

November 12, 2021

This week's DA goes to another individual who received a Montreal Children's Hospital Foundation award on Oct. 27. Never one to blow her own horn, Dr. Indra Gupta tends to keep her impressive list of accomplishments and contributions to herself. Fortunately, her outstanding contributions were recently recognized with the 2021 MCHF Research Award of Excellence.



Indra's commitment to research excellence, not only with respect to her own research team, but also with respect to our entire pediatric research community at the RI-MUHC makes her the epitome of a dedicated clinician-scientist and an exemplary 'scientific citizen'. She joined the Division of Nephrology at Montreal Children's Hospital and the RI-MUHC in 1998. Since her appointment, she has developed a research program focusing on the molecular mechanisms underlying kidney development, and disorders that arise due to congenital malformations. Indra's curiosity and openness to creative ideas has been a hallmark of her work; recently she assembled an eclectic interdisciplinary team of scientists (including a plant scientist!) and clinicians to conduct a pre-clinical study exploring the genetic variants associated with kidney stones and the use of non-invasive natural therapeutics to reduce recurrence. Her research program has been continuously supported with funding from CIHR, Kidney Foundation, and NSERC, as well as Fondation des étoiles and the Grand Defi Pierre Lavoie. Indra has directly supervised and mentored >50 research trainees, including undergraduate students, medical students, graduate students and clinical fellows.

Not only has she succeeded in the cut-throat world of medical research, Indra has also provided exceptional leadership to the local, national and international research communities. This commitment to fostering excellent training, outstanding mentorship, and promotion of good science is reflected in her generosity in serving the broader community. Currently, as the RI-MUHC Director of Pediatric Research (Interim) and Deputy Executive Director (Interim), she actively promotes and enhances the success of the pediatric research enterprise. From supporting new investigators in their salary award applications to interfacing with the MCH Foundation and donors, Indra takes on each of these tasks with positive enthusiasm. In addition to serving on many RI committees, Indra was a member and chair of the MCH site's Animal Care Committee - a time-consuming and under-appreciated activity. Externally, Indra's knowledge and research expertise is recognized in her roles as Scientific Officer and Chair of the Grant Review Panel of the Kidney Foundation of Canada, and as an organizer of the International Developmental Nephrology Workshop that will be held in Montreal in 2022 (delayed due to COVID-19). The vast majority of these activities are unremunerated, but are 'part of the game' in the world of research.

Please join me in congratulating Indra on the well-deserved award, and thanking her for her many years of service to the MCH and the MUHC.

Have a good weekend.

Beth Foster, MD, MSCE, FRCPC
Professor of Pediatrics
Chair, Dept. of Pediatrics McGill University
Pediatrician-in-Chief, Montreal Children's Hospital of the MUHC
Harvey Guyda Chair in Pediatrics