The 2016 CLHIA Conference
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The 2016 CLHIA conference was held in Edmonton, Alberta on May 11-13. This was the first conference that amalgamated the former CHCAA and CLHIA (Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association). The focus of this year’s conference theme was "Gateway to Growth and Innovation" and the focus was on both Claims and Anti-Fraud sectors.

Both the PAC and the CPC had a booth to represent the profession and the College. As in previous years, we had good conversations with attendees and met many of the contacts we already have which helps to maintain our relationships and also created some new ones. This was a great opportunity to promote our profession alongside other groups including the PFA, the Canadian Podiatric Medical Association, Canadian Federation of Podiatric Medicine and Orthotics Prosthetics Canada all speaking about who they are and what they do. Our representation at this event was important in increasing the awareness of our profession, collaborating with the other health care professional associations and continuing to be a leading voice in foot orthoses and footwear.

Brian Scharfstein, C. Ped (C), Past President of PAC, gave a detailed presentation on What You Need to Know About Orthotics which was very well attended and generated a variety of interesting questions from the audience. He helped solidify the skillset of Pedorthists and exemplified that we are the leaders in the field and the importance of having trained lower limb professionals as providers. Based on the questions posed, it's evident that there are still many in the industry that really need to be educated on the basics (i.e. The different categories of footwear from OTC to orthopaedic to custom made) and they are still having a hard time understanding what we do and how to deal with the issues with the claims for orthotics.

We also attended a session by Karen Voin, the Director of Claims an Anti-Fraud for CHLIA, who provided an update on industry anti-fraud initiatives. She broke the audience into smaller working groups to discuss how to reduce fraud in the future which generated some great discussion from both insurers and exhibitors.

Some of the suggestions included:

- Inviting CHLIA speakers to come to more association conferences to speak and educate providers on what is right and wrong
- More education is needed on what fraud is and how it affects people (i.e. losing their benefits), and that needs to be put out to providers, plan members, employers/unions and the public
- Awareness campaign is needed on all fronts to explain why fraud is a problem and how it affects them in a way that resonates with people. Promoting that message to employers, unions, members, providers and the general public

Although we have excellent educational material, both in print and on our website, there is still a need to further educate people working in the claims departments at most insurers. We will continue to advise insurers to utilize our website and the Clinical Practice Guidelines as reference tools when adjudicating claims. Having the great relationship that we do with CLHIA will certainly help promote our messages going forward and they are very happy to hear of our request to collaborate further with other foot care professionals on suggestions to improve processes going forward.

Participation in this annual conference is imperative to reaching PAC's goal of being the most recognized foot care profession by 2020. The IGR committee continues to work diligently to ensure that Canadian Certified Pedorthists are well represented among insurers across the country.