

# Rural Review

December | 2018

## Seasons GREETINGS from Dr. Johnston



Happy holidays from myself and all of the staff at Distributed Learning & Rural Initiatives! It has been a busy 2018 at the DLRI; a year of changes and new initiatives. We hope that you are enjoying our newsletter and we are looking forward to launching our new website in early 2019 - stay tuned!

This year's Cabin Fever program includes a plenary address by Dr. Sandy MacDonald, who will speak about his career in the Canadian Arctic, a screening of *Greg's Wings*, and a closing plenary on mindfulness as part of a busy professional life. We hope that you will consider joining us in Banff as we continue to build and strengthen our community of rural educators!

I hope that over this holiday season each of you has an opportunity to reflect on all of the good work you do, for your patients, your communities, and for the learners who you teach and mentor.

From all of us at DLRI , Happy Holidays!

## The ROAD ahead : INTERVIEW with a rural physician Dr. Dorcas Kennedy

Recently retired, Dr. Dorcas Kennedy was a family physician in rural Alberta for over 3 decades. She was also a preceptor for half of that time, mentoring over 30 students in small communities. DLRI was lucky enough to interview her as she reflects on her career.

**Where did you study to become a doctor?**

I am a U of C Grad, 1986 (the class of 'pigs'). I did my residency in Edmonton at Misericordia Community Hospital.

**How long have you been practicing medicine?**

I practiced medicine for 32 years. When I made the decision to become a doctor, I had actually been a nurse for 6 years, so I was a

mature student, but was always involved in health care.

**What attracted you to practice in a rural area?**

I am originally from Montreal, but my nursing degree took me up to the Northwest Territories. After med school I practiced for 7 years in Claresholm, 5 years in Edson, and Lethbridge for 18 years, where I raised my children. I had a large concentration on Emergency medicine and Obstetrics in the rural practice. In my career I have also worked in rural hospitals in New Zealand and the outback of Australia. My husband is a biologist, so we both naturally fit into a rural environment.

**What are the benefits of being a rural doc?**

When practicing in a rural area, there is a strong sense of community. Everyone knows where to get medical attention, and everyone knows who you are. There is not as many house visits as previous times, but there is still those patients who require in-home care. You get to witness the full continuum of care, a full-on family practice. I spent time delivering babies and forming a relationship with the mothers and their children. When I moved to Lethbridge, some patients even followed me from Claresholm. Working in a rural environment is an exciting, rewarding place to practice and no day is the same.

**Why should learners go rural?**

Residents are given a lot more responsibility than other learning environments. There's so much opportunity, especially if there's a cohort of learners. They come out of their residency ready to practice, as they have gained an enormous amount of experience. The patients are so grateful for speaking with learners, as they are given an increase in understanding and follow-up. I received letters expressing gratitude for interactions with residents; patients enjoy them that much.

**What has been a highlight of your career?**

I loved the obstetrical component of my practice, it's a joy to see new life. I was privileged to see the development of both mothers and their children.

**What advice would you give to the next generation of preceptors?**

Enthusiasm is contagious. If preceptors show their energy, the people around them and students will be energized. Remember, they will one day have your job, so it is critical to impart a good attitude on them. Occasionally there may be performance issues, but it is always nice to have a program back-up. Taking on a student allows you to stay up-to-date, informed, and to consider the novel approaches.

**What do you plan to do during your retirement?**

I hope to spend time with my husband and family. Practice can take you away from each other for long periods of time. I'd also like to travel and do some outdoor activities.

Good luck on your retirement, Dr. Kennedy!



Ready to catch the Cabin Fever?  
Join us from February 8-10, 2019 in  
Banff for the largest rural conference  
in Western Canada.

Hear Teri Price from *Greg's Wings*,  
an organization dedicated to  
addressing gaps in the health care  
system. Join our keynote speaker,  
Dr. Sandy Macdonald, to learn about  
practice in Nunavut. Close the  
conference with a session on  
mindfulness practice from Dr. Allan  
Donsky, plus much more!

Register below **before January 4th!**

[Register now](#)

[Download the app](#)



The Society of Rural Physicians of  
Canada is hosting the 27th Annual  
Rural and Remote medicine course  
in Halifax NS April 4-6, 2019  
This event consists of more than 160  
sessions, small group sessions,  
hands-on workshops and Rural  
Critical Care modules. A family-  
friendly (free day care included)  
collegial atmosphere drawing  
learners from all over Canada and  
around the world.

[More info](#)

## Reach the Physicians of TOMORROW



### Interested in becoming a teaching physician?

As health care professionals, preceptors leave an important legacy by teaching the physicians of tomorrow. Preceptors experience help in their workload, better patient education, enhanced credentials, and appreciation from their community.

Interested in teaching a medical learner?  
We can help facilitate that.

[Contact us](#)  
[Top 8 Reasons to Precept](#)

## Did you know?

If out of province learners don't book learning experiences through U of C or U of A, then they aren't registered with



CPSA. Protect yourself and them by making sure any learners you take on have gone through the proper channels to register their rotation.

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## Teaching **TIP** of the month

### **TOP TIP: Simulation Scenario**

After running a simulation scenario and doing a quick debrief, run the **same** scenario again to let the learner practice what they learned. Repeat again if necessary.



- **Jack Bromley**, Cabin Fever 2017

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## Happy **HOLIDAYS** to you and yours



The team at Distributed Learning & Rural Initiatives wants to thank you for a wonderful year and recognize your contributions within our community.

We hope you and your family have a happy, safe, holiday season!

**See you in 2019!**

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**Stay connected**

