



# Ontario Association of Pathologists

Dr. Nadia Alam  
President  
Ontario Medical Association  
150 Bloor Street West, Suite 900  
Toronto, Ontario

July 25, 2018

Dear Dr. Alam:

**Sent Via Email**

The Ontario Association of Pathologists would like to express its deep disappointment and grave concerns regarding laboratory medicine's revised CANDI score and ranking.

The lab physicians of Ontario see this as a direct attack on our profession by our own advocacy organization which claims to be more 'transparent' and 'inclusive'.


Salaried / contract lab physicians, who make up over 95% of the profession in Ontario, do not receive remuneration for any of the after-hours work that they do. Nonetheless, they do it because they care fiercely about patients who they know are waiting anxiously to see their lab results. Do they have cancer? Was the surgeon able to remove it all? Will they need chemotherapy? As pathologists, we are the real 'diagnostic' specialty.

The OMA continues to assess us in the context of OHIP fee-for-service billings which are received by only a handful of lab MDs in our province. The vast majority of us work on salary or contract with a flat fee structure. The Laboratory Medicine Financial Funding Agreement, or LMFFA, is a supplement to the hospital monies. It was created as a means to recruit and retain lab physicians in this province who were grossly underpaid vis-à-vis their provincial counterparts. This situation has not improved.

Concomitantly, estimates of increased workload between the period 2012 – 2017 are approximately 30% higher. This is compounded by the fact that there have been NO new LMFFA-funded positions since 2012 so higher volumes and complexity of work are being analyzed by a workforce whose numbers have remained essentially stagnant over the past 6 years.

That notwithstanding, we see our specialty has erroneously been shifted from being chronically undervalued to now overvalued. Our OMA Section Executive attributes this change in relativity score to a flawed survey that OMA was warned about prior to its issue. Therein, the questions related to after-hours were not applicable to lab physicians and their flat fee structure. What is applicable to lab physicians is the provincial workload measurement system they have developed. Requested by the Ministry, it has yet to be formally adopted as the Ministry does not want to act on the manpower and remuneration implications that emanate from use of this workload measurement tool. Consequently, our specialty has a significant and burgeoning human resource deficit!

The OMA needs to understand that this change in relativity is actually a true pay cut. We have already been subjected to this through the prior government's unilateral actions, with the net result being that Ontario lab physicians are the third lowest-paid in Canada working at 2008 income levels. With this shift in relativity valuation of lab medicine, residents are already talking of leaving the



province. Moreover, it is getting harder to recruit replacement staff who favour the west coast where income levels are higher. This is a tremendous loss of provincial knowledge and expertise for Ontario. If this situation is allowed to continue, it would be a fatal blow to this specialty and a direct hit to patient care.

We request the OMA Board reconsider its decision with respect to lab medicine's after-hours modifier and reinstate our previous CANDI score and ranking.

We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Dr. E. Celia Marginean, FRCPC, FCAP  
President, Ontario Association of Pathologists

Cc: Dr. Tim Nicholas, Chair, OMA Board  
OAP Board  
OMA Section on Laboratory Medicine  
Ms. Franca Venosa, OMA Legal and Governance

### Ontario Association of Pathologists

**President**  
Celia Marginean MD  
Ottawa  
Tel 613.737-8899, ext 79081  
Fax 613.737-8461  
president@ontariopathologists.org

**Vice-President**  
Anna Plotkin MD  
Mississauga  
Tel 905.813-1100, ext 6126  
Fax 905.813-4132  
anna.plotkin@thp.ca

**Secretary-Treasurer**  
Satish Chawla MD  
Niagara Falls  
Tel 905.378-4647, ext 53357  
Fax 905.358-4909  
treasurer@ontariopathologists.org

**Past-President**  
Russell Price MD  
Barrie  
Tel 705.728-9090, ext 43200  
Fax 705.739-5685  
pricer@rvh.on.ca