

## Focus on Faculty #57

### Joanne Alfieri



[Dr. Joanne Alfieri](#) is an Assistant Professor and Director of Education in the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology. She is a practicing Radiation Oncologist specializing in the treatment of gynecological and gastrointestinal malignancies at the McGill University Health Centre where she also leads the Gynecological Service and Brachytherapy Program. She is in the final stages of her thesis towards a Masters in Medical Education from Dundee University and is expected to graduate in June 2020.

Dr. Alfieri earned her medical degree and completed her post-graduate radiation oncology training at McGill. She completed a Post-graduate Fellowship in Gynaecology Oncology and MRI-guided Brachytherapy at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne, Australia.

Dr. Alfieri led the creation of the MRI-guided brachytherapy program at the MUHC and her current research interests lie in the evaluation of this program with the aim of improving the long-term outcomes and minimizing treatment-related toxicity in gynecological cancer patients as well as in investigating alternate treatment options for locally advanced cervix cancer. This program allows for international collaboration on the “Image guided intensity modulated External beam radiochemotherapy and MRI based adaptive **BRA**chytherapy in locally advanced **CE**rviceal cancer (EMBRACE II). She is also interested in the role of PET/CT scan in individualizing management and surveillance of gynecological cancer patients, a topic on which she has written a book chapter.

Dr. Alfieri has had a keen interest in medical education since medical school. Working with Dr. Lorraine Portelance, then Radiation Oncologist at the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), she developed and conducted an impact evaluation of an interactive, web-based radiological anatomy learning module for radiation oncology residents. During her residency training, Dr. Alfieri completed a Postgraduate Fellowship in Health Sciences Education at the Centre for Medical Education at McGill, which is now the Institute of Health Sciences Education. Dr. Alfieri was also the recipient of the Jonathan Campbell Meakins and Family Memorial Fellowship in 2011.

With her background in medical education, Dr. Alfieri was appointed Program Director for the Radiation Oncology Residency Training Program in 2015. In 2017, she was appointed the inaugural Director of

Education for the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology. This pivotal position within the department oversees undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate training programs in medical, surgical and radiation oncology. Dr. Alfieri was named the 2019-20 Richard and Sylvia Cruess Faculty Scholar in Medical Education, a position created by McGill's Institute of Health Sciences Education to promote excellence and scholarship in health sciences education.

In her current research, Dr. Alfieri is investigating what motivates the modern learner to seek feedback for learning and to improve their performance. Her research is timely as Canadian institutions transition to a competency-based medical education (CBME) model and away from the traditional time-based model. This transition will necessitate more frequent, objective and formative assessment of learners. She is building on theoretical models from social and organizational psychology to explore feedback-seeking behaviour and the link to goal-orientation. She hopes that her research will contribute to improving feedback and assessment tools available to residents and teachers.

Dr. Alfieri is a mother of two young daughters and is always on the go. She enjoys spending time with her family travelling, skiing, and cycling. Dr. Alfieri also enjoys cooking and caring for her garden.

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

James M.G. Tsui, Nicholas K.S. Grewal, Milani Sivapragasam, Melina Flanagan, Daniel W. Golden, **Joanne Alfieri**, Malcolm D. Mattes. Tumor Board Shadowing: A Unique Approach for Integrating Radiation Oncologists Into General Medical Student Education. *International Journal of Radiation Oncology, Biology, Physics*; July 2019, Volume 104, Issue 4, Pages 773-777.

Eric Leung, David D'Souza, Francois Bachand, Kathy Han, **Joanne Alfieri**, Fleur Huang, Eric Vigneault, Maroie Barkati, Ericka M. Wiebe, William Foster, Israel Fortin, Vikram Velker, David Bowes, Elizabeth Barnes, Nikhilesh Patil, Robyn Banerjee, Lisa Barbera, Ananth Ravi, MRI-based interstitial brachytherapy for vaginal tumors: A multi-institutional study on practice patterns, contouring, and consensus definitions of target volumes, *Brachytherapy*; September-October 2019, Volume 18, Issue 5, Pages 598-605.

François Lucia, Dimitris Visvikis, Martin Vallières, Marie-Charlotte Desseroit, Omar Miranda, Philippe Robin, Pietro Andrea Bonaffini, **Joanne Alfieri**, Ingrid Masson Augustin Mervoyer, Caroline Reinhold, Olivier Pradier, Mathieu Hatt, Ulrike Schick. External validation of a combined PET and MRI radiomics model for prediction of recurrence in cervical cancer patients treated with chemoradiotherapy. *European Journal of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging*; April 2019, Volume 46, Issue 4, Pages 864–877.

Catherine Pembroke, **Joanne Alfieri**, Alain Biron, Tarek Hijal, Carolyn Freeman. Creation of an Educational Quality Improvement Program for Radiation Oncology Residents. *Practical Radiation Oncology*; March-April 2018; Volume 8, Issue 2, Pages 81–89.

**Joanne Alfieri**, Lorraine Portelance, Luis Souhami, Yvonne Steinert, Peter McLeod, Fleure Gallant, Giovanni Artho. Development and Impact Evaluation of an e-Learning Radiation Oncology Module. *International Journal of Radiation Oncology, Biology, Physics*; March 2012, Volume 82, Issue 3, Pages e573–e580.