



ARTHRITIS HEALTH PROFESSIONS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Board of Directors: 2

Mission and Vision: 3

President's Report: 4

2023-2028 Strategic Plan: 7

Strategic Progress and Priorities: 8

Chair and Committee Reports: 11

SIG Report: 17

Liaison Reports: 19

Financial Overview: 20

Sponsor Support: 21



2024 Board of Directors

President: Michelle Bridge
Past-President: Samantha Holmgren
President-Elect: Vacant
Treasurer: Mary Ellen Marcon
Secretary: Claire Jacek
Communications Chair: Sue MacQueen
Member-at-Large: Frédérique Ponton (Jun - Dec)
Membership Chair: Karen Gordon
Professional and Career Development Chair: Vacant
Research Chair: Dr. Karine Toupin-April
Sponsorship and Marketing Chair: Petra Kodeda

Other

ACPAC SIG Chair: Julie Herrington
CRA Transition Liaison: Julie Herrington
ORA Liaison: Osk Jenkins
CRA Human Resources Liaison: Jennifer Burt

Webmaster/Administrative Support: Ron Yong

www.ahpa.ca
connect@ahpa.ca

ARTHRITIS HEALTH PROFESSIONS ASSOCIATION

We are a Canadian not-for-profit organization made up of healthcare professionals, students, trainees, researchers, and administrators dedicated to improving the care of individuals living with rheumatic diseases, arthritis, and related conditions.

VISION AND MISSION

Vision

Optimal care and quality of life for every Canadian living with arthritis.

Mission

To build and sustain a community of professionals who provide the best possible care to Canadians with arthritis through knowledge translation, engagement, and inter-professional collaboration.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2023 - 2028

Knowledge Translation

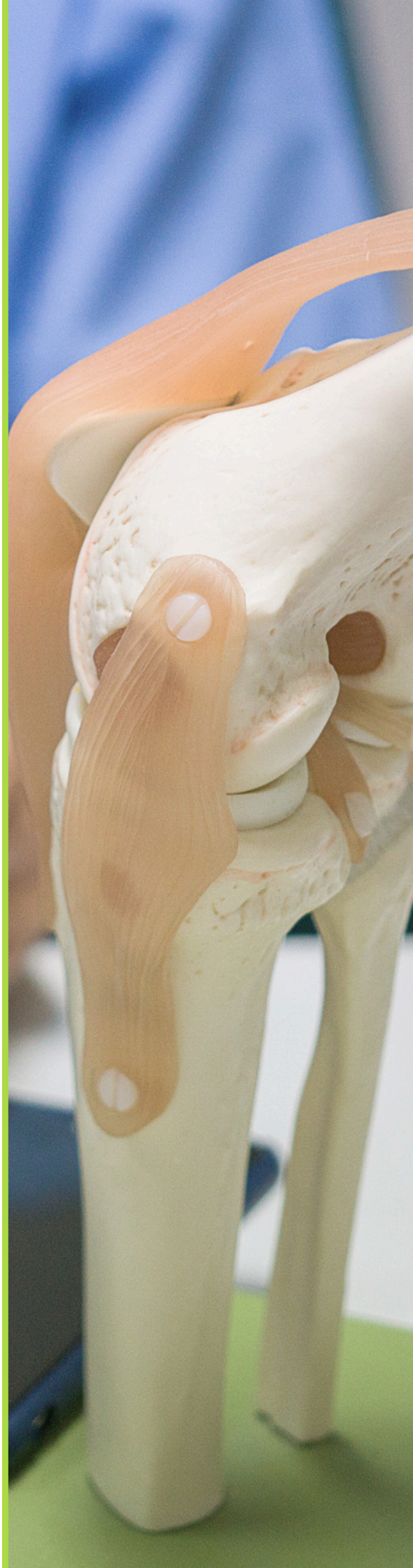
To generate, share, and disseminate the evolving body of arthritis care knowledge by creating opportunities for research funding, collaboration, and education for our members.

Engagement

To maximize the engagement of our members and external partners, leveraging our positive impact on individual professionals and the healthcare system, and better positioning AHPA to fulfill its mission.

Sustainability

To build the resources, organizational structures, and capacity, to achieve our goals and provide excellent value to our members.





PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As the President of AHPA, it is my privilege to present this year's report, reflecting on our collective achievements and looking ahead to the exciting opportunities that lie before us. It has been an incredibly dynamic year, with remarkable strides made in our mission.

In 2024, we were fortunate to have more Chair positions filled than in the previous year; however, we still operated without a full board, including the lack of a President-Elect, and Professional and Career Development Chair. This year's President-Elect would have been responsible for the Knowledge Translation (KT) portfolio, which oversees the Professional and Career Development Chair, as well as the Research Chair and Research Committee. Despite this gap in KT leadership, we remained resilient and successfully delivered our Pre-Course, hosted two additional webinars, ran our research grant competition, and shared numerous external educational opportunities and resources through our newsletter.

As the President overseeing the engagement portfolio, my work continued to focus on engaging our current members, and strengthening connections with our professional and patient organization partners, with a particular emphasis on the Arthritis Action Plan. This portfolio encompasses the Communications Chair, website committee, liaison positions, and Member-at-Large, who this year had a significant role in liaising with the ACPAC SIG. The President also oversees the roles of the Secretary and Treasurer.

Samantha Holmgren, Past-President, continued to be responsible for the sustainability portfolio, which focuses on internal processes and the viability of the organization, including funding and marketing to new members. This portfolio includes the Membership Chair, and the Sponsorship and Marketing Chair. The Past-President also oversees nominations. Her strategic guidance and commitment to strengthening AHPA's foundation have been invaluable in ensuring the organization's long-term success. We deeply appreciate her leadership!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



As a working board, we rely on the time and efforts of our volunteer Board of Directors. Their passion, experience, and insights enable us to continue supporting our community. We also recognize the invaluable contributions of our committee volunteers, liaisons, and all members and non-members who have supported AHPA. Their dedication is reflected in the following exceptional contributions.

Mary Ellen Marcon, Treasurer: For her perseverance and dedication to the financial stewardship of AHPA. Her efforts in coordinating the annual budget, monitoring expenses, ensuring accurate financial records, and overseeing the safe custody of funds are essential to the smooth operation of our association. Her diligent work and attention to detail contribute greatly to our continued success. We greatly appreciate her invaluable contributions to AHPA.

Claire Jacek, Secretary: For her loyal service and meticulous attention to detail. She fulfills an important role in recording and maintaining the minutes of our meetings and ensuring that approved minutes are promptly posted. Additionally, her efforts in ensuring that our annual corporation reporting obligations are met are vital to our compliance. Her contributions are deeply valued, and we are grateful for her commitment to our smooth functioning.

Sue MacQueen, Communications Chair: For her devotion in keeping our members informed and engaged, through our website and the production of newsletters and newsflashes. She ensures AHPA members stay up-to-date on our strategic initiatives, upcoming internal and external events, networking opportunities, job postings, grants/awards, research advancements and recruitment, member spotlights, clinician and patient resources, and more! Beyond her communications role, her advisory talents and wealth of knowledge have been instrumental in guiding AHPA's initiatives and fostering collaboration. We are truly grateful for her expertise and commitment!

- **Website Committee:** Led by Sue MacQueen, the committee is responsible for regularly updating and reviewing the content on the website. We extend our gratitude to Anne MacLeod and Rashmi Mandhane for their valuable support.

Frédérique Ponton, Member-at-Large (Jun - Dec): For her participation as ACPAC SIG liaison.

Karen Gordon, Membership Chair: For her determination in the recruitment, retention, and recognition of AHPA members. Her efforts in overseeing the membership application process and co-organizing the Lifetime Achievement Award have been key in strengthening our community.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS CONTINUED



Karine Toupin-April, Research Chair: For her leadership in driving research initiatives within AHPA and upholding the KT pillar within our organization. We are thrilled that Karine has agreed to extend her time with us as Research Chair.

- **Research Committee:** Led by the Research Chair, the Research Committee coordinates the annual AHPA grant competition and peer reviews abstract submissions by the AHPA members to the CRA Annual Scientific Meeting. We also extend our gratitude to Paul Adam who lead the review committee for the AHPA grant applications, as well as to Susan Bartlett, Linda Li, Laura Passalent, Diane Tin, and Marie Westby for their valuable support. Additionally, we appreciate the external researchers who assisted in reviewing grants to ensure impartiality and address conflicts of interest when needed.

Petra Kodeda, Sponsorship and Marketing Chair: For her dedication to implementing sponsorship strategies, liaising with sponsors, and evaluating targets, which have been essential in securing the resources needed to support AHPA's activities. In the absence of KT leadership, Petra took the initiative and worked closely with the Treasurer to organize the *Updates in Lupus Management* webinar, ensuring its smooth execution. We thank Petra for her two years of service and look forward to continuing to work with her in a micro-volunteer capacity now that her time on the board has concluded.

Cybersecurity Committee: This committee was formed out of a need identified in 2022 for increased cybersecurity protections. We sincerely thank Kristin Dillon and Phil Bertrand for their support in straightening out the tangles of technology with us.

Liaisons: In addition to our various committees, we also have AHPA members who raise our voice with other organizations as our AHPA Liaisons: Osk Jenkins with the Ontario Rheumatology Association, Julie Herrington with the CRA Transition Working Group, and Jennifer Burt with the CRA Human Resources Committee. Thank you for your continued commitment!

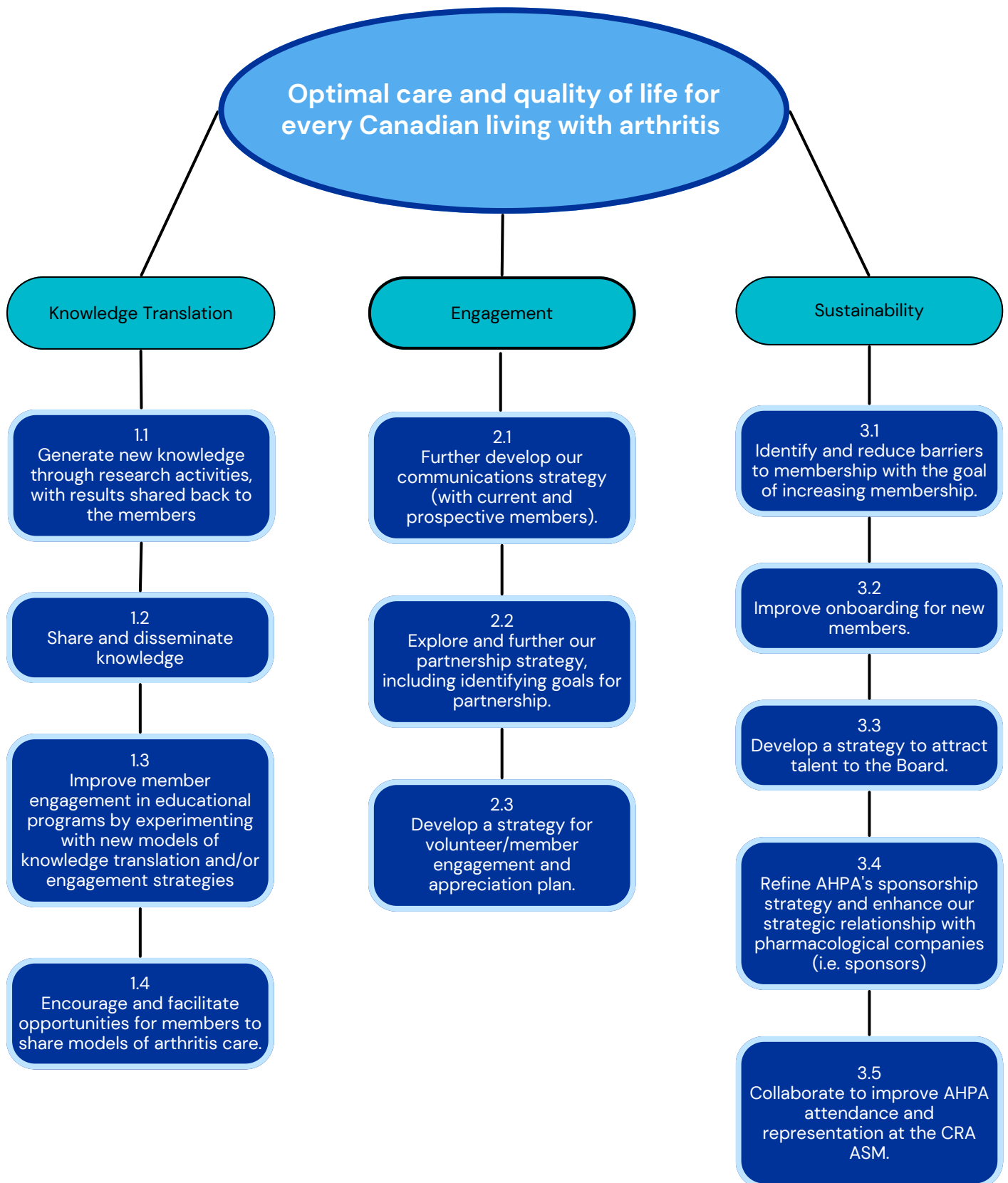
Ron Yong, Webmaster and Administrative Support: For all the hard work and dedication he brings to AHPA. His expertise, attention to detail, and commitment to keeping our systems running smoothly are invaluable to our organization.

A final thank you to our members, sponsors, and partners for your loyalty and commitment. Your involvement, generosity, and collaboration are crucial to our success and help us advance our mission and vision.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michelle Bridge, OT Reg. (Ont.), ACPAC
AHPA President



2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan



Strategic Progress and Priorities

Knowledge Translation

Progress in 2024

- The 16th annual Pre-Course was held in February with 51 participants attending at least one of the two half-days
- Two additional online education webinars were offered
- Shared >20 external professional development opportunities as well as 4 study recruitment notices
- Evaluated and awarded 2 research grants and 3 abstract awards



Priorities in 2025

- Continue with the 17th Annual Pre-Course in February
- Continue representation on the CRA ASM Program Committee
- Recruit a Professional and Career Development Chair then conduct a learning needs assessment
- Continue offering research grants and awards



Engagement

Progress in 2024

- Engaging Our Members
 - Regular Communication: Newsletters to keep members updated regarding strategic initiatives, upcoming internal and external events, networking opportunities, job postings, grants/awards, research advancements, updates on relevant guidelines and quality standards, and member spotlights. We also included study recruitment notices, patient and clinician resources, and scholarship opportunities for our members to share with patients.
 - Networking:
 - In-Person AHPA Social hosted in Winnipeg on February 26, 2024 during the 2024 CRA & AHPA Annual Scientific Meeting
 - Networking sessions offered immediately before the start of various synchronous virtual events
 - Java & Joints Virtual Networking Hour in recognition of Arthritis Awareness Month held September 25, 2024
 - Advocacy efforts included supporting a member's participation in "Arthritis Day on the Hill" in Ottawa on October 8, 2024, an initiative organized in collaboration with the *Arthritis Action Plan*.
- Engaging our Partners
 - We remained connected with our patient, professional, and research organization partners, regularly exchanging initiatives and updates.
 - AHPA continued to support the *Arthritis Action Plan* by collaborating with the 21 Ecosystem Champion organizations to advance priorities in arthritis care. AHPA contributed to key discussions on ensuring the voice of arthritis health professionals remains central to shaping policies and initiatives that improve patient outcomes.

Priorities in 2025

- Expand networking opportunities
- Increase AHPA's presence and engagement at the CRA ASM through enhanced member participation and visibility
- Strengthen membership benefits
- Advance the Access to Care pillar of the *Arthritis Action Plan*
- Promote cultural sensitivity through inclusive practices and meaningful engagement



Sustainability

Summary

Our two biggest sustainability challenges are consistent funding and board capacity. While we had more board members than in some recent years, not all board positions were filled in 2024. Most impactful was the missing president-elect for the knowledge translation portfolio and the professional and career development chair. While we have talked about having micro-volunteers, there is some infrastructure required, which requires time and attention. With a limited capacity in our working board, setting up the processes for micro-volunteers has not been a high priority. Similarly, we were not able to set up a sponsor Town Hall last year, but are hopeful that we will be able to make arrangements in the next year.

Progress in 2024

- Continued to refine onboarding of new board members
- Discussed the pros and cons of managing social media profile(s) and for now have decided to instead encourage board members and individuals to use their existing profiles to promote AHPA membership, as desired.
- As there has been low interest shown in the discussion forum, this shall be tabled for the future.

Priorities in 2025

- Continue improving onboarding for both board members and new AHPA members
- Discuss a sponsor town hall with the Sponsorship chair
- Continue to review internal processes for ways to improve sustainability and ensure we can increase capacity in our board and move our strategic plan forward year over year



Committee Reports

Communications: Sue MacQueen



Mandate

- Manage internal communications
- Keep members informed of advances in rheumatology, AHPA activities, etc. through the production of a regular newsletter
- Encourage other AHPA members and AHPA partners to write articles for the newsletter, review current books or literature, and note important upcoming dates of interest to the AHPA membership
- Be responsible for maintaining and updating the AHPA website, in collaboration with the AHPA Webmaster



Achievements in 2024

- Chaired the Website committee with ongoing updates to the website in collaboration with the Webmaster
- Updated the yearly membership renewal form
- Changed the newsletter format to a bi-weekly AHPA NEWS!
- Worked with partner organizations to provide updates in the AHPA NEWS!



Priorities in 2025

- Work with membership to disseminate information about AHPA to potential new members
- Solicit articles of interest for the NEWS! from AHPA members
- Continue to liaise with partner organizations to share pertinent information of interest to AHPA members.



Membership: Karen Gordon



Mandate

- Recruitment, retention and recognition of AHPA members;
- Development of programs for membership recruitment and retention;
- Oversee the membership process and applications;
- Ensure welcome emails sent to new members and thank-you emails sent out to members who recruit new members
- Organize the Lifetime Achievement Award



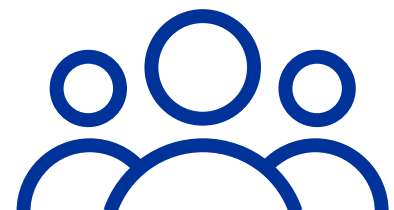
Achievements in 2024

- Updates to online membership process (student members must provide proof of FT student status; checkbox to confirm re: understands commercial activities not permitted during AHPA activities and link to CRA Industry Council Guidelines)
- In 2024, AHPA membership numbers were as follows: 148 AHPA members including 60 ACPAC SIG members. Our membership numbers have been gradually growing following COVID pandemic.
- AHPA membership renewal incentive \$100 gift card random draw award winner was Angelo Papachristos
- Lifetime Achievement Award recipient is Susan Bartlett. Award video was aired at the CRA ASM during awards of distinction. Certificate was presented during the CRA ASM gala.



Priorities in 2025

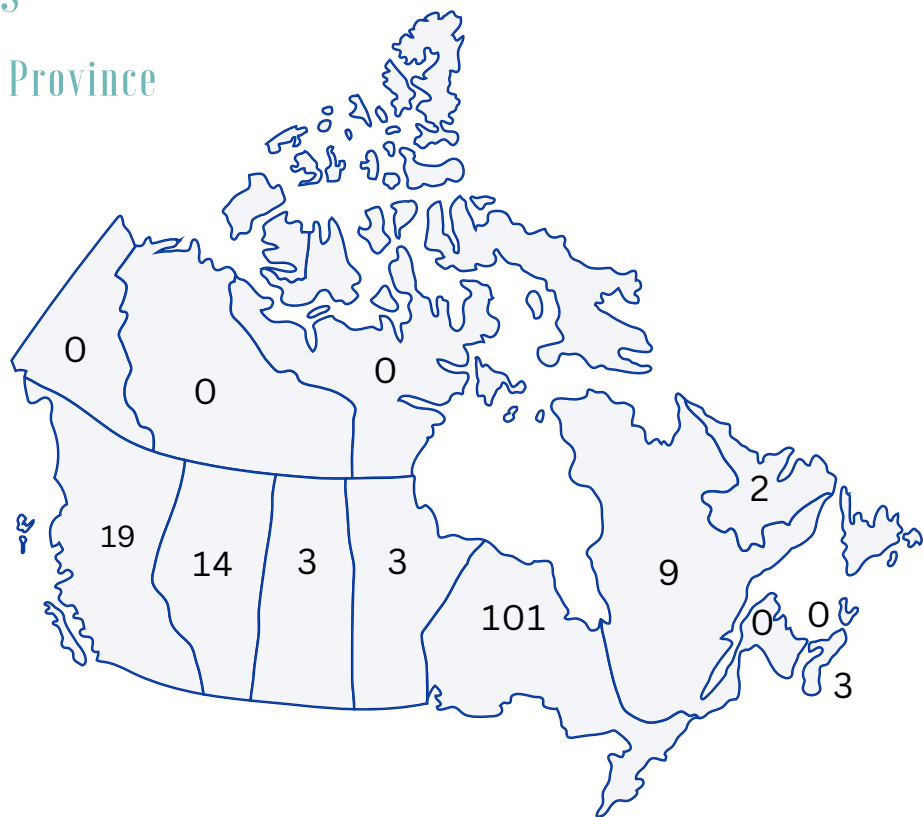
- Build on successes of 2024
- Continue to build on membership recruitment and retention including student members
- Continue to improve registration process
- Continue to promote interest in Lifetime Achievement Award



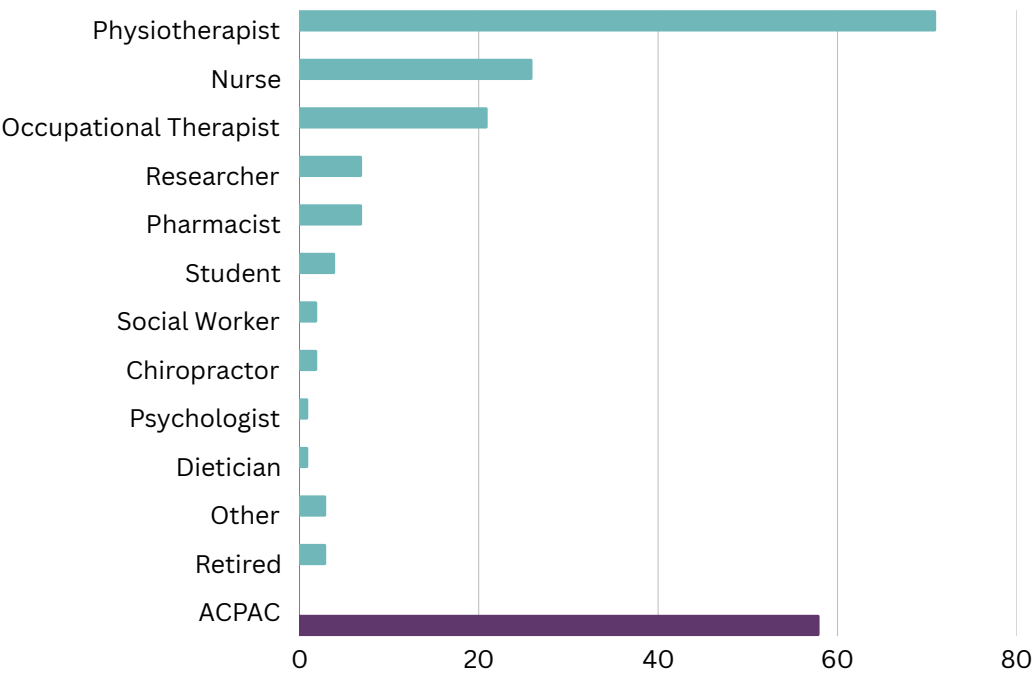
Membership 2024

148 Members

Membership by Province



Membership by Profession



ACPAC SIG members are also included in PT, OT, RN, and Chiro numbers.

Professional and Career Development: Vacant



Mandate

The Professional and Career Development Committee identifies and addresses the learning needs of the AHPA membership, as well as promoting and administering the Clinical Innovation Award.



Achievements in 2024

- The 2024 Pre-Course Committee, led by Chair Paul Adam and members Kim Hall, Sue MacQueen, Diane McGall, and Jane Prince, worked diligently for the third consecutive year to deliver an exceptional Pre-Course.
- The annual Pre-Course took place on Friday, February 9th and Saturday, February 10th. Forty-five individuals attended the Friday session and thirty-seven individuals attended on Saturday.
- The 2024 learning needs assessment was not conducted due to the vacancies in Knowledge Translation leadership.
- Despite vacancies in Knowledge Translation, AHPA successfully offered two additional online education webinars (one of which was also open to non-members as a member recruitment strategy) and shared over 20 external professional development opportunities through AHPA NEWS!
- Two applications were received for consideration of the 2024 Clinical Innovation Award. This award was promoted, and submissions were graded, in 2023, and the award was presented to the recipient at the 2024 AHPA Annual General Meeting and Awards Ceremony on February 21, 2024.



Priorities in 2025

- Recruit a Professional and Career Development Chair. A full board means we can continue offering our members the full range of benefits and opportunities they deserve.
- The annual Pre-Course remains AHPA's most popular event and a cornerstone of our educational offerings; however, with vacancies in the Professional and Career Development Chair and Education Committee, AHPA will adapt, evolve, and explore new approaches to fulfill our mandate with resilience.
- It is unclear at this point whether the AHPA OnlineED webinar series or the Joint Education Event (hybrid or not) will take place in 2025.
- Maintain the promotion and administration of the Clinical Innovation Award.



Research: Dr. Karine Toupin-April



Mandate

- Concern itself with research and research training in rheumatology
- Undertake the peer review of all AHPA-submitted abstracts for presentation at the CRA/AHPA annual scientific meeting
- Coordinate competition, submissions, and peer review of AHPA grants



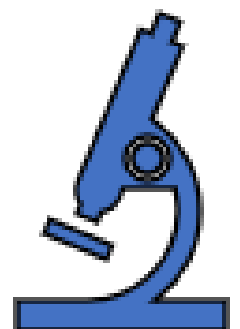
Achievements in 2024

- Coordinated review of 11 abstracts by 6 committee members. As Karine Toupin-April submitted an abstract, she recused herself from the selection and asked Paul Adam to lead the decision-making process.
- 4 Abstract Awards were awarded
 - Carolyn Thomas Award for Best Scientific Abstract – Susan Bartlett
 - Barbara Hanes Memorial Award for Best Abstract Submitted by an OT – Karine Toupin-April
 - ACPAC Abstract SIG Award – Julie Herrington
 - Best Trainee Abstract Award – Mahta Rafieinia
- Coordinated review of 4 grant applications by 4 researcher reviewers and 1 patient reviewer. As Karine Toupin-April was a co-applicant on an application, she recused herself from the selection of reviewers, selection of winners and asked Paul Adam to lead the decision-making process.
- 2 Research Grants were awarded
 - A \$10,000 grant was awarded to Codie Primeau and Linda Li (co-PIs) and collaborators
 - A \$5,000 grant was awarded to Rose Martini and Elizabeth Stringer (co-PIs) and collaborators
- There were some calls and meetings with the Canadian Arthritis Trainee Association to facilitate the recruitment of trainees for both organizations.
- The research committee solicited information for the AHPA NEWS! from AHPA members. These will be disseminated in the next few months.



Priorities in 2025

- Collaborate with the Engagement President to increase relationships with research organizations
- Solicit research news for the AHPA NEWS! from AHPA member
- Continue to liaise with partner organizations to share pertinent information of interest to AHPA members



Sponsorship and Marketing: Petra Kodeda



Mandate

- Concern itself with external communication/marketing, and the development and evaluation of fundraising targets and strategies for the purpose of generating revenue to support the activities of AHPA
- Develop fundraising campaigns targeting corporations, foundations, individuals, and government
- Participate in the development of a plan, budget, and agenda for the annual Pre-Course
- Liaise with the Treasurer as part of the annual budget process



Achievements in 2024

- Re-Branded Partnership/Sponsorship offering to reflect a maximum \$5,000.00 sponsorship per company
- Pfizer immediately committed to \$5,000.00
- Commitment to partner was also communicated by:
 - Abbvie
 - BioJAMP
 - Celltrion
 - Sandoz
 - UCB
- LUPUS CME with Dr. Kostas Tselios moderated by Dr. Ashley Sterrett in partnership with AZ was another success!



Priorities in 2025

- IMMEDIATE follow up regarding funding
- Review and modify the sponsorship/partnership request as per feedback received
- Consider a Partner Townhall to engage current and potential partners
- Explore post-ORA opportunities



Other Reports

ACPAC SIG Report: Julie Herrington



Mandate

- The pillars supporting all our activities are Advocacy, Research, and Education, all underpinned by Leadership.
- Objectives of the SIG include
 - fostering collaboration between graduates and trainees,
 - supporting program graduates and trainees,
 - providing strategic direction to those interested in extended-role practice careers,
 - maintaining a collaborative relationship with the ACPAC program
 - supporting research and professional development activities.



Achievements in 2024

- Fifty-eight members were registered with the SIG in 2024, up 11 members from 2023
- Julie Herrington continued as Chair throughout 2024
- Subcommittees include Advocacy, Research, Education, Welcome, Orthopedics with new subcommittees in 2024: Honorariums, Program Development and Planetary Health.
- ACPAC award winners in 2024 included Jennifer Burt (AHPA Lifetime Achievement Award), Anne MacLeod (AHPA clinical innovation award), Ngai Chow and Laura Passalent (CIORA grant)
- Communication to the broader membership was achieved through regular e-newsletters (ACtionPACKed NEWS), distributed 5 times throughout 2024
- Research played an important role with a Research Series to support research by SIG members, and a Scoping Review of ACPAC literature
- Advocacy efforts included the ORA Northern Subcommittee and meetings with OPA, CPA, CPO, federal and Ontario governments; obtaining ACPAC scholarships from Cassie and Friends, and the development of ACPAC Advocacy tools
- Education opportunities at each all-member meeting, the SIG Annual meeting, the AHPA ACPAC SIG lecture, and the ACPAC Program lecture
- ACPAC honorariums were given to members who presented at CRA (Sameer Chunara), OPA (Angelo Papachristos) and ORA (Anne MacLeod)

ACPAC SIG Report Continued: Julie Herrington

✓ **Priorities in 2025**

- Continue with plans already established for all committees with wrap up dates planned for June 2025.
- Establish new working groups and priorities in September 2025.
- Plan for changeover of ACPAC SIG Chair leadership position for September 2025
- All member meetings:
 - February – Ortho focused and lead by the orthopedic committee
 - April – Focus on Advocacy efforts – sharing of new advocacy slides
 - May – AGM – Trinette to share Program Development document, Chair wrap up + Lectures
- Provide honorariums for ACPAC SIG members who are presenting or sharing research at designated national or provincial conferences.
- Create Advocacy Tools and Infographic for ACPAC SIG members
- Education Events: ACPAC Program Lectures January and April; Continue with short Education sessions at all member meetings
- Welcome committee - January week - Leadership, April Week - Education, May Week - Advocacy (ACPAC SIG member to speak to current class)



Liaison Reports

CRA Transition Working Group: Julie Herrington

National Transition Committee - Chaired by Dr. Michelle Batthish (pediatric) and Dr. Stephanie Garner (adult). The group meets approximately 2-3x/year.

ACPAC/AHPA representation - Michelle Bridge & Julie Herrington

Major Project: CRA Transition Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPG)

- Delphi Process took all of 2024, complete in December
- CPG presented at the AHPA pre-course Feb. 7th & CRA Feb. 27th
- Pending approval from CRA and plans to publish in Journal of Rheumatology in 2025

Ontario Rheumatology Association: Osk Jenkins

The ORA-AHPA (Arthritis Health Professions Association) committee seeks to develop and maintain strong collaborative relationships between rheumatologists and Arthritis Health Professionals (AHPs) who work in arthritis care in Ontario. With a focus on inter-professional education, advocacy and patient care opportunities, the committee has continued to work towards the goal of optimizing positive patient outcomes. Within the AHPA, the Advanced Clinician Practitioner in Arthritis Care (ACPAC) Special Interest Group has an especially strong relationship with ORA, working together with rheumatologists in advocacy initiatives recognizing advanced practice roles and enhanced scope of practice targeting the Ontario Government, Ontario Physiotherapy Association, and Members of Parliament.

CRA Human Resources Committee: Jennifer Burt

The CRA Human Resources (HR) Committee ensures that the CRA workforce issues are identified nationally, provincially, and regionally and that appropriate strategies are developed to respond to shortages in manpower due to anticipated growth in demand

This Committee met virtually once in 2024. Dana Jerome continues as Committee Chair.

Priorities for 2024 included the following:

- 1) Identify opportunities for and gaps in Outreach Rheumatology care across the country
- 2) Promote outreach participation by Rheumatology trainees
- 3) Collaborate on Wellness initiatives to manage burnout amongst CRA members

The committee proposed an Outreach Care Award to the CRA board. This facilitated discussion on the terminology of Interdisciplinary Health Professional (IHP) being used instead of Allied Health Professional in the award criteria.

Financial Overview

AHPA expenditures in each of the 3 strategic priorities:
Knowledge Translation, Engagement, and Sustainability.
Our overall expenditures totaled \$83,927.

ENGAGEMENT

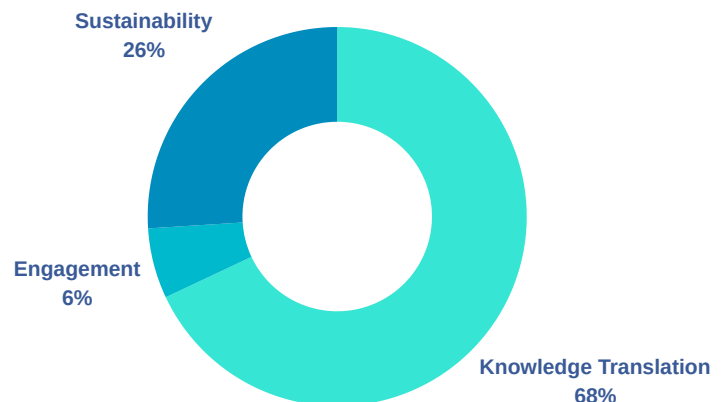
Expenses in this category include costs associated with collaboration with our external partners and marketing our organization.

SUSTAINABILITY

This includes costs associated with running an organization such as bookkeeping and accounting fees, insurance, bank fees, and website maintenance.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

Expenses in this category cover our annual Pre-Course, AHPA OnlineED offerings, and all educational and research initiatives, including grants and awards.



BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
100%
VOLUNTEER RUN

Sponsor Support

Thank you to our sponsors who supported our Annual Pre-Course and other educational activities in 2024:



SANDOZ

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Inspired by **patients**.
Driven by **science**.

*Inspirés par les **patients**. Guidés par la **science**.*

