

February 12, 2015

"I gave her my heart, but she wanted my soul"

Bob Dylan

Hi Everyone

One of the things that makes a pediatric hospital a tertiary facility is its ability to provide comprehensive services in clinical cardiovascular sciences. While it may be the CVT surgeon or the critical care units that gets most of the attention, the reality is that nothing would be possible without pediatric cardiologists. As someone who has done 'the walk' in pediatric cardiology here for a remarkable 29 years, **Marie Beland** receives this week's Departmental Acknowledgement. Timing is appropriate given that Valentine's Day tomorrow is about matters of the heart.

Marie received her undergraduate degree in the 'dismal science' of economics, before pursuing her medical studies at McGill. Like many of our attending staff, she is an MCH 'lifer' doing her pediatric residency and pediatric cardiology fellowship here. She left for a short stint to be a clinical research fellow at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto before returning to the MCH and McGill in 1986, where she has remained since. She is currently an Associate Professor at McGill.

Marie served as Director of the Division of Pediatric Cardiology from 1996-2008 inclusive and was known for her steady hand on the administrative rudder. She quietly and effectively took care of the needs of cardiology patients and forged close links with other essential elements in a quality comprehensive care network: CVT surgery, PICU, NICU and general pediatrics. This network over the years has delivered outcome results that place our hospital in the highest rungs of pediatric cardiovascular services. Under her tutelage, emerging onsite capabilities in interventional cardiology, fetal cardiology and advanced diagnostic imaging came into existence. When the Glen site opens in a couple of months, together with the current Division Director Adrian Dancea, she can take well-earned pride in what will be a superlative cardiac diagnostic and interventional platform. Her administrative skills were recognized by an MCH Foundation Award for Administrative Excellence in 2006.

As a clinician, Marie consistently exudes a calm, serene, Zen-like confidence often amidst some of the most challenging medical situations encountered in pediatrics. She is encyclopedic in her cardiovascular knowledge base with an innate skill of weaving together disparate information threads into a narrative and diagnosis that makes sense. She is an exemplar communicator, able to convey in a meaningful understandable way what is happening to parents, learners and fellow specialty colleagues. She has been a cardiology fellow or staff cardiologist here ever since I began and she has always been a personal pleasure to work with.

Not surprisingly, Marie's clinical expertise has been recognized by her international peers. She was selected as a founding member of the Board of Directors for the International Society for Nomenclature for Pediatric and Congenital Heart Disease and is a long-serving Executive Member of the International Working Group for Coding and Mapping of Nomenclatures for Congenital and Pediatric Heart Disease. Her diligence and systematic approach to the challenges of congenital heart disease, in which a normal anatomy is re-routed in a dizzying array of ways, for which we have benefited so long locally, is thus being applied to help children and clinicians worldwide.

For this "acting locally and impacting globally" approach of Marie's, we should all be grateful.

Have a great weekend (and Valentine's Day) everyone!

Michael

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