



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF GENERAL SURGEONS L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES CHIRURGIENS GÉNÉRAUX

President

Dr. David Urbach
University Health Network
200 Elizabeth St.
Room 10N-2E4
Toronto, ON M5G 2C4

President-Elect

Dr. Paola Fata
Montreal General Hospital
1650 Cedar Ave. L9-424
Montreal, QC H3G 1A4

President-Elect Secundus

Dr. Mark Walsh
HPB-Transplant Surgery
QEII Health Sciences Center
6-202 Victoria Building
1276 South Park Street
Halifax, NS, B3H 2Y9

Past President

Dr. Morad Hameed
Vancouver General Hospital
855 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Z 1M9

Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Sean Cleary
University Health Network
200 Elizabeth St.
Room 10E216
Toronto, ON M5G 2C4

Executive Director

Jasmin Lidington
233 Argyle Ave.
Suite 300
Ottawa, ON K2P 1B8
Tel.: 613-882-6510

Dear Fellow General Surgeon,

It is an incredible privilege for me to serve as the President of CAGS for 2017/18.

More than any other organization I am involved with, CAGS represents who I am and what I believe. While the challenges facing Canadian general surgery loom large, we should remind ourselves how lucky we are as Canadian General Surgeons to perform the work that we do, touching the lives of hundreds and thousands of people in very profound ways.

We have exciting, interesting jobs; we are entrusted by society to fulfill a vital role in keeping Canadians healthy. We save the lives of those injured by trauma in the course of our daily routine. We—more than any other type of doctor, oncologist or otherwise—are best able to cure common cancers. We perform operations that extend life and improve life. General Surgeons are vital to the functioning of every single hospital in the country, and to the health system itself.

We face continuing challenges on many fronts. We must ensure that surgeons are well-trained in endoscopy and can provide endoscopy services to their patients. We must ensure that surgical services are available to people in rural and remote areas of the country. We must provide educational resources to our trainees and our members. We must support research and academic activity, and promote quality in all that we do. And more than anything, we must preserve the core of what a General Surgeon is, despite the fragmentation and sub-specialization of our specialty, while we build solidarity on our common values and strengthen our incredible network.

The Spiderman movies tell us that with great power comes great responsibility. For us as General Surgeons, this includes not only our unshakable commitment to our patients, but also a duty to the health system. This year, I would like to emphasize the importance of stewardship. We have an obligation to ensure that high quality surgical services remain available in Canada and the world. We must do what's right for our patients, and we must do it in a manner that doesn't threaten the sustainability of the health care system. In some cases, this might mean using less 'stuff'—or less expensive stuff in order to provide more services to more people. In many cases, it means thinking creatively to help solve the problems facing the health care system for Canadians.

The many years I have spent in our Association have reassured me that we are up to this task. I continue to be awed by the commitment, ingenuity, and humanism displayed by Canadian General Surgeons. I have never been as confident as I am today in our ability to solve the problems that face us, and establish General Surgery as a vital and effective part of the Canadian health care system. I invite you all to join me on this important journey.

Sincerely,

David Urbach
CAGS President