Focus on Faculty #20
Carolyn Freeman

Dr. Carolyn Freeman is a Professor in the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology and the Department of Pediatrics at McGill and is a Mike Rosenbloom Chair of Radiation Oncology.

A graduate of Westminster Medical School in London, England, well-known at the time for its fine cancer program, she chose early on a career in radiation oncology, one that she has found immensely gratifying and still exciting after some 38 years in practice. Her area of expertise, the management of children with cancer, has been particularly rewarding not only for the very special relationships with the children and families but also for the international collaborations in research and education and life-long professional relationships that formed as a result of involvement in such a highly specialized field.

Here at home, she is best known as a very capable Director of Radiation Oncology, building up a fragmented department on multiple sites when she took over in 1979 into one internationally recognized for its innovative clinical programs and very strong educational programs. Her career-long firm commitment to multidisciplinary care and inter professional team work was an important factor contributing to the success of the radiation oncology program and remains a defining characteristic of the McGill radiation medicine program today.

Dr. Freeman has served in leadership roles in professional and scholarly organizations at all levels: (provincial) Chair of the Comité de radio-oncologie of the Direction de la lutte contre le cancer (DLCC) of the Quebec Ministry of Health from its creation in 1999 until 2006, Member the Board of Directors of the College of Physicians of Quebec 2012-2016; (national) Founding Member of the Canadian Association of Radiation Oncologists (CARO) in 1986, President of CARO 1991-1993, Chair of the Specialty Committee of

the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada 1992-1996, Chair of the Radiotherapy Quality Assurance Committee of the National Cancer Institute of Canada (NCIC) 1995-2000; (international) Co-Chair of the Brain Tumour Strategy Committee of the Children's Oncology Group (NIH funded) 2001-2008, Founding Member of the international Paediatric Radiation Oncology Society (PROS) in 2005, and President of PROS 2011-2014.

After stepping down as Director of Radiation Oncology in 2011, Dr. Freeman participated as a Fellow in the exceptional FORCES/EXTRA program of the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement and has since focused on quality improvement initiatives. Her current positions at the McGill University Health Centre include Co-Lead of the Quality and Performance Improvement Office for the Cancer Care Mission and MD Quality Champion for the MUHC. Still up for new challenges, she most recently has been appointed Chair of the Comité national de performance en cancérologie.

Dr. Freeman has been supported throughout by her husband, Dr. Juan Negrete, Professor of Psychiatry at McGill who is internationally recognized for his expertise in addictions medicine, and her children, Elena a graphic designer and Sebastian a family physician, of whom she is immensely proud.

We asked Dr. Freeman to list a few of her articles whose work she is particularly proud or enjoyed the most. This is what she provided:

A widely cited article that clarified the difference between different types of brainstem tumours in children:
Freeman, C.R., Farmer, J-P. Pediatric brain stem gliomas: A review. International Journal of Radiation Oncology, Biology and Physics 1998; 40: 265-271.

A new technique developed at the MUHC that changed practice in pediatric radiotherapy:
Parker, W., **Freeman, C.R**. A simple technique for craniospinal radiotherapy in the supine position. Radiotherapy and Oncology 2006; 78:217-222

An area of current research using radiomics to better understand the biology of soft tissue sarcoma:
Valliéres, M., **Freeman, C**, Skamene, S.R., El Naqa, l. A radiomics model from joint FDG-PET and MR texture features for the prediction of lung metastases in soft-tissue sarcomas of the extremities. Physics in Medicine and Biology 2015;60: 5471. Selected "Editor's Choice"