

# MEDICINE MATTERS

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HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA

NO. 27, FEBRUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER

CARDIOLOGY • CLINICAL DERMATOLOGY & CUTANEOUS SCIENCE • DIGESTIVE CARE & ENDOSCOPY • ENDOCRINOLOGY & METABOLISM • GENERAL INTERNAL MEDICINE • GERIATRIC MEDICINE • HEMATOLOGY • INFECTIOUS DISEASES • MEDICAL ONCOLOGY • NEPHROLOGY • NEUROLOGY • PALLIATIVE MEDICINE • PHYSICAL MEDICINE & REHABILITATION • RESPIROLOGY • RHEUMATOLOGY

## DEPARTMENT HEAD MESSAGE



Last month I passed the 100-day mark as the Head/Chief of the Department of Medicine. Coming into the role, I said my first priority was to listen and learn. I have done a lot of both and still have much to do. I have enjoyed meeting with many physicians, staff and faculty within our Department, Dalhousie, Nova Scotia Health Authority, Department of Health and Wellness, Doctors Nova Scotia, and more. It's reassuring to see that most often we have a shared view on how we want to improve the system for the sake of better patient care.

I have particularly enjoyed attending the Division meetings over the past months to discuss the Practice Plan. We are learning a great deal about how we can further improve the Practice Plan. We are also discussing important issues that lie outside of the Practice Plan – issues that are important to support us in providing quality patient care and achieving the highest level of professional satisfaction. For example, we - the Department - AND all our health partners, must move forward in creating a better system to measure the work we are doing. I think we all understand and appreciate the need for us to be accountable and demonstrate that we are providing value with tax payers' dollars. Yet, I hear and agree with my colleagues when they say the shadow billing system fails us in this regard. Not only is it not capturing the actual work we are doing (simply because the fee codes do not exist), but it is also not always measuring the right things. We should be measuring the quality of care, how our innovative work is improving care and access, the impact we are having on educating our next generation of learners and the advances we make in medical research, to name only a few.

While we cannot solve this problem – through our Practice Plan – we can be leaders in advocating for a change in mindset and practice in how we evaluate our work going forward. I can say in the short time

I have been in this role these discussions have already started with our various stakeholders. And, I also know while talking about this is nice, action is needed to achieve our desired outcomes.

As we have met with the Divisions we have covered difficult topics, such as perceptions that various disciplines are valued more than others, and how the growing pressure to meet patients' needs is on the edge of being unsustainable, or in some cases we have already reached that point. What I appreciated most about those discussions, is that behind every concern I heard so clearly that you are all deeply committed to doing what is best for your patients and have expressed some unique and innovative solutions.

I also heard that we do not have a clear understanding what each Division does. We have a tremendous opportunity to do better in sharing and collaborating between Divisions. Yet, as we discussed our differences, I saw a profound level of respect shown for one another. This is so important to me – and I think for the Department as a whole. We are stronger together.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter. We have much to celebrate in our Department!

Sincerely,

**Christine Short, MD, FRCPC (C), FACP**

*Head, Department of Medicine, Dalhousie University*

*District Chief, Department of Medicine, Central Zone, Nova Scotia Health Authority*

*Associate Professor of Medicine, Dalhousie University*



**Research Day 2018**

Thursday, April 19

12:00-6:00 p.m.

Pier 21, Halifax

RSVP: [kathryn.nelson@nshealth.ca](mailto:kathryn.nelson@nshealth.ca)

[Learn more about Dr. Caulfield](#)

Guest speaker: **Dr. Timothy Caulfield**, a researcher, author and public speaker, is a Canada Research Chair in Health Law and Policy, and a Professor in the Faculty of Law and the School of Public Health at the University of Alberta. He studies, writes and speaks about legal, policy and ethical issues in medical research and its commercialization. He is author and editor of several books: *"The Cure for Everything: Untangling the Twisted Messages about Health"*, *"Fitness and Happiness"*, *"Is Gwyneth Paltrow Wrong About Everything? : When Celebrity Culture and Science Clash"*, and his most recent book, *"The Vaccination Picture"*. He also hosts a television documentary series debunking pseudoscientific myths and assumptions about innovation in the health sector—from research on stem cells to diets to alternative medicine.

## RESEARCHERS TOP \$3M IN RECENT GRANT WINS

Since last Fall, the Department's researchers have brought in more than \$3 million in grant funding to support and advance their studies. Congratulations to the following grant recipients.

**Dr. Lisa Barrett**, Division of Infectious Diseases, has been awarded \$1,491,336 by Gilead Sciences, Inc. for Hepatitis C elimination research through an investigator-initiated research study. Her study team will assess the impact of structured public health and model of care interventions on health system outcomes related to HCV cure and elimination.

Principal Investigator, **Dr. John Sapp**, Division of Cardiology, was awarded a Canadian Institutes of Health Research project grant (fall 2017 competition) for his study: "*The VANISH2 Trial: Ventricular Tachycardia Antiarrhythmics or Ablation in Structural Heart Disease 2*". The award is valued at \$979,200 over six years. Fellow division member **Dr. Ratika Parkash** is one of the collaborators on this study.

Co-Investigator, **Dr. Kenneth Rockwood**, Division of Geriatric Medicine, was awarded a \$466,652 Canadian Institutes Health Research project grant for the study: "*How Does Frailty Influence the Risk and Expression of Dementia in Alzheimer Disease?*" Fellow Department members are also part of the study: **John Fisk, Sultan Darvesh and Susan Kirkland**.

**Dr. Sultan Darvesh**, Division of Neurology, recently received three research grants. As co-investigator on "*CBRAIN: Canadian Brain Research and Informatics Platform*", he was part of a \$3M award from Brain Canada (platform support grant) and will receive \$124,875 over three years. Co-investigator, Dr. Darvesh also won the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation - Research Enterprise Development Initiatives: Catalyst Award of \$10,000 for one year for "*A Collaborative Study to Understand the Role Metabolism Plays in the Development of Alzheimer's Disease*". He is also the recipient of the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation Adopt-a-Researcher award of \$17,500 for one year for "*The Relationship Between The Cholinergic System and Olfactory Dysfunction in Multiple Sclerosis*".

**Dr. Tallal Younis**, Division of Medical Oncology, was the first-time recipient of the Department of Medicine's internal Strategic Research Incentive Grant. He received \$10,000 for his study: "*Endocrine Strategies for Breast Cancer Prevention in Postmenopausal Women*". That same study was also awarded \$24,990 by the NSHA Research Fund. Dr. Younis, along with colleague Dr. Robin Urquhart, Department of Surgery, was also awarded the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute's Ivor Hamilton Award for \$37,640 over two years.

**Judith Godin**, Division of Geriatric Medicine, received a \$25,000 Category 2 NSHA Research Fund award for "*Social and Occupational Factors throughout the Life Course: What Matters for Health at Older Ages*".

**Dr. Todd Hatchette**, cross-appointment with the Division of Infectious Diseases, and Service Chief, Division of Microbiology, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, also received a NSHA Research Fund Category 2 award for "*Two ELA Algorithms*

*for the Serological Diagnosis of Lyme Disease*". The award was \$21,876.

**Dr. Arik Drucker**, Division of Medical Oncology, and Dr. Kirill Rosen, Atlantic Research Centre, have received seed funding in the amount of \$10,000 from the Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute for: "*A Feasibility Study of Extracellular Vesicle Protein Evaluation in HER2-positive Metastatic Breast Cancer*".

**Dr. Leah Cahill**, Howard Webster Department of Medicine Research Chair, and team have received a level 1 TRIC award of \$2,999 for "*Uniting Clinical, Patient and Research Efforts in an Environmental Scan of Nutrition Screening and Assessment Tools*".

## RESEARCH NIGHT CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE

On Nov. 30, 2017, 65 people gathered at the Prince George Hotel to celebrate, discuss and honour the Department of Medicine's research success.

Two researchers were honoured with the Department of Medicine's Faculty Research Excellence Award. Congratulations to **Dr. Ravi Ramjeesingh**, Division of Medical Oncology (Assistant Professor category) and **Dr. Ratika Parkash**, Division of Cardiology (Full Professor category).

Fortunate to have diverse expertise within our own Department, attendees also expanded their knowledge in important research advances happening right in their own backyard.



"*Advances in the Management of Ventricular Tachycardia*" | **Dr. Amir AbdelWahab**, Division of Cardiology



"*Epigenetics: Marking a Paradigm Shift in Diabetic Nephropathy*" | **Dr. Ferhan Siddiqi**, Division of Endocrinology & Metabolism

"*Getting Under the Skin: Advances in Early Diagnosis of Melanoma with Noninvasive Imaging*" | **Dr. Richard Langley**, Division of Clinical Dermatology & Cutaneous Science



## FOLLOW YOUR COLLEAGUES - TWITTER

Follow these Department members on Twitter to stay current on their activities. Not listed here? Let us know your Twitter handle. Contact: [sam@holmescommunications.ca](mailto:sam@holmescommunications.ca)

Leah Cahill [@leahcahill](https://twitter.com/leahcahill) | Geriatric Research Unit [@GeriatricMedRes](https://twitter.com/GeriatricMedRes)  
Jennifer Jones [@nscibd](https://twitter.com/nscibd) (Nova Scotia Collaborative IBD Program)  
Shelly McNeil [@domsam](https://twitter.com/domsam) | Arnold Mitnitski [@AMitnitski](https://twitter.com/AMitnitski)  
Kevork Peltikian [@LiverSensible](https://twitter.com/LiverSensible) | Ravi Ramjeesingh [@medoncdoc](https://twitter.com/medoncdoc)  
Ken Rockwood [@Krockdoc](https://twitter.com/Krockdoc)

## MEDICINE MATTERS CONFERENCE

### DEBATE ADDITION RECEIVES RAVE REVIEWS

Those who don't see the connection between medical education and fun, must have missed Medicine Matters 2017. The Department's annual internal continuing medical education conference proved to be a big hit.



In addition to the traditional plenaries and small group break-out sessions, this year's conference introduced a debate. Knowledgeable colleagues took the stage to defend their stance on whether the Choosing Wisely campaign was synonymous with patient-centered care. The educational, yet entertaining, debate concluded (by applause) that **Drs. Laurie Mallery** and **Nabha Shetty** narrowly won the crowd's approval with their argument that the two concepts are not synonymous. The opposing view was capably expressed by **Drs. Amanda Miller** (Vinson) and **Karthik Tennankore**. Post-conference evaluation called for the debate again next year, with one change - up the stakes and throw in a Debate Championship trophy.



The plenary by **Dr. Leah Cahill**: "Nutritional Therapies in Medicine: Fact or Fad?", was another conference highlight. Touching on a topic that was relevant to the diverse audience, Dr. Cahill's talk was both educational and interactive.

**Dr. Trudy Taylor** is the conference planning committee's chair and sees huge value in hosting conferences like these.

"This is a great opportunity to offer continuing professional development on important internal medicine topics, while showcasing the exceptional talent and expertise we have right here in our Department, said Dr. Taylor. "It also presents an opportunity for us to interact with colleagues who we don't get a chance to meet when focused on our clinical responsibilities."

The conference took place in November 2017 with 75 participants.

The conference was organized by the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Committee. The Committee was restructured this year, combining three pre-existing committees: Grand Rounds, Medicine Matters and Teach the Teachers into one Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Committee. This Committee is now responsible for organizing and overseeing all Department CPD efforts.



Teach the Teachers January 2018

## INTERNAL MEDICINE CHIEF RESIDENTS

Effective Jan. 1, we welcomed the following residents as our new Chief Residents.

**Dr. Shannon Murphy**, PGY2, Co-Chief medicine resident (Halifax site)  
**Dr. Douglas Motomura**, PGY2, Co-Chief medicine resident (Halifax site)  
**Dr. Andrea Letourneau**, PGY2, Chief resident (Saint John site)  
**Dr. Eric Pond**, PGY2, MTU chief resident (Halifax)

## PHOTOGRAPHER DR. STEPHEN PHILLIPS BRIGHTENS MOOD ON 7.4

Tired of the institutional environment, the neuro team on 7.4 at the Halifax Infirmary decided to enhance the feel of the ward by mounting large canvas photographic prints on the walls around the unit. Fortunately, they didn't have to look far to find that perfect art work. Neurovascular neurologists, **Dr. Stephen Phillips**, is not only a skilled physician, but also a talented photographer. His photography, now mounted throughout the ward has brightened the space and garnered positive feedback from patients, families, and staff.



What other talents do our Department members have? Tell us!  
Email: [sam@holmescommunications.ca](mailto:sam@holmescommunications.ca)

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

Congratulations to the following Department members who have been honoured and acknowledged for the contributions they are making to advance medicine.

**Dr. Jennifer Jones**, Division of Digestive Care and Endoscopy, was awarded the 2017 Crohn's & Colitis Canada Outstanding Physician Award in November.

**Dr. Charles Maxner**, Division of Neurology, was made Honorary President of the Dalhousie Medical Alumni Association.

**Susan Rahey**, Neurophysiology Program Coordinator with the Division of Neurology, was the recipient of the 2017 Canadian League Against Epilepsy Clinical Practice/Advocacy Award. Susan is the only non-physician recipient of this award.

**Dr. Geoff Williams**, Division of Digestive Care and Endoscopy and Assistant Dean of Postgraduate Medical Education received a certificate of merit from the Canadian Association of Medical Education.

## NEW LEADERSHIP

The Department's undergraduate medical education leadership team has experienced a number of changes. The following are new appointments:

- **Dr. Bakhtiar Kidwai**, Division of Cardiology, is our new Undergraduate Medical Education Chair;
- **Dr. Chris Gallivan**, Division of General Internal Medicine, has been appointed to Clerkship Director;
- **Dr. Tallal Younis**, Division of Medical Oncology, is the new Assistant Clerkship Director; and
- **Nina Nedic** is covering Karmal Brouwer's mat leave and assuming the role of DOM Undergraduate Education Coordinator starting February 20, 2018.



## MAKING HEADLINES

Department members are the go-to experts on many issues. Their expertise and innovative approaches to care are frequently featured by media. Here is who was making headlines since January 2018:

**Dr. Kenneth Rockwood**, Division of Geriatric Medicine, talks to [CBC Information Morning \(Cape Breton\)](#) advocating for improved dementia care in Cape Breton.

**Dr. Sultan Darvesh**, Division of Neurology, was featured as a revolutionary researcher by Dal News. His work was also featured by NSHA: "[Creating the World's First Definitive Diagnostic Test for Alzheimer's Disease?](#)" and CBC News: "[Discovery at Dalhousie brain tissue lab could lead to Alzheimer treatment](#)".

**Dr. Graeme Rocker's**, Division of Respiriology, INSPIRED program was the focus of a column by [Globe and Mail's](#) Andre Picard.

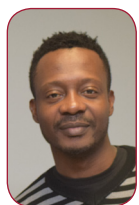
**Dr. John Hanly**, Division of Rheumatology, talked to [CTV News](#) about his Lupus Brain Map study. This study was also featured in the [QEII Times](#).

**Dr. Shelly McNeil**, Division of Infectious Diseases, participated in a shingles vaccine call-in show on [CBC's Maritime Noon](#) (segment starts at 9 mins, 37 seconds).

## WELCOME

In January, we were pleased to welcome **Dr. Mahmoud Elsayy**, Division of Hematology, to the Department. Dr. Elsayy, Assistant Professor, joins us from British Columbia where he was a Senior Clinical Fellow with the Leukemia and Bone Marrow Transplant Program of British Columbia since 2016. Dr. Elsayy attended Cairo University in Egypt and completed his MCCEE in 2016 and the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) in 2017.

**Dr. Maia von Maltzahn**, Assistant Professor, joined the Division of Geriatric Medicine in January for a three-month locum term. She completed her medical degree at Dalhousie University, her residency in internal medicine at the University of Saskatchewan (2015) and most recently her fellowship in Geriatric Medicine at the University of Toronto in 2017. Welcome Dr. Maltzahn.



**Mc'Edward (Eddie) Jones** joined the Department as our new Accounts Payable and Payroll Coordinator in December. Prior to joining us he served as a Bookkeeping/Payroll Clerk for a local not-for-profit organization. He holds a bachelor's in business administration from Mount Saint Vincent University.

With a passion for singing and making music, he is a member and soloist with the Nova Scotia Mass Choir and sings with various groups around HRM. Mc'Edward is from Sierra Leone, West Africa and has lived in Canada for more than 13 years.

## IN MEMORIAM – DR. ANGELA MCGIBBON

It is with great sadness to say good-bye to colleague and friend Dr. Angela (Angie) McGibbon. Dr. McGibbon passed away on Feb. 11.



Dr. McGibbon was the Director of Education for Horizon Health. She was a Dalhousie Medical School graduate (1998) who did her postgraduate training in Internal Medicine and Endocrinology (also at Dalhousie). She worked as an endocrinologist and was the former Head of the Department of Medicine at the Dr. Everett Chalmers Regional Hospital in Fredericton.

She was a highly respected clinician and teacher. In 2017 she was recognized by the Canadian Association of Medical Education (CAME) with a Certificate of Merit Award.

Dr. McGibbon was very active in all levels of medical education. She co-chaired the resident wellness task force at Dalhousie that was formed the basis for our resident wellness program, including the establishment of the new position of Assistant Dean for Resident Affairs, and the Resident Affairs Office.

Dr. McGibbon will be greatly missed and our sincere condolences go out to her family. Please read Dr. McGibbon's [obituary](#).

## FAREWELL

Over the past few months we have also said farewell to a few colleagues who have either retired or are pursuing their careers elsewhere. We wish the following colleagues all the best.

After serving the Department for 30 years, **Brenda Nicholson** with Accounts Payable/Payroll, has now entered her well-deserved retirement years. Thank you for your many years of service and commitment Brenda. Wishing you a long and joyful retirement.



This past month we said good-bye to colleague **Elizabeth (Betty) Hogue**. Betty worked with the hospital in various positions since the 1970s and was team lead of Medical Oncology for the past 18 years. Best wishes on your retirement Betty!



Farewell to **Dr. Jonathan Hebb** who finished his locum term with the Division of Hematology.

Best wishes to **Matt Adams**, Department Division Manager, who left the Department in November 2017 to pursue a new opportunity.

## NAME CHANGE

If you are looking for **Dr. Amanda Miller**, Division of Nephrology, please note she has changed her name to Dr. Amanda Vinson. Congratulations on your recent marriage Dr. Vinson.