

# NEWSLETTER

## CHAIR'S REPORT

Now that the summer has wound down, and sweaters and coats are back, it is time once again to think about academic renewal. I do hope that everyone was able to enjoy some rest and relaxation during the summer, whether in Toronto or far away.

So what is in store for us in the new academic year:

- Daune MacGregor has stepped down as Associate Chair/Chief of the Department after seven stellar years. Her contributions have been, and continue to be, enormous. There are insufficient words to describe her role in, and impact on, departmental activities. Thank you, Daune. The new Associate Chair/Chief is Jeremy Friedman, who is well known to everyone and will be making his own mark on the department in the weeks and months to come.
- Division Head searches are proceeding in Neurology (far advanced), Immunology/Allergy and Clinical and Metabolic Genetics (just getting underway).
- New faculty joining the Department include:
  - Maarten Egeler as Director of Bone Marrow and Stem Cell Transplantation
  - Michaela Cada in Haematology/Oncology
  - Melissa Carter in Genetics
  - Diego Bassani as a Clinical Epidemiologist
  - Gerda Meijler and Boriana Parvez in Neonatology.
- Prof. Zulfiqar Bhutta of the Aga Khan University in Karachi, Pakistan, and a recognized world leader in global child health research has started his sabbatical in the Department of Paediatrics and SickKids International, and will participate in a number of global health activities during his time with us.
- Watch the new boys on the block in global child health research: Dan Roth and Diego Bassani have made a considerable splash this summer with their Rising Stars' funding.

**Now here's the rub:** It is becoming increasingly difficult for us to meet our commitments to Undergraduate Medical Education based on a process of volunteerism. There are just too few faculty members who step forward to teach the preclerkship students in ASCMII, Problem-based Learning, etc. As a result, much of the responsibility is placed on our fellows. While this is good some of the time, it is not so good when it occurs most of the time. So we're going to have to assign undergraduate teaching responsibilities to many of the faculty not now participating. With long lead times, it ought to be possible to rearrange clinics and other commitments.

**Academic Away Policy:** The Division Heads ought to have shared with their division members the new Academic Away Policy which increases accountability for time spent away from the hospital for academic activities. Please ensure that you read this policy carefully and comply with its spirit.



**Some important activities for the upcoming year include:**

1. Renewal of the Department of Paediatrics Strategic Plan in harmony with those of the hospital and university;
2. Continued simplification of the Career Development and Compensation Program, including harmonization of the annual and triennial assessments with those of the Research Institute;
3. Key recruitments to the faculty at both senior and junior levels.

This promises once again to be an exciting and productive year.

Best wishes,

Denis

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**NEW RECRUITS**



**Paediatric Medicine**

Dr. Diego Bassani is a scientist at The Hospital for Sick Children (Department of Paediatrics - Paediatric Medicine) and an assistant professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Bassani received an M.Sc and a PhD in epidemiology from the Universidade Federal de Pelotas, Brazil. He has conducted important research on the causes and distribution of child deaths in India, identification of risk factors for child mortality and impact of policy changes on child health, survival and development. Bassani currently works on international projects in maternal and child health epidemiology, collaborating with the Centre for Epidemiological Research in Pelotas, Brazil, with the Department of International Health at Johns Hopkins University and with Saving Newborn Lives in South Africa and Uganda. He is also a member of the Child Health and Epidemiology Reference Group (CHERG), chaired by Dr. Robert Black, responsible for the global estimates of neonatal and child deaths.



**Paediatric Emergency Medicine**

Tania Principi recently completed her Pediatric Emergency Medicine fellowship at The Hospital for Sick Children. She is currently undertaking work to complete her Masters of Health Research Methodology at McMaster University. As a new staff in the Emergency Department she will continue her research and teaching efforts with a focus on measuring and improving the effectiveness of emergency care.



**Clinical Genetics**

Dr. Melissa Carter completed her Masters in Molecular Genetics at Queen's University in Kingston, followed by a medical degree at McMaster University in Hamilton. She completed her residency in Clinical Genetics at Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa. Following residency she completed a fellowship in Developmental Paediatrics at Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital in Toronto. Melissa joined the Division in September of 2011. She has started an Autism Genetics clinic and has a clinical and research interest in chromosomal and genomic disorders causing autism and other developmental disabilities.



### **Neonatology**

Dr. Robert Jankov joined SickKids in January 2011 as a Clinician-Scientist in the Division of Neonatology and Senior Scientist in the Physiology and Experimental Medicine Program, having been recruited from Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, where he was first appointed in 2003. Robert received his medical degree from the University of Melbourne, Australia, and trained in Paediatrics at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne. He first came to Toronto in 1996 to undertake a Clinical Fellowship in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, which was followed by a PhD in the Department of Physiology at the University of Toronto. Robert's research is focused upon understanding the cellular and molecular mechanisms of vascular remodeling, right-ventricular dysfunction and nitric oxide unresponsiveness in pulmonary hypertension during early life. He has been the recipient of a number of training, support and infrastructure awards, including a Career Development Award from the Canadian Child Health Clinician Scientist Program and a CIHR New Investigator Award.



Dr. Gerda Meijler joined the University of Toronto, Division of Neonatology in September 2011. Gerda is a neonatologist from Leiden University Medical Center in the Netherlands, where she set up neonatal neurology and neuroimaging and was the primary investigator of the Leiden neonatal neuroimaging group. She received her MD from the University of Amsterdam and her PhD in neuroimaging and neurodevelopmental studies from VU University Medical Center, Amsterdam. Meijler is well known for her work in neuroimaging studies of the neonatal brain. She teaches on this subject at the Imperial School of Medicine, London, and worldwide at IPOKRATES postgraduate courses. She has written a teaching book on neonatal cranial ultrasonography. The second edition of this book is now in press. Her major research and clinical interest has so far been development of and injury to the preterm infant's and fetal brain. In addition, she has focused on optimizing cranial ultrasound and MRI protocols for reliable detection of neonatal brain injury. Meijler would like to continue her work on preterm brain injury and optimizing neonatal neuroimaging. She is also studying the performance and reliability of cranial ultrasonography as compared to MRI on detecting neonatal cerebellar injury. Meijler joins the department of neonatology as a clinical-investigator and will lead the development of a neonatal neuro-intensive ward. This will include intense brain monitoring of neonates with (increased risk of) brain injury and care of these neonates by a specialized team.



### **Haematology/Oncology**

Dr. Michaela Cada completed her undergraduate and medical studies at the University of Ottawa, and then moved to Toronto where she finished her training in General Paediatrics and Paediatric Haematology/Oncology at The Hospital for Sick Children. Following the completion of her clinical training, she pursued further research training at the Harvard School of Public Health, Harvard University, where she obtained a Master in Public Health Degree with specialization in Clinical Epidemiology and Decision Analysis. She then worked as a senior Clinical Trust Fellow in Paediatric Oncology at The Great Ormond Street Hospital in London, UK, before accepting a staff position in Haematology/Oncology at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa. Her main research interests are in the transition of care of paediatric patients to the adult health-care world, and in the development of novel and cost-effective diagnostic and treatment strategies for patients with bone marrow failure and myelodysplasia.



### **Cardiology**

Mike Seed was appointed as a Staff Cardiologist at SickKids and Assistant Professor in Paediatrics in July 2011 and will be cross appointed to Diagnostic Imaging. He received his medical degree at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in the United Kingdom where he initially trained in paediatrics before completing a residency in Radiology at Leeds. He undertook fellowships in paediatric radiology and cardiac MRI followed by a fellowship in paediatric cardiology at SickKids. Mike will be splitting his clinical time between cardiac imaging and in-patient cardiology. His research has been into the development of fetal cardiovascular MRI and he is the recipient of Labatt Innovations funding for his work on the fetal circulation.