

Department Head Blog
“The Blog that isn’t really a blog!”
March 9th, 2021

One year ago was the last week of “normalcy” before the declaration of the global pandemic and the Maritimes went into lock-down. It is hard to believe what has transpired over the past year. What has become a part of our daily routines – checking pockets to make sure we have a mask as we leave the house, checking public health notifications for potential exposure locations, checking hospital emails for the most recent policy changes. Always checking. In Emergency Medicine, we live by the old Scouting model of “Be Prepared”. The role out of the vaccine is a reminder that in addition to always checking, it is important to also look ahead - **to innovate, to create, to lead.**

When we speak of **leaders in Emergency Medicine**, for each of us, there are several names that quickly come to mind. Well recognized figures that have played national roles in advancing the speciality of Emergency Medicine. I contend, however, that is often the small “L” leaders who play the most important role. These unsung heroes quietly go about the job of providing high quality patient care without fuss or fanfare. They provide sage advice to the learners they mentor on shift. They work the least desirable of shifts and are always quick to pick up in order to lend a hand. They are the moderate voice of reason during contentious departmental debates. They are the ones we turn to after a difficult shift. They are the ones who allow our stars to shine and so rarely themselves are ever acknowledged. Last week I could not have been happier to learn that **Dr. Ismail Cajee** will receive the **Doctors Nova Scotia Senior Membership Award** in recognition of his accomplished career! Congratulations and so well deserved!

Yesterday was **International Women’s Day**. At **DalEM**, we are proud of the accomplishments of the women in our faculty, many of whom are national leaders in their respective areas: **Dr. Mary-Lynn Watson** was the **first female president of CAEP**; **Dr. Nancy Murphy**, until recently joined by **Dr. Caitlin Wolfe**, was the **only toxicologist east of Montreal**; **Dr. Jo-Ann Talbot**, the **academic backbone of the SJRH ED**; **Dr. Shannon MacPhee**, nationally recognized for her work with **TREK**; and **Dr. Connie LeBlanc** internationally renowned for her **CPD** work. Emerging as new leaders in DalEM, we have **Site Chiefs Drs. Janet MacIntyre** and **Katrina Hurley** and of course our **Residency Program Directors Drs. Laurel Murphy, Emma Burns** and **Robin Clouston**. While this list is by no means complete, it important that we not only celebrate the achievements of these remarkable women, but also acknowledge the challenges that women in academic medicine still face and our responsibility as a Department **to oppose inequality and gender bias.**

Angela Quinn has been the **Health Services Manager for the HI ED** since July 2017. Angela has worked to solidify staffing and done forward planning for the ED with her work around roles and flow in the department. We wish her all the best as she moves into her **new role** as the **Health Service Manager for PACU/SDSU/PAC at the VG Site.**

Prior to becoming the **Department Head in Saint John**, **Dr. Paul Atkinson** was the Chief Medical Officer at WorkSafeNB. He was recently awarded the **New Brunswick Chiropractors Association Award of Merit** in acknowledgement of services rendered to the NBCA and chiropractic profession. Given Paul’s history of seeking mutually beneficial collaborative partnerships, I was not surprised to see him recognized in this fashion.

On Wednesday, March 10th, **Dr. Kirsten Weerdenburg** will appear on the **CBC Maritime Noon Show** to discuss the **Canadian Doctors for Protection from Guns** proposed changes to gun legislation, Bill C-21.

The **Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine** invites **nominations for awards** that recognize outstanding contributions to education and teaching, administrative leadership, community service, medical research and continuing medical education. **Deadline for submissions is Wednesday, March 31st, 2021.** The nomination criteria and application details are available [here](#). Please consider nominating a member of **DalEM**, no matter whether early or established career, who have made valuable contributions in any of these areas.

As always, if you have any comments, suggestions or news you would like me to share, I can be reached at emergency.medicine@dal.ca.

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