

Hi Everyone

Rehabilitation professionals are essential partners in health care. Anyone who has suffered a loss of function knows how crucial these experts are in restoring health and well-being. May is the Canadian National Physiotherapy month and as an exemplary representative of her profession, this week's Departmental Acknowledgement goes to **Debbie Friedman**.

Debbie is a physiotherapy graduate of McGill's School of Physical and Occupational Therapy (SPOT). As best as I can determine, she has spent her entire professional career at the MCH. She is a prime example of what passion for a particular concern and issue can do. Early on in her career Debbie became interested in rehabilitation issues pertaining to pediatric traumatic brain injury. Debbie realized early on that care was fragmented and far from seamless for affected children. This resulted in less than optimal outcomes. Rather than merely observing, Debbie became a passionate advocate for these children and was the will and administrative glue (along with many others) behind the creation of inter-disciplinary programs that bring together various services to provide focused and timely patient and family oriented care to all children with traumatic injuries. Indeed our Neurotrauma Program was the first to be recognized at a supra-regional level in Quebec. Now head of the MCH Trauma Program that embraces 5 distinct programs, Debbie has consistently led the group through multiple accreditations and reviews that has firmly established our hospital as a tertiary level pediatric and adolescent trauma centre at the leading edge of care provision.

In addition to fostering this cutting edge clinical service, Debbie has been true to our academic mission. Trauma rounds now occur regularly as does teaching to learners at all levels from varied health professional disciplines. Research in trauma is also a feature, largely embodied by a fellow physiotherapist Isabelle Gagnon who holds an FRQ-S salary support award, multiple external operating grants and an academic appointment as a full-time faculty member in SPOT. Debbie has also been relentless in her advocacy of prevention of traumatic injuries. She has been highly visible in the media emphasizing strategies and interventions that may lessen the likelihood of traumatic injury.

For her work Debbie has received an academic appointment in the Department of Pediatrics and multiple awards. These include an Award of Excellence from the MUHC, the Canadian Brain Injury Coalition Award and Le Prix Annuel de la Corporation Professionnelle des Physiotherapeute du Quebec.

If your work takes you into contact with a physiotherapist, I urge you to take the time to say "thank you".

I will be in Lithuania next week giving an invited talk to the Baltic Child Neurology Association. I will also be visiting my father's birth town of Shavl (yes that is where the name comes from). I will be the first member of his family to do so since emigration to NYC in 1904. Absolutely nothing remains of what was once a vibrant Jewish community (they even bulldozed the cemetery and put up an apartment building apparently) so I expect a morose visit, filled with heaviness. Saleem Razack will be handling the Departmental Acknowledgement next week.

Have a great weekend everyone!

Michael