

# The 2011 Canada Winter Games

*New frontiers for DCs in sports*



*Aerial view of the Canada Games Oval and the Citadel, Halifax, 2011.*

The month of February saw 3,000 of the best young athletes in Canada descend upon Halifax for the 2011 Canada Winter Games (CWG). This event represents a number of firsts:

- the first time the Canada Winter Games were held in Nova Scotia;
- the first time a multi-sport event of this size has been held in Nova Scotia;
- the first time a chiropractor has served in the lead position for Host Medical Services at the Canada Games.

Dr. Brian Seaman is a Chiropractic Sports Specialist practising in Halifax Nova Scotia and has been an official service provider for the Canadian Sports Centre Atlantic since its inception in 1999. Dr. Seaman is a longstanding member of the Board of Directors of the Royal College of Chiropractic Sports Sciences(Canada), and has volunteered at numerous national and international sporting events, including four Winter Olympics and a Pan American Games.

Brian Seaman, DC, FRCSS(C), FICC



## **CHAIR OF MEDICAL SERVICES**

In August 2008, I had the honour of being named the Chair of Medical Services (CMS) for the 2011 Canada Winter Games. The role included the selection of a chief medical officer (CMO), assistant chief medical officers (ACMOs), chief therapist (CT), assistant chief therapist (ACT) and manager of the poly clinic (MPC).

In addition, CMS responsibilities involved overseeing a variety of aspects in preparation for the Games, and included:

- meetings of the medical committee, Athletes Services Division and Venue Teams, Medical Venue Team (MVT) reps, and between staff from the host society and Canada Games Council;
- assessment of athlete medical areas and field-of-play positions at each of the 13 sport venues;
- meetings with external agencies such as Capital District Health Authority, IWK Children's Hospital, EHS (ambulance/paramedics), Nova Scotia Public Health and Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness;
- development of an Emergency Response Plan for Medical Services;
- preparation and review of documentation to provide a legacy of information for the 2013 Canada Summer Games (Sherbrooke, Quebec) and the 2015 Canada Winter Games (Prince George, British Columbia).

Preparation also included overseeing the setup of a poly clinic (this was set up at the World Trade and Convention Centre in Halifax) and a satellite clinic (this was set up

in Tatamagouche/Truro) as well as providing coverage for over 20 sports at 13 sport venues.

While every event of this magnitude is unique, I was very fortunate to have been able to draw from the experiences of having participated as a sports chiropractor in four Winter Olympics and a Pan American Games.

None the less, it was a significant time commitment over a two and a half year time frame with over 2200 hours volunteered and 275 meetings. Was it worth it? Absolutely! The Medical Committee and volunteers were an outstanding group of individuals.

### **CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

First and foremost, it is important to know what the athletes competing at this level need in order to maximize performance. Not only are the services at the poly clinics planned with this in mind, but also the sport venue medical teams.

During the Games, the Medical Committee (Med Comm) dealt with the infamous “bedbug issue” at the Tim Hortons Camp in Tatamagouche. This created a situation in which the Satellite Medical Team, under the direction and leadership of Dr. Linda Ferguson (ACMO) and Shannon Estabrooks (ACT), had to “rally the troops” and relocate 100 kilometres away in Truro, Nova Scotia, within just 24 hours.

## ***It is important to know what the athletes competing at this level need in order to maximize performance.***

Dr. Janice Drover (a Fellow of the RCCSS) stepped in and volunteered her time, serving as chiropractor at the satellite clinic for the duration of the Games.

There was also an unfortunate scenario of a para-athlete being admitted to ICU for a non-sport-related condition. Dealing directly with this was Dr. Sonya McVeigh (CMO), a physiatrist, and a specialist in spinal cord injuries and concussions.

Throughout the Games, Dr. McVeigh, Dr. Tina Atkinson (ACMO) and Dr. Ferguson dealt with the issue of concussions and return-to-play protocols (using the Zurich 2008 Consensus guidelines). An attempt was made to be proactive by

advising the high-risk teams of the diagnosis of, and the protocol of “return-to-play” after, concussions.

The Therapy Group included chiropractors as well as physiotherapists, athletic therapists and massage therapists. Interestingly, massage therapy is not required by the Canada Games Council in the poly clinic or satellite clinic. However, the Med Comm decided that this was needed, and a valuable asset of the Therapy Group. The Therapy Group worked very well under the guidance of Chad Newhook (CT), Shannon Estabrooks (ACT) and Karen Decker (MPC), sometimes working within multiple situations of interdisciplinary care without any difficulties whatsoever.

### **THE CHIROPRACTIC ROLE**

For the 2011 CWG, chiropractic services were included within the poly clinic in the main athletes’ village as well as in the satellite clinic within the satellite village, but unfortunately, there were no sponsored chiropractors for the Games. “Sponsored” personnel for the 2011 CWG included physicians, athletic therapists and physiotherapists. With sponsored individuals, flights are covered by Canada Games Council while Host Medical Services provides accommodations and a per diem allowance for food.

Despite not having any sponsored chiropractors, the scheduling of the

chiropractors was helped dramatically by Dr. Matt Cochran (Fredericton) who volunteered over the entire two weeks of the Games to help out at the poly clinic. Local chiropractors who applied were selected for poly clinic shifts based on experience in sports injuries and event coverage. These individuals included four residents of the RCCSS(C) Sports Sciences Residency Program (SSRP): Dr. Matt Cochran, Dr. Ben Murray, Dr. Charles Dauphinee and Dr. Warren Hefford.

Dr. Dauphinee took on an additional role behind the scenes related to the scheduling of the medical venue teams. This was a significant contribution to the Games.

The lead chiropractor for the event was Dr. Lisa Richard. Other chiropractors volunteering included Dr. Mary-Irene Parker, Dr. Mike Majaess, Dr. Mike Cochrane and Dr. Monique Aucoin.

The feedback I received was exceptional, especially with respect to Dr. Janice Drover, who volunteered for the entire Games at the satellite clinic, and four residents of the RCCSS(C) Sports Sciences Residency Program namely, Drs. Matt Cochran, Charles Dauphinee, Ben Murray and Warren Hefford.

### **SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Overall, the Games were a tremendous success. At the last *Chef de Mission* meeting, Mike Bell, the vice-chair of the Executive Committee of the Host Society indicated that there were absolutely “no complaints” about medical services. This, he indicated, was “unheard of” with the Games (having been a Chef himself in 1999 and 2001). His quote was that Medical Services had “hit a home run.”

Mr. Bell’s comments were echoed by Chris Morrissey, CEO of the 2011 Canada Winter Games Host Society and Bill Moore, Chair of Athlete Services. At the final operational meeting after the Games, both commented specifically on the quality of Medical Services.

Overall, it was a memorable experience, one that provided great opportunities for networking, collaboration and co-operation within the health-care fields in Nova Scotia.

The 2011 Canada Winter Games provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the health-care professions in Nova Scotia as well as to demonstrate the level of care a multidisciplinary clinic can provide to athletes.

My role as Chair of Medical Services also allowed me to point out that the Fellows and SSRP residents are well trained, as, among other roles, Medical First Responders (MFRs) or Sport First Responders (SFRs). Hopefully opportunities will be presented for chiropractors with the appropriate training to be assigned to the sport venue medical teams at the Canada Games in the future. This would provide an excellent opportunity to work together, at the sport venues, with other members of the health-care team such as physicians, physiotherapists and athletic therapists. •