



Jason Shaw, B.Comm, RCM
Property Manager
Arnsby Property Management

What Does or Can RCM Mean?

Recently I was asked, “As a new Registered Condominium Manager, what does being an RCM mean to you?” Almost automatically, I wanted to respond with something akin to what can be found on the ACMO website under “What is an RCM Designation.” While the definition is certainly true, it doesn’t offer much personal insight or relate to my own experience in becoming an RCM. Looking back to when I first considered this industry and designation, my initial interest in obtaining the RCM was as an investment in myself and my career. From that perspective, I think the answer has two parts; what does being an RCM mean to me now? And what will it mean in the future?

I started in condominium management approximately 4 years ago in the

middle of some major changes and uncertainty. The industry had been operating for many years as a sort of “Wild West” of managers. Most managers were skilled and qualified gained through years of experience in this industry (or a related industry) but found themselves competing against any person who was able to secure a property management contract. With updates to the *Condominium Act, 1998*, regulatory changes were set in motion to impose standardized educational requirements in order to work in the field.

Is Regulation a Bad Thing?

The new regulations caused some grumbling throughout the industry, but I wondered whether heightened regu-

lation is, in fact, a bad thing? From the perspective of a condominium manager, knowing that your competition and colleagues must follow the same regulations and have the same credentials levelled the playing field and discouraged unqualified persons from entering the industry. From the perspective of a condominium owner, increased regulation appeared necessary to protect them and ensure that their stake in a multi-million-dollar building/community was professionally managed.

While adapting to the new regulations wasn’t easy at first, I believe it has benefitted the career-minded condominium manager. The awareness and publicity resulting from these changes mean the RCM designa-



nation is being recognized by our clients as necessary, more often than not, when hiring a manager for their community. I think all condominium managers would agree that this is a complex industry, and to be effective, you must have a working knowledge of many different areas including finance, general management, law, and building sciences. What the RCM designation means to me now is that I belong to a group of professionals who have agreed that rigorous training through education and industry experience is necessary to continue to exceed the expectations of a newly regulated industry, and provide excellent service to our clients.

RCM Designation Recognition

While awareness of the RCM designation and what it means is higher than ever within our industry, I think there is still room for growth especially outside our industry with the broader general public.

Recently I was hanging my newly acquired certificate in my office, and I thought, how did I end up on this path?

When I graduated from university, working towards my RCM designation wasn't my plan; in fact, I didn't know that such a career or designation existed. At the time, my classmates and I were aware of other high-profile professional designations, and I considered continuing on to become a chartered accountant (CA) Why doesn't the RCM have the same profile?

In speaking with other condominium managers about how they got into condominium management, a familiar response is, "I sort of fell into it." I get the impression that at some point, we recognized our skillsets fit well in an industry we hadn't previously considered. If there is a condominium manager out there who trained specifically for this role right out of school, I haven't met them. I think with some effort, the current generation of RCMs could help change that path for future condominium managers.

The Next Wave

The next step is pushing that awareness with post-secondary students, so we catch the next wave of condominium

managers early. At the very least, we'll create awareness with the next wave of owners. As a student, I had a difficult time deciding what career path to follow and worked in one for a few years before realizing it wasn't right for me. We need to make students aware of the endless growth potential of condominium management, which is suited to those who work well across a range of responsibilities without being entirely focused on one.

Our goal, and collective responsibility, must be to raise awareness to the point where the role of condominium manager is synonymous with the RCM, in just as accountants, lawyers, or engineers are associated with their designations. ■

Jason Shaw, RCM, holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Guelph. Jason is currently a Property Manager with Arnsby Property Management, and manages a portfolio of Condominiums and Social Housing Communities within London, Ontario and surrounding area.
arnsby.com

YOUR PARTNER IN BUILDING GREAT COMMUNITIES

Royale *RG* Grande

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LTD.

SPECIALIZING IN CONDOMINIUM PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

PROUD MEMBER OF



235 Yorkland Boulevard | Suite 1001 | Toronto, ON | M2J 4Y8 | 416.945.7902
www.royalegrande.com mkalisperas@royalegrande.com