



The UPDATE



**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

FACULTY OF MEDICINE
Department of Surgery

Summer 2020



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General Surgery

Dr. Roach
Dr. Jad
Dr. Purcell
Dr. McWilliams

Otolaryngology

Dr. Al Afif
Dr. Alamoudi

Cardiac Surgery

Dr. Baghaffar

Orthopaedics

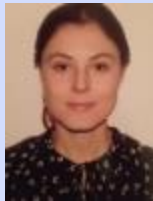
Dr. Al-Thubyani
Dr. Bishop
Dr. Elnagar
Dr. McNeil
Dr. Moga

Plastic Surgery

Dr. Gencarelli
Dr. Corkum
Dr. Samagrandi

Neurosurgery

Dr. Brandman



**Department
of Surgery**

**RESEARCH
DAY**

**Wednesday
April 7,
2020**



Department Head Dr. David Kirkpatrick

The Beacon UPDATE Summer 2019

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Elaine Marsh
Research Coordinator

Sheila Reid
Education Coordinator

*On the cover – Peggy's
Cove Nova Scotia Light
House*

The big story for 2020 of course is Covid-19 and more specifically for us, dealing with the impact of the pandemic on our medical students and residents as well as the delivery of surgical care.

In the beginning we were not as efficient or as effective as we now have become at prioritizing care in the face of limited resources. Now as we face the fall and the possibility of a second wave we have made the organizational changes that will further enhance efficiency.

Firstly the **OR committee** has undergone a long overdue reorganization. For the past 15 years we have had an OR Executive which neither large enough to be wholly inclusive of all surgical specialties nor small enough to be nimble. The new OR Operations Committee will include the leaders of all surgical disciplines, the OR managers as well as the site chiefs of anaesthesia and Surgery. A smaller OR Executive will be more strategic and avoid operational decisions. This organizational plan has adopted the best of the Covid-19 Pandemic Planning Committee that formed spontaneously at beginning of the pandemic when it was apparent that the existing OR committee did not include all the people necessary to make on the spot decisions. A heightened state of readiness now exists largely due to the sustained efforts of Geoff Porter, Mark Taylor and Bill Oxner working collaboratively with others from the perioperative leadership team.

Secondly the **Nova Scotia Perioperative Program of Care** under the leadership of **Greg Hirsch** further proved its worth during the first phase by reorganizing into a perioperative mutual aid network that can and did provide a rapid response to regional centers with acute human and physical resource needs. All this happening while NSHA is reorganizing to make provincial programs of care less operational and more strategic in focus.

The Faculty of Medicine has signaled that they will not be shutting down teaching to the same extent during a second wave so we will be busier insuring that students have a meaningful clinical experience. Additionally the Personal Protective Equipment supply is better so that medical students will be able to participate in surgery without us running the risk of depleting our supply.

I remember my father describing the effect that World War II had on his generation's medical education. For many this meant abbreviated or disrupted training. Most who survived those uncertain formative years were judged to be stronger for it and better equipped to deal with adversity. I anticipate that the current medical students and residents who are negotiating the hurdles produced by the pandemic will be similarly revered by their younger colleagues.

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Michael Biddulph



Dr. Micheal Biddulph is a native Maritimer. He graduated from Dalhousie University with a BSc Biology/Chemistry. He attended Dalhousie Medical School and completed his residency in Orthopaedics at Dalhousie. Dr. Biddulph successfully obtained Fellowship training in Primary Revision Joint Surgery of the Hip and Knee at the Peninsula Orthopaedic Research Group in Sydney, Australia. He continued His Fellowship training in Musculoskeletal Sarcoma at the University of Toronto, and further training in Musculoskeletal Tumors with Mega Reconstruction and Revision Surgery at the Rizzoli Institute in Bologna, Italy. Dr. Biddulph is an Associate Professor in the Department of Surgery.

“the opportunity to travel and see new techniques and philosophies during my Fellowships and other training was incredibly valuable to me before coming back to Halifax. I received strong training in new approaches, which I hope helps our unique patients here”

What attracted you to Orthopaedics?

I always like working with my hands and problem solving. I have the ability to see a problem, visualize it and tackle it. My hobbies were always in building things and then taking them apart. Orthopaedics seemed like the natural fit for me.

How do you balance the demands of clinical practice and your personal life?

Balancing is a challenge, even after 10 years, I still struggle to keep a good balance. I try my best to keep flexible with my time and to go with the work flow to get everything done in regular working hours, but like my colleagues time often spills over. I have the best assistant in Jessica Arnold who makes sure I keep organized and on track. I would be lost without her!

What is your advice to young orthoped trainees?

I would remind them that orthopaedics is a fantastic field full of many subspecialties in which to practice. I would advise them to not commit to any one sub specialty too early. Learn to explore the different varieties and then master it!

Robin Richards Award for Upper Extremity Research: Ivan Wong

The Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation is pleased to announce the recipient of the 2020 Robin Richards Award for Upper Extremity Research. Dr. Ivan Wong from Halifax, NS receives the award for his paper titled: *“Bridging Allograft Reconstruction is Superior to Maximal Repair for the Treatment of Chronic, Massive Rotator Cuff Tears – Results of a Prospective, Randomized, Controlled Trial”*.

Thanks to a generous endowment fund donated by Dr. Robin Richards, this award was established to recognize the best upper extremity research submission at the Canadian Orthopaedic Association annual meeting. All papers in upper extremity research accepted for The COA meeting are eligible, and are reviewed by a COF research review panel. Although the physical COA annual meeting is cancelled, many papers were submitted prior to the pandemic, and the COF reviewed abstracts and manuscripts prior to selecting the award recipient.





Dr. Michael Dunbar Director of Research

The Department of Surgery had its first virtual **DOS Research Day** held on **June 3, 2020**. Due to COVID 19 social considerations, our research day was delivered remotely to all members of our Department, our Students, Residents, and other members from Medicine, NSHA and The Ministry of Health and Wellness. We had 20 presentations from our students and residents. We held our **Basic Science Research Day** remotely on **Thursday June 18th**. The Program consisted of our Departmental Clinical Scientists giving an overview of their lab's research, followed by representative graduate student presentations from each lab. Our highlight of the event was having recently recruited Thoracic Surgeon and Clinical Scientist, Dr. Alison Wallace give the key note address – showcasing her previous research work and her plans on setting up bench work here at Dalhousie to build her research program around lung pathologies. Below are our Research Day Winners! Congratulations to them!

The Dr. Robert Stone Traveling Fellowship: **Dr. Catherine Deshaies**, PGY 5, Cardiac Surgery,
IMPACT OF TRICUSPID INTERVENTION ON EARLY OUTCOMES FOLLOWING PULMONARY VALVE REPLACEMENT IN ADULT CONGENITAL PATIENTS

The Best Resident Presentation: **Dr. Chad Purcell**, PGY1, Otolaryngology
DECISION AID TO ENHANCE SHARED DECISION MAKING FOR PEDIATRIC OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA: A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED STUDY

Honorable Mention: **Dr. Daniel McNeil**, PGY5, Orthopaedics
ESTABLISHING SAFETY PARAMETERS FOR ORTHOPAEDIC CAST SAW BLADE USAGE

The Best Student Presentation: **Casey Jones**, Medical Student – Neurosurgery
IMPACT-DETECTING HELMETS AS INDICATORS OF CONCUSSION AND TRAUMATIC MICROVASCULAR INJURY IN UNIVERSITY FOOTBALL PLAYERS

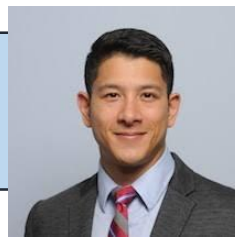
Honorable Mention: **Kelly Brennan**, Medical Student
PATTERNS AND YIELD OF SURVEILLANCE COLONOSCOPY AFTER POTENTIALLY CURATIVE RESECTION OF COLORECTAL CANCER

The Best Basic Science Presentation: **Lauren Westhaver** - PhD Student
MITOCHONDRIAL DNA RELEASED DURING EX VIVO NMP AS A QUANTITATIVE BIOMARKER FOR LIVER ALLOGRAFT QUALITY

Health System Innovation – Capacity Planning for Elective Surgical Services POST COVID-19

In Response to the COVID 19 pandemic, our elective surgical services were cancelled in mid March 2020. This resulted in increased waitlist volumes, and only emergent cases were proceeding. Re-opening of surgical services was resumed in May and there continues to be continued competing demands for access to health system resources such as OR times and inpatient beds. The aim of our Department Research Project, lead by **Drs. Geoff Porter** and **Michael Dunbar** is to address the COVID-related backlog of elective surgery in NS by providing direction, utilizing capacity planning forecast modelling to explore potential strategies to provide patients with their required surgeries. We have partnered with **Dr. Peter Vanberkel**, and his colleagues in the **Faculty of Industrial Engineering** to support a Master's student (Natalie Ash) to conduct the research. Outcomes for a robust plan on how to re-open safely, which accounts for the realities resource availability and the needs of patients which will be optimally designed using scientific methods.

Dr. David Tang Director of Education



Bringing Out the BEST in Education

The past 6 months has been a period of change and considerable growth for education within the Department of Surgery, with great cause for celebration and recognition of the people who have maintained and advanced our educational directives. It is through their dedication, resilience, and innovation that we have proven that education thrives in the face of adversity.

Perhaps most tested over the recent months have been undergraduate learners, who were pulled from clinical rotations during the pandemic for their safety. Despite this obstacle, medical students showed their mettle in continuing to meet their learning objectives virtually and contributed to the fight against the virus by starting a much-needed volunteer childcare program for first responders struggling to balance their personal and professional lives. As the hospital began a return to more normal procedures, undergraduate learners were welcomed back to clinical rotations on June 8th. Under the capable leadership of **Clerkship Director, Dr. Andrew Glennie**, clerks were seamlessly reintegrated into surgical rotations in a manner that both prioritized their clinical learning and protected them from high risk situations.

For postgraduate learners, residency training programs have been continuing their successful trends in the first year following accreditation and maintaining a commitment to continuous quality improvement. However, similar to their clerk counterparts, residents faced significant challenges during the pandemic with a direct impact on their clinical learning opportunities. But, considerable credit should be given to the leaders in education who guided their programs through the crisis with poise and thoughtfulness. Program Directors and residents should be celebrated for their flexibility in adapting to modified rotation schedules, clinical hours, the introduction of virtual care delivery, and the conversion of academic activities to a virtual platform. We are incredibly fortunate at Dalhousie Surgery to have these dedicated PDs at the helm of our ship; **Dr. Gerard Corsten** (Otolaryngology, H&N), **Dr. Dafydd Davies** (Surgical Foundations), **Dr. Lucy Helyer** (General Surgery), **Dr. David Horne** (Cardiac Surgery), **Dr. Gwynedd Pickett** (Neurosurgery), **Dr. Glen Richardson** (Orthopedic Surgery), **Dr. Andrew Trenholm** (Surgical Foundations) and **Dr. Margie Wheelock** (Plastic Surgery).

Looking forward to the next 6 months, there is great excitement for the world of education, particularly in surgery. General Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, Pediatric Surgery and Plastic Surgery are finally implementing CBD within their training programs and will be learning from the experience of those programs already engaged in competency-based medical education. These programs will also have the tremendous advantage of benefitting from the guidance and leadership of Dr. Dafydd Davies, who has just been named the PGME CBD Lead for Dalhousie University – congratulations to you on this tremendous and well-deserved accomplishment!

As we continue to persevere through these unprecedented times, it is the people within this great department who will help to see us through. Great challenges remain for the continued delivery of high-quality surgical education, both known and unknown. But, we are uniquely positioned to succeed given the commitment and ability of our educational leaders. What an exciting time to be a part of Dal Surgery!

'Adversity is the mother of progress' Mahatma Gandhi



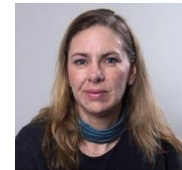
Dr. Andrew Glennie



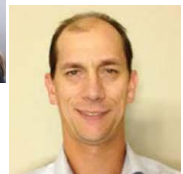
Dr. Gerard Corsten



Dr. Dafydd Davies



Dr. Lucy Helyer



Dr. David Horne



Dr. Gwynedd Pickett



Dr. Glen Richardson



Dr. Andrew Trenholm



Dr. Margaret Wheelock

Dr. Robin Urquhart has joined the Department of Community Health & Epidemiology as the **Canadian Cancer Society (Nova Scotia Division) Endowed Chair in Population Cancer Research**. She is also an Associate Professor in Community Health & Epidemiology and has a cross appointment with the Department of Surgery. Robin's research expertise is in cancer health services research and implementation science. Robin has been the Department of Surgery Ramia Chair Scientist.

She completed the Interdisciplinary PhD Program and her program of research is highly collaborative, interdisciplinary, and patient-focused. Her research is funded by the CIHR, Canadian Cancer Society, Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, and many other national, provincial, and local funding agencies, her research spans the entire cancer continuum from primary prevention to survivorship and end-of-life care.

Dr. Urquhart will remain on the Department of Surgery Research Committee.

Congratulations Dr. Urquhart!

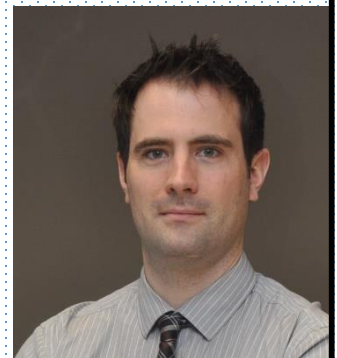


The Faculty of Medicine is pleased to announce that **Dr. Dafydd Davies** has been appointed, **Lead, Competence-Based Medical Education (CBME)**, for a two-year term. This appointment is effective May 4, 2020.

He currently serves as Head of the Division of Pediatric General and Thoracic Surgery and Trauma Director at the IWK, where he has been on staff since 2013. His research interests lie in pediatric trauma care, minimally invasive surgery in infants and children, and surgical education. Dr. Davies has been Co-Director of the Dalhousie Surgical Foundations Program since 2018.

Competence by Design is the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada's model for implementing competency-based medical education (CBME) in all specialist residency training programs in Canada. Competency-based medical education in general—and Competence by Design in particular—is focused on advancing each individual resident's progress toward mastering a clearly defined set of skills for their discipline.

Congratulations Dr. Davies!



Congratulations to Dr. Mathew Rigby and Dr. Cathy Coady on their promotions to Associate Professor.



Dr. Mathew Rigby **Dr. Cathy Coady**

Remembering Dr. Dennis Klassen



In July we learned of the sudden passing of our colleague, mentor, teacher and friend, **Dr. Dennis Klassen**. Dennis was raised in Sanford, Manitoba. Dr. Klassen is a graduate of the University of Manitoba School of Medicine, where he also completed his residency in General Surgery. He completed the highly coveted fellowship in Minimally Invasive Surgery at McGill, and in 2002 was recruited to our Department of Surgery, here at Dalhousie -as our first General Surgeon trained in MIS in Atlantic Canada!

During Dr. Klassen's tenure at Dalhousie, he was pivotal in advancing minimally invasive surgery in the Maritimes. He was a leader in teaching and training advanced skills by sharing his knowledge and techniques with our residents and fellows. He believed in continuing education in medicine and was known for his advanced knowledge on any given topic, beyond medicine, and was generous in sharing and conversing with anyone at all times.

Dr. Klassen was recognized for his excellence in teaching, receiving the **Silver Dever Award** five times throughout his 18 year career, and was bestowed to him again at this year's award ceremony. The Silver Dever award is given by the Surgical Residents in General Surgery to honour and celebrate "**The Professor of the Year**". Dr Klassen also won the **Faculty of Medicine Wayne Putman Award** for outstanding contributions to the continuing education of Maritime Physicians. Dr. Klassen served as the Director of the General Surgery Residency Training Program, as well as the Undergraduate Clerkship Coordinator for General Surgery. He was the catalyst for establishing the Advanced Gastrointestinal Minimally Invasive Surgery Fellowship Program at Dalhousie University.

"Dr. Klassen travelled throughout the Maritimes teaching and mentoring in specific MIS cases in his collegial fashion. In serving as a reliable and effective hands-on surgeon mentor in the learning curve of many Maritime surgeons, he had a profound impact on the safe implementation of new technology to the betterment of patients. This has likely been the single most important element in driving the widespread and thoughtful adoption of many minimally invasive operations throughout the Maritimes".

He was always known as calm and understated, leading his ORs in this fashion. Many past trainees and colleagues uploaded videos to the "**Dalhousie Minimally Invasive Surgery**" YouTube Channel prior to his passing. The goal of the channel was to convey to Dr. Klassen during the peak of COVID -19, the impact head on those he mentored and worked with. It is clear by the videos that he had a profound influence of many of us.

Dennis will best be remembered for his collegial, supportive and kind approach to his work. The Division of General Surgery will establish an annual award "**The Dennis Klassen Award**" – which will celebrate and recognize a surgeon who best displays professional kindness".



*Picture from front page: MIS Program –faculty and previous graduates.
L-R: Dr. Danny French, Dr. Jon Enright, Dr. Dennis Klassen (centre).
Dr. Reilly Stewart, Dr. Marius Hoogerboord and Dr. Jim Ellsmere.*

Welcome New Surgical Residents!

Orthopaedics



Malik Ali



Michael Whitcomb



Abdullah Ashour



Dominique De Waard

Neurosurgery



Katherine Tourigny



Todd Dow

Plastic Surgery



Bradley Greene



Ahmad AlShammari

General Surgery



Alison Keeping



Victoria Long



Elisabeth Savonitto

Otolaryngology



Usman Khan



Alexander Clarke



Michel Sheikh



A. Al-Abduljabbar



Matthew Playfair



<https://medicine.dal.ca/departments/department-sites/surgery.html>



Department of
Surgery Research



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All Faculty, Residents, Staff and Students are encouraged to send Elaine Marsh any ideas for feature stories in the UPDATE:
Elaine.marsh@dal.ca