

## DECEMBER 2017 – Issue #7

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## DIVISION DIRECTOR'S COLUMN – Dr Douglas Bradley

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### External Review

The Division of Respiriology underwent an external review by Professor Denis O'Donnell from Queen's University and Professor Susan Redline from Harvard University on October 23, 2017. I am happy to say that their review was very positive and a synopsis follows.

They were impressed by the structure and effectiveness of the Division's administrative organization and leadership. This was reflected in their comments about the appointment of capable individuals to key leadership positions in Research, Residency Training, Education, Faculty Mentoring, Continuing Medical Education and Quality Improvement, and by the enthusiasm, optimism and camaraderie of our faculty and trainees. They were also impressed by the integration of research training into the residency program, the provision of the intramural Pettit grants and parallel success in improving research output to levels of international renown, by improvements in the residency program, and by building cohesion across a large and diverse Division through University-wide events.



As expected, they did identify some issues for our consideration. They noted that with the increased pool of fellows and implementation of Competency By Design (CBD), a separate Fellowship Director would be helpful. They felt an additional procedural lab simulation session should be implemented. They sensed that some Clinician Investigators and Teachers may not have access to adequate resources to support their research and teaching activities, although most are successful in their respective fields. They expressed the view that the Division is large enough to broaden its future research foci. The need for a more systematic approach to hiring PhD scientists was mentioned. Finally, they suggested that we refresh our strategic plan.

I believe the Division can profit from addressing these challenges. In some instances, the solutions are directly at hand. For example, I have been able to divert Divisional funds to support an extra procedural skills lab session this year. The Division's Executive Committee is committed to renewing our strategic plan for 2018 as confirmed at our Divisional retreat in June, 2017. This includes broadening our areas of excellence according to the interests and expertise of our constituency.

In other instances, the Division needs to work with the DOM and hospitals to achieve our mutual goals. For example, the DOM recognizes the need for increased administrative support for CBD and for a separate Fellowship Program Director. The sense that Clinician Teachers and Investigators may require more support for their academic activities is generalized across the DOM. In the past this has been partially addressed by negotiating for AFPs to support both teaching and research activities. More may need to be done, but this must occur in partnership with the hospitals according to their clinical requirements and financial resources. Implementation of a more systematic means of hiring PhD scientists will require cooperation among the DOM, the hospitals and their research institutes.

In summary, the external review of our Division was highly laudatory and constructive. I would like to thank everyone in the Division for their participation in this process and their contributions to this successful outcome.

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## FEATURE ARTICLE – Tuberculosis and Nontuberculous Mycobacterial Disease Programs

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### Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) remains far from elimination. In the city of Toronto alone, there are approximately 300 active TB cases every year. Most of these patients, and many more with latent, suspected, and prior TB, are managed in one of three adult TB clinics, located at St. Michael's Hospital (SMH; medical director: Dr. Jane Batt), Toronto Western Hospital (TWH; medical director: Dr. Michael Gardam), and West Park Healthcare Centre (WPHC; medical director: Dr. Sarah Brode). Children with TB are managed at The Hospital for Sick Children's TB clinic (medical director: Dr. Ian Kitai). All have a similar care model, with full time nurse practitioners coordinating care and assessing patients, along with Respiratory and

Infectious Diseases physicians. The clinics work closely with Public Health to ensure comprehensive care for all, including the uninsured. WPHC houses a provincially unique 20 bed TB unit, where patients with drug resistant TB, medication toxicities, severe disease, and those who require inpatient isolation may receive inpatient care.

The Toronto TB research program is rapidly evolving. The TWH TB clinic established a TB database in 2002, WPHC recently established their database, and SMH is in the process of getting theirs up and running. The establishment of data availability for research has helped initiate our city-wide TB research collaborative, where clinician researchers from each site may access shared data for retrospective city-wide observational research.

The recent appointment of Dr. Brode, and the arrival of Dr. Natasha Sabur (WPHC and SMH), both of whom are engaged in clinical epidemiology research in TB, has also facilitated the growth of the Toronto TB research program. Ongoing TB research in Toronto includes population based studies of healthcare resource utilization, and risk factors for active TB in new migrants, in collaboration with investigators at Public Health Ontario (PHO), Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES), Theta, and colleagues in British Columbia and Quebec, supported by a project grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (Dr. Brode is a co-Principal Investigator).

The TB educational program includes a fellowship program, with one fellow per year participating in clinical care and research in TB and possibly NTM, based at WPHC and TWH. For Respiriology residents, a university-wide TB rotation, run by Dr. Harvey Wong and Julie Seemangal at SMH, is a popular month-long elective.

The Toronto TB program, despite being dispersed over multiple hospital sites, is united in its goal of providing excellent TB clinical care, research, and education, with the ultimate aim, in collaboration with our colleagues across the country, to eradicate TB in Canada.

## Nontuberculous Mycobacterial Disease



Pulmonary nontuberculous mycobacterial (NTM) infections are challenging to treat, generally requiring multiple antibacterials for more than 12 months. Adjunctive surgery is helpful in a selected minority, but can be fraught with complications. Prior to our program, there was no dedicated and comprehensive care for NTM disease in Ontario, and only a single specialized NTM clinic in Canada. The program began with Dr. Marras' interest in NTM and a few patients in his TWH general Respiriology clinic. Eventually "general Respiriology" became "NTM" and, outside of a TB clinic, Dr. Marras' consultations are now restricted to NTM. Dr. Brode joined the program in 2016, after a two-year mycobacterial diseases fellowship.



In our NTM clinical program, Canada's largest, we have approximately 1200 visits annually and have assessed more than 785 patients. Therapeutic options are complex and involve combination antimicrobials (oral, injectable, and inhalational), physical therapies (airway clearance), and surgery in select situations (in collaboration with Thoracic Surgery at TGH). We have a full-time nurse, through philanthropic support, who combines clinical and research duties. We also have the services of a superb respiratory educator and a part-time research coordinator, and an active fellowship program. We fostered the development of a patient-led support group for NTM, and provide bi-annual seminars at patient meetings.

The NTM research program, in collaboration with PHO, did the pivotal population-based study of NTM lung disease prevalence, demonstrating high and increasing disease rates; a study subsequently mirrored by others in the United States, Europe, and Japan. Additional leading population-based research has involved epidemiology, TB co-infection, associations with obstructive lung disease, inhaled steroids, rheumatoid arthritis and immunosuppressives, and survival. Ongoing population-based studies include treatment practices and their effects on survival, drinking water attributes and NTM incidence, and health-care resource utilization. Clinic level studies have included a number of observational studies (quality of life, treatment costs, lung physiology) and a number of ongoing investigations. We collaborate closely with investigators at PHO, ICES, and Theta, and also with international colleagues in both investigator-driven and industry sponsored studies.

The NTM educational program includes an active fellowship, a significant role in the University of Toronto's, Respiriology Mycobacterial Disease elective, resident participation during Respiriology rotations, and international observers.

We are proud of the NTM program, where we strive for excellent clinical care, high-quality useful research, and education to foster improved patient care and research through our trainees' future careers.

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## RESIDENT TRAINING PROGRAM ALUMNI - Dr Mark Varkul

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Dr. Mark Varkul completed his Respiriology training at the University of Toronto in 2000 which included a third year fellowship in ICU. He then accepted a job at Etobicoke General Hospital (EGH) as a staff Respiriologist and Intensivist. Shortly after joining EGH, he opened an outpatient general respirology office practice. During his first years at EGH, Mark spearheaded an effort to develop a much needed hospitalist

program run by family doctors which was one of the first of its kind in Toronto. This program has been thriving since then, and led not only to the retention of existing staff doctors but subsequently to the recruitment of many more sub-specialists. Motivated to bring more variety to his practice, Mark has successfully completed training in Sleep Medicine via the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario change in scope of practice pathway, and now works at a Sleep Clinic two days a month in Etobicoke.

Mark is married to Joanna Shapiro, a family doctor whom he met while in residency. They have three children: Olivia 17, Ethan 13 and Jonah 8. Outside of Medicine, since graduating, Mark achieved his black belt in Karate. Currently, he enjoys playing soccer and keeping fit. Life is busy and getting a moment to read the newspaper cover to cover with a cup of coffee remains his holy grail.

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## CLINICAL FELLOWSHIP ALUMNI – Dr Cecilia Chaparro

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Almost 25 years ago after working in my native Colombia for a couple of years as a respirologist I had the opportunity to come to Canada with the intention to learn about lung transplant, and then to go back and help start a lung transplant program there. It was a very exciting time to be part of this newly developing discipline in Toronto. However, love got in the way and I ended up staying in Canada.

Unfortunately, getting a medical license to practice in Canada was not feasible then. However, thanks to the support of my colleagues I was able to continue working with the transplant program in research and produce many publications, which helped me, after several years, to be appointed an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Toronto, and to obtain a medical license to practice. I was then cross-appointed to St. Michael's Hospital (SMH) and University Health Network Toronto General Hospital (TGH). This allowed me to enjoy the two areas that I like most and enabled me to support our adult cystic fibrosis (CF) patients at SMH to make the transition to the lung transplant program at TGH. My main research interests are common to CF and lung transplant and include outcomes and infectious complications of CF and lung transplant, especially *B. cepacia*. Currently, I am working on a project called "transition to transplant" with CF Canada and SMH. We are also running a similar project with nine centres in the United States.

I enjoy hobbies like pottery, photography, and sports. With my husband, Carlos Gutierrez, an internist who works as a hospitalist at the North York General Hospital, we enjoy the wonderful outdoors either travelling or participating in sports. I took skating and skiing lessons so that we could enjoy outdoor winter sports, a new experience for us in Canada. Travelling is another of our favorite activities, so whenever possible we travel as a family with my 86 year old mother who inspires my life with her incredible positive attitude and energy.

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## Resident Training Program Director Report – Dr Christopher Li

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### Medicine Subspecialty Match

I am very pleased to announce and welcome the cohort of 5 residents who will be joining us for the 2018-19 academic year. They are:

Dr. Ahmed Abdelbasit (University of Alberta, international stream)

Dr. Colin Adams (Western University, CaRMS)

Dr. Alina Blazer (University of Toronto, CaRMS)

Dr. Eunice Cho (University of Toronto, CaRMS)

Dr. Daniel Marinescu (University of Toronto, CaRMS)

Many thanks to this year's selection committee for donating their time to the file review and interview process.

### Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Examination in Adult Respiriology

Five of our graduates sat for their Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada examination in Respiriology this Fall. I am happy to report that all of our graduates were successful. Congratulations to:

Dr. Melissa Brijbassi

Dr. David Christiansen

Dr. Andrew Kouri

Dr. Sindu Mohan

Dr. Nicole Sitzer

### Internal Review of the Respiriology Training Program

Our program underwent a thorough Internal Review on October 25, 2017. The reviewers identified a number of strengths in our program, including: an effective Program Committee and a supportive Division Director; a thorough program review and development process; tremendous depth, size, scope and diversity of clinical experiences; a strong and dynamic academic half day curriculum; and comprehensive multimodal assessment tools. No weaknesses were identified.

I am grateful to our faculty and residents who work every day to create the best possible training program. I am also indebted to Rhiannon Davies for working tirelessly to produce the first-class program documentation that proved invaluable at the review.

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## Research Advisory Committee – Dr Jane Batt

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### Meet the Investigators Night – hosted by Marie Faughnan

This event was held in September at Oro restaurant Humidor Room and was attended by 32 faculty, residents and fellows. Trainees greatly appreciated the opportunity to learn about the exciting array of research available to them, as well as to have the opportunity to socialize with faculty in a convivial atmosphere. In 2018, we hope to have more fellows attend.



### Pettit Block Term Grants – Nov 2017

Applications received for the November 2017 competition are now being reviewed by the RAC. The new terms of reference state that there is a \$10,000 budgetary limit. One may apply for an additional \$5,000 top up if: 1) the applicant can describe an additional component of the project that would require the extra funding, 2) the project is deemed exceptional, and 3) it is the top scoring project in that competition. However, if the top up is not approved, but the project is otherwise deemed worthy, it will be funded up to the \$10,000 maximum.

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### Continuing Medical Education Update – Dr John Thenganatt

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The Inaugural Respiriology Summer CME Evening was held on the June 22, 2017. Sixty physicians attended the event. The featured speakers and topics reviewed were: Mark Doherty (Lung Cancer), John Granton (Massive and Submassive PE), and Matthew Stanbrook (Asthma). The presentations were well-balanced and highlighted the new developments in these areas over the past 12 months. For the first time a full day CME event was held the next day (June 23) on Lung Infection. Nearly 100 Respiriologists from across Ontario attended this event. Local University of Toronto Respiriology faculty included Drs Ted Marras, Sarah Brode, and Ron Grossman. The two invited guest speakers were Dr Charles Daley (National Jewish, Denver) and Dr Jay Johnston (University of British Columbia). We once again were able to offer Section 3 Royal College CME Credits to our learners using our Conference App. I would like to thank the Lung Infection Day Organizing Committee (Ted Marras, Sarah Brode,

David Hall, Marcus Kargel, and Shahid Husain, pictured below) for their hard work in putting together such a wonderful agenda. A special thanks to Karen Forai for tireless dedication to CME activities in our Division.



*The Annual Day in Respiriology Committee: Left to right: Shahid Husain, John Thenganatt, Jay Johnston (UBC), Richard Daley (Denver), Sarah Brode, Ted Marras, and Karen Forai.*

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## EVENTS, PROMOTIONS, AWARDS AND NEWS

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### EVENTS

#### Phillipson Scholars Event

On April 20, 2017 the Department of Medicine hosted its inaugural Phillipson Scholars Celebration at Massey College, University of Toronto. The event was an opportunity for Phillipson Scholars to come together and celebrate the success and the valuable contributions of the many trainees, supervisors and program directors who have been part of the Eliot Phillipson Clinician-Scientist and Clinician-Educator Training Programs over the years.



*Dmitry Rozenberg, Matthew Stanbrook, Lianne Singer, Shiphra Ginsburg, Chung-Wai Chow, and Eliot Phillipson*

## PROMOTIONS

Name	Career Path	Rank	Hospital Affiliation
Neill Adhikari	Clinician Investigator	Assistant Professor	Sunnybrook Health Sciences Ctr
Chung-Wai Chow	Clinician Scientist	Associate Professor	UHN - Toronto General Hospital
Warren Lee	Clinician Scientist	Associate Professor	St. Michael's Hospital
Christopher Li	Clinician Teacher	Associate Professor	St. Michael's Hospital
Eddy Fan	Clinician Scientist	Associate Professor	UHN - Toronto General Hospital

## AWARDS

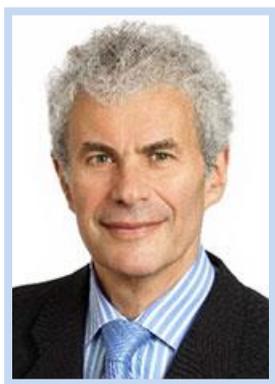
**Andrea Gershon**, was awarded a CIHR foundation grant, Canadian Best Respiratory Research Evaluation and Analyst Team of Health, Experts (CanBREATHE).

**Samir Gupta** was awarded a Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR): Exploring the lived experiences of patients with acute asthma: a qualitative photovoice study.

**Stephen Juvet** was awarded: 1) an Ontario Institute for Regenerative Medicine (OIRM)/Medicine by Design New Ideas Grant. This project aims to promote lung allograft acceptance by altering the immunological microenvironment of the graft with an immunoregulatory cell population before transplantation during ex vivo lung perfusion. 2) a Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Therapeutics Grant, "Mechanisms of IL-10 gene therapy in human lung transplantation". This will support parallel mouse and human studies into the immunological effects of pre-transplant, ex vivo-delivered IL-10 gene therapy to donor lungs.

**Tetyana Kendzerska** (supervisor: Andrea Gershon), won the Abstract Scholarship Award: "Effectiveness and Safety of Inhaled Corticosteroids in Elderly Individuals with Chronic Obstructive Airway Diseases: A Population-Based Study" at the 2017 American Thoracic Society International Conference in San Francisco, California.

**Tereza Martinu** was awarded the Ontario Thoracic Society /The Lung Association - Grant In Aid for a project entitled: "IL-17A in chronic lung allograft rejection". Chronic lung allograft dysfunction (CLAD) is the major cause of long-term morbidity and mortality after lung transplantation. This project will examine this pathway using explanted human CLAD lungs and perform staining for IL-17A and IL-17A receptor.



**Dr Arthur S Slutsky** was awarded the CIHR Institute of Circulatory and Respiratory Health (ICRH) and the Canadian Thoracic Society (CTS) 2017 Distinguished Lecturer in Respiratory Sciences

Dr. Slutsky is a pulmonary/critical care physician whose research interests include acute respiratory failure, non-conventional ventilation, classic respiratory mechanics, asthma pathophysiology, lung transplantation, and the primary role mechanical ventilation plays in the development of subsequent lung injury and multiple organ failure. His basic research into mechanisms of ventilator-induced lung injury have been translated into lung protective ventilatory strategies leading to decreased mortality of patients with Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome.

Dr. Elizabeth Tullis received the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, Regional Prix d'excellence — Specialist of the Year Award Winner for Region 3 for 2017, and, the Dr. Douglas Crozier Award from Cystic Fibrosis Canada.

Dr. Tullis is Professor of Medicine at the University of Toronto and Respiriology Division Head at St. Michael's Hospital.



## Annual Respiriology Research Day Awards 2017

Basic Science Oral Presentation, **Wang Yuan GUO**

Clinical Health Science Oral Presentation, **Marcos GALASSO**

Basic Science Poster Presentation, **Watanabe TATSUAKI**

Clinical Health Science Poster Presentation, **Luana MELO**

## Annual Respiriology Teaching and Research Awards 2017

The Faculty Teaching Award, selected by the respiriology residents for excellence in teaching went to **Ted Marras**

The Jae Yang Award for Teaching by a respiriology resident went to **David Christiansen**

The Sheldon Mintz Undergraduate Teaching Award went to **Harvey Wong**

The Excellence in Research Faculty Award went to **Margaret Herridge**

The Outstanding Research Trainee Award went to **Kevin Grace**

## APPOINTMENTS



**Richard L. Horner** has been appointed a **Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences** for outstanding leadership and innovative contributions to the study of sleep, sedation and anesthesia. Dr Horner has advanced knowledge in respiratory and sleep science by elucidating the cellular mechanism of the brain responsible for the impact of sleep on breathing. September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## NEWS

The Division of Respiriology would like to welcome the latest faculty hire, PhD Scientist, **Dr Gaspard Montandon**. Gaspard has joined the Li Ka Shing Research Institute at St Michael's Hospital.

We would like to welcome to the Division as a clinician quality innovator, , **Dr Christine McDonald**. Christine has joined the team at Sunnybrook Health Science Centre. Presently, Christine is completing her Masters in QI and Patient Safety at the University of Toronto.

The inaugural **Michael Hutcheon Mentorship Award** for the UHN/MSH Department of Medicine was award this spring to Dr Heather Ross of Cardiology

Congratulations to **Shiphra Ginsburg** on her new position as Academic Director, Continuing Professional Development, Faculty of Medicine

Congratulations to **Meyer Balter**, who was awarded a "Distinguished Chest Educator 2017" by the American College of Chest Physicians.

**David Christiansen**, has a new baby boy, Henry Thomas Christiansen, born on February 19 at St. Michael's, weighing 8lbs 1oz. Both he and Elizabeth are doing wonderfully.

**Erica Merman**, has a new daughter, Olivia, born September 18, 2017. Congratulations Erica, and welcome to the world, Olivia.



**Andrei Vagaon** has welcomed into his family a baby girl, Julia. She is now 3 months old and making her wishes known.

## Reminders:

**Interview Day** for 2018, will be announced in February

**Annual Respiriology Research Day**, June 27, 2018. Please put this date in your calendars now.

**Dawson Fellowship** application deadline is January 31, 2018

**Pettit Block Term Grant** application deadline is April 15, 2018

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