

Hi Everyone

When I started these Departmental Acknowledgements back in November 2011 I did not give any thought to putting a limit on how many a certain individual can get in a defined time interval. Perhaps I should have as the line up for the 5 weeks consists of several "repeat offenders". I have every reason though to single out these individuals again as they are each the recipient of a distinguished award at either the University or National level. I also could have lumped them together in a single Acknowledgement but the scope of each deserves a singular mention.

This is so with this week's Acknowledgement which goes to **Hema Patel** for her being awarded the Canadian Pediatric Society's (CPS) Victor Marchessault Advocacy Award. This Award, given every two years, is named after the late Victor Marchessault who served as Executive Vice-President of the CPS from 1964-1997. An infectious disease scholar, Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Ottawa, and Chair of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization, Victor's remarkable tenure at the CPS included its emergence as a political force with multiple advocacy successes that contributed substantially to improved child health in our nation. These successes, which we take for granted as part of the current landscape of preventative medicine, included the fluoridation of water, the addition of Vitamin D to milk (with help from our own Charles Scriver & Arnold Steinberg), safety caps on prescription bottles, and seatbelts in automobiles. And this is only a partial list.

Hema follows in the noble tradition of Dr Marchessault. Hema is a passionate, effective, and dare I say, forceful advocate for children with complex care needs who represent one of our most challenging patient populations. She contributed significantly to the effort to effect a province-wide hearing screening protocol for children that will no doubt improve outcomes through early detection, diagnosis and intervention for children born with profound hearing loss. Her advocacy work is always driven by the simple question; "What is the best that we can do for these children and their families?" She strives to provide policies that go beyond simply taking care of the immediate problem in a hospital setting to one that is holistic embracing multiple complimentary health care disciplines that makes the family a true partner in care. And this care frequently takes place in the child's home. Her latest collaborative effort, the "Hospital@Home" has been presented to the provincial government, favorably received and will hopefully result in action shortly that will make a difference.

As I said before about Hema, it is a delight to see a professional's clinical expertise translate into advocacy that makes a difference for children beyond the reach of those that the clinician actually comes in contact with. Hema's success in this area should give each of us food for thought in our respective clinical domains.

Hema will receive this Award during the CPS Child and Youth Health Lecture, on **June 7th** at the CPS Annual meeting in London. I encourage all members of the Department who are attending the CPS meeting to be sure to be in the audience when Hema gets this Award.

I would like to close by acknowledging the efforts of **Denis Leduc**, a former CPS President and member of our Department, who nominated and advocated for Hema for this Award.

Have a great weekend everyone!

Michael Shevell