

Focus on Faculty #101

Richard Payne



Dr. Richard Payne is an Associate Professor at McGill University in the Department of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery and is an Associate Member in the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology. His subspecialty is in surgery of the thyroid gland and parathyroid glands. Dr. Payne works at several of the McGill University affiliated adult hospitals. While his main office is at the Jewish General Hospital, he also evaluates and operates on patients at the McGill University Health Centre Glen site (Royal Victoria Hospital).

During his medical school training at McGill University in Montreal, Dr. Payne was awarded the Harry S. Gross Memorial Prize for outstanding general surgery accomplishments and the H.S. Birkett Memorial Prize for research and clinical achievement in otolaryngology – head and neck surgery. As a resident, Dr. Payne completed a Master of Science Degree in Otolaryngology. He also won 15 different awards for clinical, surgical, and research accomplishments. Following graduation, Dr. Payne completed a fellowship in Head and Neck Surgery, with an emphasis in thyroid surgery, at the University of Toronto (Princess Margaret Hospital, Toronto General Hospital, and Mount Sinai Hospital).

Dr. Payne is a leader in the field of thyroid cancer diagnostics, management and surgery. At the national level, he is the Director of the Endocrine Surgery Group at the Canadian Society of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery. He is actively involved in research and presents his findings regularly at international conferences, most recently in London, UK at the World Congress on Thyroid Cancer. His current interests involve molecular testing of thyroid tumors and using the genetic mutation/alteration to optimize patient care. He is currently the director of a province wide pilot project aimed at providing molecular testing of thyroid nodules. The goals of this initiative are to avoid unnecessary thyroid surgery, provide optimal care to patients undergoing

surgery and to reduce government expenditures such that there is an overall cost savings benefit for the health care system. He is working closely with the Quebec ministry and government agencies in this very important endeavour.

Dr. Payne has been one of the pioneers in the development of sentinel lymph node biopsy and has published about this technique in both North America and Europe. He has been an instructor to other thyroid cancer specialists at the THANC thyroid course held in New York City. Dr. Payne has experience in endoscopic thyroidectomy using the minimally invasive video assisted technique. He has given several talks on this surgical procedure. Dr. Payne is certified by the American College of Surgeons to perform ultrasound guided biopsies of thyroid nodules. He regularly trains both otolaryngology and endocrinology residents and fellows in this skill.

At the community level, Dr. Payne is committed to several fund-raising initiatives, which include promoting further research into Head and Neck Oncology, at the Department of Otolaryngology, McGill University annual fund-raiser. He is the Chair of the JGH Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Annual 5km Race which involves 50 runners and raises funds for the hospital. In addition to running regularly, Dr. Payne has been playing hockey at very high levels since he was very young and still plays recreationally today.

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