

**Dean's Report, Annual Faculty Meeting  
June 6, 2023**

After months of consultation and review, this year we proudly launched our new strategic plan, [Realizing our Ambition: Defining a New Era at Dalhousie Medicine](#).

The plan signals the Faculty of Medicine's long-term aspirations while providing a clear, actionable strategy to guide us through the next five years. It builds on our achievements, while guiding us in new, and exciting directions.

New and exciting truly is a theme of the past year. We were pleased to announce earlier this year the partnership we have formed with Cape Breton University to establish a new medical school campus in Cape Breton. The campus, the province's second and the third campus for Dalhousie Medical School, will focus on family medicine and rural health and will train up to 30 new doctors every year. We believe that this partnership has great potential to provide excellent medical education and health research in Cape Breton and to benefit the region for years to come.

I am proud to share some of the many highlights and achievements realized by our talented and dedicated faculty, students, and staff. In this report you will find highlights and updates from the Faculty of Medicine.

For more details, I refer you to the reports from our Assistant and Associate Deans on our Faculty Council [webpage](#).

**Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME)**

A big congratulations to our UGME team, led by Dr. Evelyn Sutton, as they conclude the academic year, which saw the largest cohort of students in the history of Dalhousie Medical School.

A special thanks to our clinical education leaders, Dr. Simon Field and Dr. Robert Boulay, for another successful year of clerkship training for our Med 3 and Med 4 students, who consistently demonstrate high pass rates for assessments, including MCC exams, internal exams and OSCEs.

As such, we had another successful residency match this year, and set a record for the most Dalhousie graduates matching to a Dalhousie residency position with 76.

The past year also saw the appointments of Dr. Samantha Gray and Dr. Ian Epstein as Assistant Deans, Professional Affairs. The development of the Office of Professional Affairs and the appointment of the Assistant Dean positions will provide an opportunity for a systematic approach to effect change to improve the learning environment for undergraduate and postgraduate learners while providing the tools for faculty to achieve this outcome.

Over the past year, the updates and adjustments to the curriculum continued, with all Med 2 cases being revised by the Case Diversification group, in accordance with the recommendations which arose from curriculum renewal consultations. Importantly, new sessions on anti-oppressive practice and on anti-Black racism were also introduced into the curriculum. I would also like to thank our Assistant

Deans for Preclerkship Dr. Osama Loubani and Dr. Wendy Stewart for their outstanding contributions to our Med I and Med II students.

After 37 years at the Faculty of Medicine, Ms. Sharon Forward, retired as Director of Admissions, Resident and Student Affairs, and we welcomed Mr. Tyler Hall, as the new Director. Thank you to Dr. Sue Zinck and Dr. Lisa Sutherland for all their work to support medical students.

In addition to our partnership with Cape Breton University to develop a medical campus, our partnership agreement to provide an additional five first-year positions to qualified Nova Scotia applicants, was renewed for the 2022-2023 application cycle. As such, an additional five Nova Scotian students received offers under this agreement.

### **Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME)**

This has been an exciting year for our postgraduate medical education team as we welcomed new Associate Dean, Dr. Babar Haroon. We also welcomed Dr. Alison Dixon, who started in her role of Communications Skills Lead, taking over for Dr. Lori Connors, who transitioned into being the program director for the core internal medicine training program.

In 2022, the government of Nova Scotia created a designated pathway to family medicine residency for 10 international medical graduates studying outside Canada, with priority given to those with a connection to Nova Scotia. Previously, there were six designated seats for international medical graduates interested in a Nova Scotia residency; this brings the total to 16.

Dalhousie has no spots unfilled for its residency positions. Congratulations to the PGME team for this incredibly successful match cycle.

New this year, was the development and launch of a leadership elective for residents, led by Assistant Dean for PGME, Dr. David Bowes and Ms. Jennifer Acuna, PG curriculum specialist. The elective is modeled after the medical education elective currently offered to residents and was offered to provide an opportunity for residents with leadership interest and aptitude to develop specific leadership competencies. I am pleased to report that this will now be an annual elective, and I look forward to seeing what our resident leaders will accomplish in their careers.

### **Continuing Professional Development/Division of Medical Education (CPDME)**

This was another successful year, as Dr. Stephen Miller is completing the third year of his first term, as Associate Dean alongside Managing Director, Ms. Mary Ann Robinson. The unit continues to be in an excellent position as new programs and initiatives are driven forward via this leadership team.

CPDME led the way in providing virtual programming when COVID-19 first forced us to pivot to a new way of working, and the office continued this approach in the delivery of new and important educational programs. Most significant, was the extremely successful delivery of hybrid (virtual and in-person) large conferences (Fall Family Medicine Refresher; Spring Emergency Medicine Refresher) and virtual CHP/Clinical Webinar programs. Attendance has exceeded expectations and has seen the largest audiences of the past decade.

In 2022, the Fear Family Conference on Planetary Health and the Climate Crisis was a huge success with many well recognized national speakers in June of 2022 and the new Faculty Development Teaching Certificate has been fully enrolled (30 people) and is taking in new applicants for the fall enrollment. The work continues on to bring the Royal College Clinical Educator Area of Focus to Dalhousie University in 2024.

Wellness for faculty, both in their personal lives and their work lives, continues to be top of mind as the demand and increased focus on the health care system intensifies. The CPDME team, working with Assistant Dean for Wellness, Dr. Ange Cooper has been integral in the analysis of the Faculty Wellness Survey and meetings with Departments/Divisions to review results and develop action plans to support wellness.

I would like to thank to Dr. Cooper for her efforts, as she completes her term as Assistant Dean, Wellness. Dr. Cooper has been instrumental in the foundational work of Faculty Wellness with the Faculty of Medicine, and I wish her the best moving forward.

### **Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick (DMNB)**

Dr. Jennifer Hall, Associate Dean of DMNB, and the faculty and staff of DMNB are commended for a successful year at DMNB, which included an announcement about the first significant expansion of the campus since it has opened.

In October 2022, the Government of New Brunswick announced the expansion of 10 NB medical seats at DMNB commencing the fall of 2023. Approval was also received to support the postgraduate expansion.

Over the next year DMNB will navigate major organizational changes with three senior leadership positions at DMNB coming to an end; Dr. Jennifer Hall's term as Associate Dean, DMNB, ends in December 2023, Dr. Robert Boulay, Assistant Dean Clerkship, completes their term in September 2023 and Ms. Pamela Bourque, Chief Operating Officer, retires in June 2023. The process to advertise and appoint replacements is underway. A strategy to ensure the transition process for both the incoming leaders and the outgoing leaders is integral to ensuring the successful transitions to support the continued success, growth and stakeholder engagement.

We have benefited greatly from the steady, dedicated, and thoughtful leadership these three have provided and the foundation of excellence they have built. A sincere thank you for everything they have done to make DMNB the best distributed educational experience in Canada.

I would also like to thank our partners with the University of New Brunswick and the physicians and staff with Horizon Health Network who continue to provide educational opportunities to our students.

DMNB and Horizon Health have recently collaborated to create a Simulation Advisory Committee. This committee will create, oversee, and control all simulation activity with Horizon Health facilities. This is crucial for Dalhousie Medicine learners in New Brunswick, as Horizon Health is the institution that carries most of our learners during their clinical rotations.

Research efforts and supports continue to expand under the leadership of Dr. Paul Atkinson, Assistant Dean, DMNB Research. Two research groups were added over the past year, the Digital Network

Solutions group, and the QI Scholarship group, DMNB also hosted panel discussion on Research Collaboration with research experts representing Dalhousie University, Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick, the University of New Brunswick and Horizon Health Network.

### **The BSc Medical Sciences Program**

This year marks the eighth year of the BSc Medical Sciences Program and its fifth graduating class. Importantly, for the second year in a row, graduates from the Medical Sciences Program will be graduating with their medical degrees at Dalhousie, a testament to the preparation and education they received during their time in the BSc Med Sciences program.

Since 2020, Dr. Sarah Wells, Assistant Dean of Medical Sciences, has been leading the development of Inclusive Pathways to the Medical Professions (IPMP) initiative: a cohort program for African Nova Scotian (ANS) and Indigenous students in the Medical Sciences Program. This program officially launched in 2023 due to the incredible efforts of Dr. Wells, as well as the Indigenous Cohort Advisor, Ms. Kim Lickers, and the African Nova Scotian Cohort Advisor, Ms. Vanessa Jackson.

Excitingly, the program received 12 applications for our first cohorts for fall 2022 and all were accepted. I am pleased to share that these students will receive wrap-around supports, including access to (and financial coverage of) private tutoring, access to racialized counselling, and residence priority for incoming and returning students.

### **Research**

2022/2023 was defined as a year of change for our medical research community. As such, much of the year has been devoted to strengthening existing relationships and building new collaborations in order to ensure a healthy a vibrant research community within the Faculty of Medicine. One important example of this is the milestone integration of the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation with Dalhousie University.

This partnership has seen the two entities combine efforts to create an expert team with a vision of raising even more funds for research at Dalhousie for the benefit of the broader communities served.

With this new and exciting change, several members of the DMRF team have brought their expertise in fundraising, administration, and philanthropic communications and marketing to the Faculty of Medicine under the direction of Ms. Cathrine Yuill, Executive Director, Advancement. This newly integrated team will be working to build strong relationships with both donors and researchers, helping to raise funding for important medical research that has the potential to transform lives.

The Medical Research Development Office (MRDO), under the direction of Ms. Sara Lavender, has provided support for numerous applications and several large applications including three HUB applications for Canada Biomanufacturing Research Fund (CBRF/BRIF) and a Canada Foundation for Innovation Infrastructure Fund for Biobank in DMNB.

I would also be remiss not to acknowledge the incredibly challenging situation faculty, staff, and learners have experienced in the Tupper Building. In early February, an extreme weather event caused the water pipes in the building to rupture, which resulted in flooding and significant water damage throughout the building. Repairs in the building are ongoing, and researchers and staff have been displaced and have seen their important research disrupted. I have appreciated everyone's input and ongoing patience as we have worked diligently to address this situation and thank Dr. Eileen Denovan-Wright for spearheading the restoration efforts.

The MRDO also restructured the oversight of CORES to be more inclusive and accountable with scientific input for sustainability and growth via inclusive users' groups and a Scientific Advisory Committee for CORES in Medicine.

The overall funding capture for Faculty of Medicine reported in July 2022 was over \$95M, up from \$76M from the previous year. Congratulations to Dr. Eileen Denovan-Wright, Associate Dean, Research, and the entire research community conducting incredibly important research, for this impressive grant capture.

In Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, we welcomed Dr. Kirill Rosen to his new role as Assistant Dean. Both he, and Interim Assistant Dean, Dr. Paola Marcato, worked hard over the past year to establish connections with basic science department heads, graduate coordinators, FMGSS, graduate student Peer Support Network, FGS, and AFMC to work on the promotion of the interests and perspectives of the graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

### **Serving and Engaging Society**

Under the leadership of Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed, the Serving and Engaging Society, portfolio has become a fundamental stream of work within the Faculty of Medicine.

In collaboration with Admissions, under the direction of Dr. Andrea Rideout, the Indigenous Applicants Admissions Pathway was initiated in the 2022-2023 application cycle. Applications from Indigenous persons were holistically reviewed by the Indigenous Applicants Pathway (IAP) Subcommittee for eligibility. The Admissions Committee approved the recommendations of the IAP Subcommittee for admissions offers for 10 Indigenous applicants. The Black Learners Admissions Pathway was also approved and will be initiated in the 2023-2024 application cycle.

An important appointment was made this year, with Dr. Leah Jones being named the Academic Director for Black Health.

These are meaningful steps in demonstrating our commitment as a Faculty to removing the barriers Indigenous and Black applicants have faced in the historical application to our program and we look forward to welcoming and supporting these students in the future.

The Faculty of Medicine's partnership with the MacEachen Institute for Public Policy and Governance (MIPP) continues to facilitate the faculty's strategic vision for improving health in the Maritimes and support Catalyzing Systems Change. Recent work includes three panel events held in the fall of 2022, and the development of the Fear Memorial Conference, which will be taking place in June 2023.

The White Fragility Clinics have continued under the leadership of Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed and the second visiting scholar, Dr. Eli Manning. They provide a safe and non-judgmental space for faculty and staff members from the Faculty of Medicine to explore the concept of whiteness and its role in racism and build racial resilience. The clinics have been evaluated and findings were presented at ICAMS in 2023.

## **Dean's Office**

The Dean's Office provides administrative supports and resources to enable the medical school's academic, teaching and research missions.

As mentioned above, we are incredibly excited to be partnering with Cape Breton University in the development of the Cape Breton Medical Campus. The Dean's Office, along with various Associate and Assistant Deans, will be working closely with the steering committee to ensure that the campus is prepared to accept students by 2025.

Significant progress has been made with the Medical Education Information System project. The first phase involved extensive consultations with staff, faculty, students, residents, and other institutions to conduct a thorough requirements gathering and needs analysis to develop a Request for Proposals for a potential One45 replacement for the Faculty of Medicine.

Under the direction of Mr. Chris Newell, the Faculty of Medicine has implemented reporting and analytics software, which has improved data management and reporting capabilities. By managing and accessing data, and the ability to create reports and dashboards for various users throughout the Faculty, this has already greatly assisted with operations in the Faculty.

There is also a lot of behind the scenes work in Finance, Communications, Human Resources, Advancement, Building Services, and Planning all under the steady leadership of Ms. Linda Penny, our Chief Operating Officer, Ms. Janice Godin, our Executive Director of Operations, and Ms. Pam Bourque, Chief Operative Officer for Dalhousie Medicine New Brunswick. All are essential for the smooth running of the Faculty of Medicine, and I am very appreciative of their collective efforts and the work of their teams. I would again like to wish Pam all the best as she begins her retirement in June 2023. You will be missed!

## **Departments**

Our clinical and basic science departments play a crucial role in moving forward the educational and research mission of the Faculty of Medicine. Because of the hard work of the departments, and the faculty and staff that comprise them, our learners benefit from a diverse skillset that will ultimately mold them into skilled physicians and scientists. A sincere thanks to the department heads in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick for all that you do.

I would like to specifically thank Dr. Marcelo Nicoleta, Head of the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, who is completing his second and final term as department head for his years of service to the department and the Faculty of Medicine. I wish him the best of luck as he returns to focus more time on research and his clinical practice.

In regard to recent appointments, I was pleased to announce in May 2023, that Dr. Amanda Caissie accepted the role as department head for the Department of Radiation Oncology. Dr. Caissie had been serving in the role on an interim basis, and we are thrilled she will be leading the department for the next five years.

### **Opportunity Ahead**

This is an incredibly exciting time for the Faculty of Medicine. After an extensive and informative consultation process, which was crucial in the development of our new strategic plan, the true work begins now.

As we begin the implementation of the plan's action items, which fall under four core streams: Educational Excellence, High-impact Research, Serving and Engaging Society, and Valuing People, your input and collaboration will be critical to our success. With the incredible work of our faculty, staff, and students, in collaboration with each other and our partners, we will achieve our vision of healthier communities.

In closing, I wish everyone a well-deserved break and hope everyone takes the summer to enjoy everything the Maritimes has to offer. As always, I welcome any feedback about what we can do to improve our activities within the Faculty of Medicine.

Kindest regards,

Dr. David Anderson  
Dean, Faculty of Medicine