



Board of Directors Report – AGM 2022

The last year finally allowed us to roll out most of the marketing initiatives that we have been working on for the last few years. Although Alberta did not fully open in 2021 like we were hoping to see, it does look like we are getting closer and closer to what 'normal' was. Hopefully we can continue to market our members directly to the general public and start promoting our own Find a Therapist page to track how many potential clients we are pushing to our members. Much of the last year was overshadowed by the announcement of the potential CATA Bylaw change that would have potentially had far-reaching effects on how the AATA and other Regional Associations operate. So far CATA and the Regions are still operating as they always have, but this will be a major factor for our regional association moving forward.

Executive Liaison (Jacqui Sanderson)

Jacqui has continued in her role as the AATA Executive Liaison in a contract position. Jacqui is the first point of contact for the public, and usually for members of the association as well. The last year highlighted how big the role of the treasurer is for one unpaid volunteer, and Jacqui has recently taken over most of this portfolio as well. She is still the link between the marketing group (Communicatto) and the Board, and is the one that is responsible for our regular mailouts, and most of the website updates.

Member Services

The last 2 years of the COVID 19 pandemic has made it very difficult to plan and support any type of in person member services. With in person gatherings being allowed in Alberta in March, the board has started to implement Social/Educational Check Ins. The plan for these events will be to provide a learning opportunity for our members, as well as some in person networking for the membership. The first event was both in person and virtual and was held on March 22, 2022. There is a schedule moving forwards to these events on an ongoing basis. The board has also been looking into hosting more courses for the membership, but many courses are yet to provide in person opportunities, and booking a physical location has still proven difficult. If there are courses that you would especially like to see, make sure to reach out!

Advocacy and Awareness

This year we were still working on transitioning all members to using the members only section of the website. Renewals were to be completed through the members portal ensuring that we had all the members information we need to kick off our own Find a Therapist page. There were some issues with the renewal process that we hope will be addressed for next year making it an even easier process. The renewal process was also complicated by being cut off from the CATA database, so we were unable to

correlate our renewals with the CATA in real time. This was also an issue for any member that Certified, transferred, or applied for an LOA through CATA at this time. We are still working to have these issues all corrected.

The public facing yourlifeinfullmotion.ca website has continued to bring in more traffic, and our members have been great at providing regular blog posts for us to share to the general public. Advocacy and Awareness are still one of the biggest issues we face as an unregulated health profession. We need every member to make sure their profile is updated, like and share any AATA content that you see online, and consider helping to contribute a blog post or article for the website.

Finances

The AATA continues to be in an excellent long-term financial position. General guidance for regulating in Alberta has been 1000 members or 1M justify starting their own regulatory college. We are obviously a long way from these long term goals but continue to save money for the chance to pursue regulation in the future. Alberta has done an excellent job of saving for regulation, and it is important that these funds remain invested for the long term to make sure they are available for AATA members when needed. Compared to other regional associations, the AATA membership fees are close to the average for the nation as a whole, but we believe we have the most money saved on a per member basis.

In the short-term, most of the budget goes to the advocacy and awareness campaign, and the role of the Executive Liaison. Advocacy and awareness should remain one of the top priorities for any member-based association, and will require continuous funding in to the future. Likewise, as the Exec Liaison position continues to grow, it will also likely continue to grow. It is important that our membership stays engaged by running for Board positions, stepping up for writing blogs and articles, and joining a committee to lend a hand. These are tasks that we can do as members to ease the workload of the EL, assist with the advocacy/awareness, and still keep our annual membership dues below average.

National/Regional Structure

The proposed CATA Bylaw change regarding regional association membership was probably the most influential topic for the AATA over the last year, and will be into the near future. The timing of the Bylaw change made it extremely difficult and stressful for the Regional Association year ends. It also put the regional association future into question, which made it much more difficult to plan any type of long-term initiatives. Although the AATA would not disappear if membership was no longer mandatory, it would significantly impact our membership numbers and drastically affect our short term budget. It would be risky to enter into longer term financial contracts while this is still a potential issue.

Although the Bylaw change was voted down by the national membership, it appears that the root of the problem has not gone away. It became very apparent during the many Town Halls and meetings that this issue is directly related to the OATA and its membership. After the vote failed, it seems this is still the issue. We have been informed that there is now a second member association in Ontario. They are lobbying for another Bylaw vote (Special Members Meeting), asking that there be the option of more than one Regional Association per Region so that Ontario could have the choice of which association to join.

We recognize that the Ontario members are feeling that they do not have a voice and are not happy with their association. But one of the major benefits of Athletic Therapy versus other unregulated professions in Canada is the strength of how consistent our profession is across the country. All our membership attends schooling that meets the same accreditation standards, take the same national exam and use the same title. One provincial voice allows us a stronger voice if the opportunity for regulation ever does come. For example, in Alberta there are MANY different associations, now all using different school/training, number of hours title, etc. This will be a major issue if they ever do get the opportunity to become regulated.

We believe that most associations desperately DO want to come to an agreement with the CATA about how the regional associations interact with the CATA going forward. The last proposed Bylaw change stopped this process, and we are now farther from an agreement than we were in Feb of 2021 (we had a letter of intent signed at that time, now we are still working on the new letter of intent). We believe the focus should be on solidifying the relationship between the CATA and interested regional associations and moving forward together.

In summary, the looming issue of the CATA bylaw change has been of great concern to all Regional Associations for the last 6 months and will continue to be for the near future. The AATA will continue with its own Advocacy and Awareness campaign and promoting its members to the Alberta public, will continue to invest membership funds for potential regulation, and will continue working to increase its member benefits. We will always need more members to step forward and represent the membership at the Board level, and we will especially need members who wish to be involved with developing the CATA and regional association relationship to step up this year. If you are interested at all in being part of the AATA board, we encourage you to reach out in advance.

AATA Board of Directors