Annual Report
1996 - 1997

Chair’s Report

The University of Toronto is home to Canada’s largest department of paediatrics. The Department’s overall goal is to create, evaluate, disseminate, and utilize knowledge to improve the health of children in our city, province, country, and the throughout the world.

As we look forward to the new millennium, it is important to reflect upon our past achievements, take stock of our present strengths and weaknesses, and build for tomorrow’s challenges and opportunities. Accordingly, the theme for this year’s annual report of the Department of Paediatrics is “Honouring our past and Building for our Future”. Each Division within our Department has reflected on this theme, and provided a brief vignette of its past achievements and current progress.

The history of our department is intimately tied to the Hospital for Sick Children (HSC), founded in 1875. Much has changed since the beginning of patient care at HSC. During the early years, children under the age of 2 years were not admitted, and parents were forbidden to visit. At the end of the 19th century, the average length of stay was 54 days. Today, infants and children receive care in a state-of-the-art facility with single rooms, allowing parents to spend as much time as they want with their children. Thanks to continuing advances in outpatient care, HSC’s inpatient capacity has decreased from its high of 810 beds to less than half that number, and the current length of stay is 5 days on average. In the near future, implementation of the recommendations of the Province of Ontario’s Health Care Restructuring Commission will result in further changes in HSC’s delivery of paediatric care. One such change is the development of the Child Health Network, a Toronto-wide partnership that will allow more HSC patients to receive primary and secondary care at hospitals that are closer to their homes.

Another key mission of the Department has been the dissemination of knowledge to trainees, other health-care professionals, and the public. In the 1903-04 academic calendar of the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Medicine, one finds the first mention of a “special course of instruction in Disease of Children”. In 1937, The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada recognized paediatrics as a freestanding specialty. Educational strategies within the Department continue to evolve, with new approaches to undergraduate and postgraduate education as well as initiatives to establish research in medical education.

Ever since Maggie, HSC’s first patient, was severely scalded with boiling water, the importance of prevention of childhood injury and illness has been recognized. Today, educational outreach and service to our local, national, and international community remains a priority. Recent community-service achievements include the internationally recognized Motherisk Program, which provides mothers-to-be with the latest information on the use of medications and household products during pregnancy, and a program designed to prevent accidents in the home and on bicycles. Both these programs have been highly successful. In the future, the expansion of our Internet, telemedicine, and other electronic information-transfer systems will assist in the dissemination of new knowledge and the practice of evidence-based health care.

The creation of knowledge by the Department’s faculty has resulted in dramatic improvements in child health. During the early part of this century, mandatory pasteurization of milk and the use of Pablum (the first ready-to-use vitamin-enriched baby cereal, one of the Department’s inventions) dramatically decreased infant mortality and morbidity in Canada and throughout the world. Other advances by our faculty members have led HSC to achieve international recognition as a research and treatment centre for disorders such as congenital heart disease, immunodeficiencies, bone marrow transplantation, and
cystic fibrosis. Our future cadre of scientists will require an even greater investment of money and time to support their clinical and laboratory-based research initiatives. The Department of Paediatrics looks forward to the new millennium and to the many changes it will bring. Although it is impossible to predict what will happen in the next 100 years, we can be certain that the strategies to maintain health and to treat disease will bear little resemblance to our present efforts. What will not change is the skill and dedication of the physicians in the Department who provide care, train future caregivers, and develop new health-care strategies for our children’s children.

Hugh O’Brodovich, MD, FRCP(C)
Professor and Chairman of Paediatrics, University of Toronto
Paediatrician in Chief, Hospital for Sick Children
Senior Scientist, Hospital for Sick Children Research Institute
AWARDS

TEACHING AWARDS

HARRY BAIN AWARD to a full-time member of the Department of Paediatrics who demonstrates excellence in teaching as nominated by core paediatric residents.

Dr. Elizabeth Harvey, Paediatric Nephrology

MARVIN GERSTEIN AWARD to a part-time member of the Department of Paediatrics who demonstrates excellence in teaching as nominated by core paediatric residents.

Dr. Marvin Gans, General Paediatrics

ONDAATJE AWARD to a senior resident for excellence in clinical teaching as nominated by core paediatric residents.

Dr. Sandy Arnold, PGY 4, Associate Chief Resident
Dr. Wendy Edwards, PGY4, Chief Resident

PERLS AWARDS (Paediatric Educational Resident Lecture Series Award) to faculty members who have demonstrated commitment to excellence in teaching at the Paediatric academic sessions.

Dr. Bairbre Connolly, Radiology
Dr. Bernice Krafchik, Dermatology

CLINICAL AWARDS

THE SAUNDERS PRIZE to a senior resident who has demonstrated excellence in clinical paediatrics.

Dr. Michelle Shouldice, Core Paediatric Program

RESEARCH AWARDS

FREDERICK FITZGERALD TISDALL Awards for excellence in resident research.

General Paediatric Section

1st Place Dr. Sunita Vohra, PGY3
2nd Place Dr. Dat Tran, PGY4

Paediatric Subspecialty Section

1st Place Dr. Jill Hamilton PGY5 Paediatric Endocrinology
2nd Place Dr. David Wilson Clinical Fellow Paediatric GI/Nutrition