



- BRENDAN SEATON -

## Strategic Alliances and the Globalization of Health Informatics

President COACH, Canada's Health Informatics Association

Recent tragic events in the United States have brought home two important facts. The first is that we live in a global society. An attack on one part of the globe is an attack on the entire planet. We share a global commons and cannot hide behind our borders. The second is that we live in a world of intricate global dependencies. Canadian life is impacted by world events, and we exert our own subtle influence on the rest of the world.

Canada, and indeed any Canadian organization, can no longer act in isolation. While we must think globally and act locally, the opposite is also true. We must think locally and act globally. In order to preserve our values in a global melting pot, we must actively contribute to international developments.

In recent months COACH has been reaching out and engaging the international world of health informatics. We have always held a leadership position through our role as Canada's representative organization to the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA). Over the past few years several COACH Board members have served as members of the IMIA executive. COACH founding President, Steven Huesing, is the current Executive Director of IMIA. During IMIA's recent meeting in London England, Canada and the United States held exploratory discussions about establishing a North American region for IMIA.

COACH members are active participants in the development of international health informatics standards, particularly ISO Technical Committee 215 (Health Informatics). At the London meeting, held in conjunction with IMIA, COACH Secretary-Treasurer Don Newsham was appointed convener of ISO TC 215's Working Group 1. Past President Pat Jeselon has been working with the ISO TC 215 executive to develop a business plan for the Technical Committee. Many COACH members, including myself have been participating as working group experts. On a formal basis, COACH is represented on the Canadian Advisory Committee to TC 215 providing input into work items. Our own COACH Guidelines for the Protection of Health Information have been identified as a key reference for the development of an international standard for health information privacy.

During August, a delegation from the COACH Board met with the Board of HIMSS (Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society) to discuss opportunities for collaboration. Many COACH members will remember the Canadian reception at this year's HIMSS conference in New Orleans. It is important for COACH to connect with other national bodies, especially those that can add value for our members.

The COACH Board is looking for opportunities for our members to participate in international activities. Participation at the international level provides many benefits to the COACH members including professional development, establishment of an international network of colleagues, and an opportunity to contribute to the state of the art in health informatics. Relating to my own personal experience, much of my work in Canada is heavily influenced by my international colleagues who are most generous with their knowledge and experience. In reciprocity, the same colleagues regularly contact me as they seek to learn from the Canadian experience.

If you want to participate in the international arena, or any of COACH's activities, contact the COACH office to connect you with people in your area of interest.

On behalf of the COACH Board and membership, I want to express our condolences to the family and friends of those who lost their lives in New York and Washington. The experience brought home the smallness of our world, and the need to live and act as a global community.



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### PRESIDENT

**Brendan Seaton**  
CareLink Incorporated  
Fredericton, NB  
Tel: 416.450.4922  
E-mail: brendans@carelink.ca

#### VICE PRESIDENT

**Gil Sampson**  
Feronia Group  
Gold River, BC  
Tel: 250.283.9190  
E-mail: gsampson@island.net

#### SECRETARY TREASURER

**Don Newsham**  
Sierra Systems Consulting  
Edmonton, AB  
Tel: 780.424.0852  
E-mail:  
donnewsham@sierrasystems.com

#### PAST PRESIDENT

**Patricia Jeselon**  
Pat Jeselon & Associates  
Consulting, Inc.  
Toronto, ON  
Tel: 416.486.6442  
E-mail: patjeselon@home.com

#### DIRECTORS

**Shelagh Maloney**  
ThiINC Health Inc.  
Toronto, ON  
Tel: 416.862.5552 x 233  
E-mail: smaloney@thiinc.com

#### Dr. Matthew Morgan

Per-Se Technologies  
Toronto, ON  
Tel: 416.413.0398  
E-mail:  
matthew.morgan@per-se.com

**Michael Nusbaum**  
M.H. Nusbaum & Associates Ltd.  
Victoria, BC  
Tel: 250.384.0001  
E-mail: mnusbaum@home.com

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Andrew Parr**  
Tel: 416.979.5551 x 248  
E-mail: Andrew@coachorg.com

#### COACH National Office

2 Carlton Street, Suite 1304  
Toronto, ON M5B 1J3  
Tel: 416.979.5551  
Toll Free: 1.888.253.8554  
Fax: 416.979.1144  
E-mail: info@coachorg.com  
Web Site: www.coachorg.com