

My Christmas Wish List



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Two billion dollars for *Infoway*, to enable their continued leadership, in collaboration with the provinces and territories, towards a pan-Canadian system of electronic health records. Senator Kirby and his Committee have asked that this be accepted as a priority for the elves in the federal government.

Lots of coffee and sugar-plums to power the team led by Drs. Baker and Norton, as they analyze thousands of hospital charts to provide the best picture to date of the extent of preventable adverse events in the acute care sector across Canada.

Less talk, more action, on three specific fronts - primary care reform, evidence-based decision-making, and a national process of independent, objective, factual evaluation of what works well, and not so well, in our health system.

A few days off for the *e-Health 2003* Program Committee who are feverishly reviewing a wealth of proposed presentations. The outcome will be a stellar menu of learning for us to enjoy next May in Toronto at the *e-Health 2003* conference, co-sponsored by CIHI and COACH.

An extra serving of plum pudding for the COACH Education Committee and National Office staff for their excellent work in successfully creating and launching the COACH Professional Development series this year, literally from coast-to-coast. I encourage everyone to attend one or more of the timely, informative sessions scheduled through 2003 in a city near you.

A candy cane to everyone who has successfully completed a pioneering project funded by the Canada Health Infrastructure Partnerships Program (CHIP). Here's hoping your innovation can be productively replicated across the country.

To help ensure we properly safeguard the rights of all individuals, I hope that Santa puts a copy of the *COACH Guidelines for the Protection of Health Information* in everyone's stocking.

That we steadfastly resist pressures to reduce health to just another marketplace commodity. Call me a citizen of Canada, call me a resident of my province, just don't call me a consumer of healthcare.

That software from Mr. Gates stop automatically changing EHR to HER.

A supply of inexpensive bandwidth to eventually bring to your desktop the broadband interactive e-learning environment under development by the Pan-Canadian Health Informatics Collaboratory.

A whole scuttle of coal to those who drive up pulmonary illness, and our health care costs, by lax enforcement of environmental commitments, for example, the bilateral agreement to reduce coal-fired smog over southern Ontario and northeastern U.S.

A glass of eggnog to toast the authors of each of the comprehensive, articulate submissions to the Romanow Commission that have influenced their report's bold and persuasive recommendations. As Margaret Mead wisely counseled - "*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*"

Overflowing hampers of food for the million Canadians whose dominant feeling on Christmas morning would otherwise be hunger pain. My real wish is that we collectively resolve to eliminate the avoidable and disgraceful scourge of poverty in our country. And in the process dramatically reduce the costly strain on our cherished healthcare delivery system.

Above all, I wish for all readers to enjoy a season filled with joyous moments, spiritual renewal, and an internal peace to sustain you in the busy year ahead.



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