whitby, ON; Chris Frank, MD, FCFP, Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, Queen's University; Clinical Director, Specialized Geriatrics, Providence Care, Kingston, ON.*



Dr. Andrew Baker,  
Co-chair



Dr. Jennifer Ingram  
Co-chair



Dr. Chris Frank

The 29th Canadian Geriatrics Society (CGS) Annual Scientific Meeting launched with welcoming remarks delivered by its co-chairs, Dr. Andrew Baker and Dr. Jennifer Ingram. Dr. Baker is in full-time geriatrics and internal medicine practice at St. Joseph's Health Centre in Toronto. Dr. Baker is the current OMA head of the section for Geriatrics and Long-Term Care and has been chief of geriatrics at St. Joseph's since 2005. Dr. Ingram is a specialist in internal medicine and geriatric medicine currently practicing in Peterborough, Ontario. Dr. Ingram founded the Kawartha Regional Memory Clinic, a consultative service. Dr. Ingram also serves as consulting geriatrician at the Whitby Mental Health Centre's Memory Clinic.

Dr. Baker introduced Dr. Chris Frank, outgoing President of CGS, who offered his own welcome to attendees. Dr. Frank, associate professor in the Department of Medicine at Queen's University and director of the Care of the Elderly residency program, as well as Clinical Director of Providence Care Specialized Geriatric Services, reflected on the three themes that encompassed the efforts of CGS members during his presidency: the need for collaborative work with other organizations devoted to seniors' health and well-being; the necessity to mobilize the intelligence and energy of the Society's able members given the Society's small size; and the commitment to excellence in patient care.

All three aims were evident in reviewing the previous year's accomplishments, he noted: the Society has worked collaboratively with the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, the Canadian Pensioners Concerned, the Canadian Academy of Geriatric Psychiatry, the Health Care of the Elderly Committee of the College of Family Physicians, and the National Initiative for Care of the Elderly, among other organizations, to develop the Geriatric Education and Recruitment Initiative (GERI). The collaborative's mandate is to improve the image of caring for seniors and to attract people to the field. Dr. Frank stated that GERI has a funded project to develop geriatric interest groups at health science centres and has worked with the media and related businesses to improve the representation of aging. Ongoing activities include efforts to secure grant monies to fund geriatric education in Africa.

As for CGS members' commitment to senior care, he noted the multitude of voices that rose in response to the journal *Geriatrics & Aging's* "Call to Arms," which sought opinions on the value of geriatrics. Most respondents equated geriatrics with excellence in medical care.

Dr. Frank emphasized the Society's pleasure at bringing multiple health care organizations together for the meeting to work collaboratively to promote excellence in eldercare. He encouraged attendees to incorporate the information and initiatives discussed into their professional interactions, and to build and maintain professional linkages. He emphasized his optimism about the growing attraction of geriatrics, noting the CGS membership was at an all-time high. Increasingly, core competencies in geriatric care are successfully being introduced into medical training, as those who map curricula are seeing the need to prepare practitioners for burgeoning numbers of aging adults. Dr. Frank expressed hope that the meeting would be of great utility in helping professionals to care for seniors in their locale.

