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January 1st, 2021

Please find enclosed your 2021 membership application.

HMEPA MISSION: To benefit our clients and health care providers by developing a spirit of cooperation and increased professionalism among Home Medical Equipment providers in British Columbia”

Activities undertaken in recent years are clearly important to both HME providers, product manufacturers and distributors. As budgets become tighter, rules become more stringent, and competition increases, it is increasingly important to work together.

With our increased involvement in medical equipment provision contract issues, public policy relating to member interests, and especially covid 19 impacts on our industry during this past year, HMEPA is able to help members speak to government, funders and the public with one voice.

Finally, the annual HMEPA members list and 'Dealer Locator' is updated regularly on the HMEPA website. Alerts about a variety of issues are circulated to our members and roughly 1500 prescribers across the province. These activities help prescribers direct clients to HMEPA members when their clients need equipment.

Here is a summary of projects we've been working on during this past year;

- **As the Covid 19 crisis unfolded**, several HMEPA board members participated in negotiations between the two Ministry stakeholders in the MSA and with CAOT-BC to help put together a modified operating procedure that has allowed both prescribers and home medical equipment providers continue providing equipment. These updated procedures were circulated to all HMEPA members and are now in-use. The procedure has also been posted to the HMEPA website.

Around the 20th of March dealers began asking if they were to be considered an Essential Service. HMEPA made inquiries and was able to provide documents confirming HME dealers are considered essential service providers. This letter from the Ministry of Health has been posted to the HMEPA website.

CAOT-BC (Prescribing OT's) requested our help in sourcing PPE equipment for OT's when working with clients. We put a call out to our Manufacturer/Distributor members who quickly responded, allowing several of our Dealer members to bring in this inventory for use by OT's as well as many others looking for these products.

BC Care Providers requested our help in mid-March as long-term care homes were desperately sourcing urgently needed equipment that was in short supply. We put a call out to both our Dealer members and Manufacturer/Distributor members who responded quickly.

BC Care Providers announced new funding specifically to help their members deal with changing needs going forward. This call for medical equipment includes a wide assortment of products that can be provided by our members. HMEPA has circulated the list and an important meeting notice where BC Care Providers will run a tutorial focused on how to participate in this new initiative.

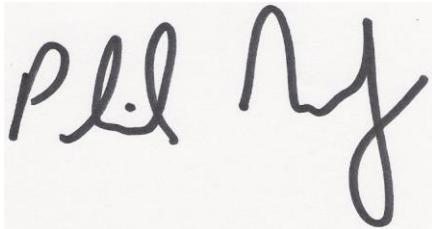
- **WorkSafeBC MSA Contract Issues** - Currently investigating issues with WorkSafeBC in an effort to resolve contract problems around late payment, changes to payments following preapproval and issues concerning equipment rental/purchase.
- **ICBC** – Investigating complaints relating to ICBC not respecting the principle of client-choice and sharing of confidential quotation information when providing home medical equipment.
- **NRRTS** - Supporting the Canadian Assistive Devices Association (CADA) in work with the National Registry of Rehab Technology Suppliers (NRRTS) to establish a basic level of competence for Rehab Reps. Michelle Harvey (HME

Mobility) will be the BC representative working together with other reps from across Canada to get this project up and running.

- **MEPP Bidding Concerns** – After unsuccessfully trying to get the Provincial Health Services Authority to recognize their contract bidding process was flawed, we registered a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsperson. At this point we are not expecting any changes to the current contract but are focused on ensuring future bidding processes will not be a repeat of what happened in the 2019 bid process.
- **Webinars** – HMEPA has had a very busy 2020 with 9 webinars presented. These webinars, co-sponsored by HMEPA, CAOT-BC and the BC Care Providers Association continue to attract large audiences (as many as 250 attendees for one session). Webinars have been generated by HMEPA provider members and HMEPA manufacturers/distributors.
- **Funding Levels for Home Medical Equipment** – As a result of the White Paper developed by HMEPA in collaboration with other groups involved in providing home medical equipment there have been several important changes made to the funding of devices under the current MSA. For example, power-tilt funding and replacement batteries for power chairs have seen significant improvements in the level of funding provided under the MSA.
- **Covid 19** - As part of efforts to support members during the Covid 19 epidemic, HMEPA has developed a document providing advice regarding product refunds and exchanges at this time. This document can be found on the members section of the website.
- **Salary Survey** – A survey document was developed and circulated among dealer members. Participants were provided with a summary document that assists these companies in understanding a variety of compensation variables including wages, commission/bonus compensation, vehicle and phone costs, vacation and sick day allowances and information about the impact of Covid-19 on our businesses.
- **2020 AGM** - We held our AGM at the International Seating Symposium on March 5th. This meeting included presentations by several funders and by the CAOT-BC. These presentations and the face-to-face discussions help our members understand funder priorities and processes. The presentations also provide funders and CAOT with an important venue where they can get a better understanding of HMEPA member concerns.
- **Bylaws** - We updated our corporate bylaws, making them easier to understand. You can find our Bylaws on our website. We've increased the number of Manufacturer/Distributor board members from 2 seats to 4 seats.

To learn more, visit www.HMEPA.ca where you will find background information about recent activities and member priorities.

I look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light background. The signature appears to be 'Phil Mundy' written in a cursive, flowing style.

Phil Mundy, Executive Director

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