

Office of Surgical Research

Department of Surgery

Meet Dr. Mary Brindle!

Dr. Brindle is a Pediatric General Surgeon and has been practicing in Calgary for more than 8 years. She attended Medical School at Dalhousie University, completed a General Surgery residency at the University of British Columbia, and followed up with a Pediatric Surgery Fellowship at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. Dr. Brindle has also conducted additional research at Stanford University, and obtained a Masters of Public Health, from the Harvard School of Public Health.

She first arrived in Calgary with the idea to continue the pursuit of basic science research, as she had done some research in gene therapy and fetal surgery during her training. She soon realized, however, that the clinical questions being encountered were more interesting to her; she started to look at the strategies used to care for pediatric surgery patients, and considered how surgeons might do a better job.

It didn't take Dr. Brindle long to realize that she was encountering significant limits in terms of constructing these studies and analyzing data. She recalls some great advice from her partner, and additional insights provided by Dr. Elijah Dixon, which prompted her to pursue a Masters of Public Health at Harvard.

"This experience really turned research around for me and has allowed me to look at surgical outcomes of patients on a larger scale. I have really focused a lot of my research on pediatric surgical problems but I am now starting to think about the structure of health systems in Canada and beyond, and how they affect the outcomes of patients. My training in epidemiology has also given me the tools to better mentor surgical trainees interested in research."



Image provided by Dr. Mary Brindle

There are a few publications that Dr. Brindle is particularly proud of. She has a paper that came out in 2014 in *Pediatrics* that was created using an international dataset, and provided a prediction rule to identify those patients with diaphragmatic hernia at the highest risk of mortality. These findings may allow for identifying best locations of care for patients, and identification of high-risk groups to target for studies and higher-risk interventions. The publication was identified as a "recommended paper" from the American Pediatric Surgical Association. *"It is very geeky of me to say this but I actually found the statistics involved in designing this prediction rule really interesting. It got me thinking more about what could be done on a larger scale in terms of data, cases and impact."*

Dr. Brindle's enthusiasm, commitment and dedication to our missions of research, education and service are exemplary. Her energy and optimism are appreciated by colleagues and students. A great colleague!

-Dr. John Kortbeek
Professor and Head, Department of Surgery

Dr. Brindle has been increasingly involved in the administrative aspects of Calgary surgical care and would like to explore how administrative decisions and design can be used to improve health outcomes.

This year she will be heading to Boston for a year long sabbatical to work with the Harvard School of Public Health and Ariadne labs looking at innovations in health systems, and how they might be used to improve health care outcomes. Through ongoing involvement with administration in Calgary, she is hoping to further develop these ideas. She is also working alongside several members of pediatric surgery to find ways of creating multidisciplinary surgical research teams capable of leveraging funds to support surgical research at Alberta Children's Hospital.

Upcoming Deadlines:

CSR Fund	January 30 th
DOM-DOS Fund	March 30 th
Surgeons' Day	June 12 th
SSP	November 30 th

Ethics and You: What to Know?



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Tip 1: ARECCI #QualityAssurance

A pRoject Ethics Community Consensus Initiative (ARECCI), an initiative of Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions, developed the four-step, web-based ARECCI Ethics Screening Tool, which helps determine category of risk and identify the appropriate review pathway for projects. This enables investigators to plan appropriate risk-mitigating strategies before involving participants. For more information go to: www.aihealthsolutions.ca