

**"Study until 25, investigate until 40, profession until 60, at which age I would have him retired on a double allowance."**

Sir William Osler

Note to reader: I guess he didn't get everything right.....

Hi Everyone!

Hang around me long enough and you will hear me mouth a well-worn but definitely true cliché that goes: "Medicine is a team sport and there is no "I" in team".

I see evidence of this everyday throughout our Department in a multiplicity of settings and contexts.

Thus this week I want to single out for Departmental Acknowledgement two "teams" for their efforts and dedication.

The first team is a bit overdue and it's our **ER physicians and fellows** for holding the fort over the recent XMAS holidays. Their Director Harley Eisman is fond of reminding me that it's the ER that is the front line and for the vast majority of our in-patients the portal of entry into our hospital. In addition, staff physicians from the ER are on-site 24/7, 365 days a year. Under Harley's direction there have been substantive changes in the past year in the mode of service delivery in the ER with the goals of improving professionalism, quality and as Harley keeps saying "the patient care experience". As they say the "proof is in the pudding" and this was in evidence over the recent holidays. At a time when physicians and health care facilities cut back on operations, our ER becomes THE place that worried and stressed parents bring their ill children for assessment and care. Patient volumes go way up and in past years waits of up to 12 hours for a non-urgent case would occur. This holiday season was no exception with patient numbers exceeding 300 visits per day. Yet despite this volume, Harley and his team under their new modus operandi was able to ensure that it never took longer than 3.5 hours from registration to assessment for a non-urgent case. Knowing Harley he will not be satisfied by this and will continue to look for ways to tweak the wheels of the system to improve care.

The second team that I would like to highlight is our **Pediatrics Residency Training Committee** under the direction of Richard Gosselin. Just yesterday this group took a collective pause in their respective busy schedules to spend an afternoon together to consider some very important issues. This group which combines representation from our Resident and attending staff has to now pro-actively deal with multiple challenges to how we train the future generation of pediatric specialists. These challenges come from several directions that leads to tensions in opposite directions and include; 1) a reduction in entry level residency positions, 2) a move to a competency based Royal College evaluation scheme for certification, 3) stricter protocols for residency work hours to minimize patient errors and improve work-life balance for the resident, and 4) the pending move to the Glen. What impressed me most at this meeting was how committed everyone was to the strategic goal of maximizing the quality of the resident educational experience. By keeping their collective eyes on the prize of excellence in training, operational challenges will be met through creative thinking and action in the coming months. Indeed my impression is that these challenges will create realizable opportunities for refinement and improvement. A robust training and educational environment is critical for our collective success as an academic centre.

Have a great weekend!

Michael