McMaster Well Represented at BRT 2017

The BRT is an annual international interdisciplinary meeting hosted in Canada that brings together health professionals from across the world to share their experiences in delivering safe surgery in low-resource settings. Dr. Andrew Giles (PGY 4) presented his work on obstetric fistula completed as part of his Harvard MPH. Dr. Brian Cameron participated as a panel member for seminars on Developing a Curriculum, and Pearls and Preparation for Successful Partnerships.


The full BRT2017 conference program can be viewed at bethuneroundtable.com

McMaster residents, faculty and alumni at BRT 2017 - (back row L to R) Mira MacLellan (GenSurg PGY2), Matthew Chan (ER), Stacey and Andrew Giles (GenSurg, PGY4), Cecily Bos (GenSurg, PGY2), Brian Cameron (PedSurg, Hamilton), Abdullah Saleh (PedSurg, Edmonton).

(front row L to R) Stephen Foster (GenSurg, Angola), Esther Chin (Ob/Gyn.), Steven Ttendo (Anesthesia, Uganda), Yvonne Ying (Plastics, Ottawa), Dante Pascali (Ob/Gyn, Ottawa), Michelle Davey (GenSurg, Winchester)
Guyana Postgraduate Director Visits McMaster

The Department of Anesthesia and the International Surgery Desk were pleased to welcome Dr. Alexandra Harvey to McMaster this past August. Dr. Harvey is the program director for the Anesthesia residency program at the University of Guyana, and the director of the Institute of Health Sciences Education in Georgetown, Guyana. The purpose of her visit was to meet academic leaders including Dr. Parveen Wasi, McMaster’s Assistant Dean PGME, to observe clinical teaching and to build on the long relationship that exists between McMaster University and Guyana. In 2006, McMaster faculty and the Canadian Association of General Surgeons helped start a postgraduate training program in Surgery in Guyana. Inspired by this collaboration, Dr. Harvey turned to the McMaster Department of Anesthesia for assistance in developing an Anesthesia residency program. A four year residency program in Anesthesia was established, and in 2017, the first resident graduated. This is an incredible milestone.

To mark Dr. Harvey’s visit, the Department of Anesthesia and the ISD hosted a forum on International Medical Training Partnerships with Dr. Harvey as the guest of honour. She challenged the audience to think about how to build quality partnerships that train competent physicians. In an era of competency based medical education, it was a timely message. It was also an inspiring message that highlighted the need for collaboration. Often medical education, especially in low/middle income countries, can be delivered in isolated ‘silos’, with little discussion between disciplines. Our aim is to harness the resources of several departments and work together to support international medical education. The work is just beginning, but the future is full of promise!

As part of our ongoing training partnership, Anesthesia and Surgery residents and fellows will be undertaking clinical placements at McMaster.

We welcome Dr. Hemraj Ramcharran (pictured at right), who recently started a clinical fellowship in General Surgery and laparoscopy at St. Joseph’s Healthcare Hamilton. He completed his General Surgery training in Guyana in 2011, obtained a Master of Surgery in General Surgery (ChM) through the University of Edinburgh, and is currently a Senior Registrar at the Georgetown Public Hospital in Guyana. At present, Dr. Ramcharran is training with Dr. Manoj Sayal in Oakville, and will join the colorectal and HPB specialty rotations at Juravinski Hospital in the new year. Dr. Ramcharran is participating in courses at the Centre for Minimal Access Surgery, and attended the recent Principles and Practice of Clinical Research course. Dr. Ramcharran hopes to lead improvements in laparoscopic surgery and clinical surgical research capacity in Guyana upon his return home.

Thanks go to the St. Joseph’s International Outreach Program (SJIOP) and Charles Johnson Charitable Foundation for sponsoring Dr. Ramcharran’s stay, as well as to McMaster’s Postgraduate Medical Education office, and Dr. Michael Marcaccio (Director, General Surgery Residency Training Program, McMaster) for their efforts in facilitating Dr. Ramcharran’s visit.

Thanks! TO THE CHARLES JOHNSON CHARITABLE FUND & SJIOP

Visiting scholars from Uganda and Guyana who undertake clinical fellowships in the Department of Surgery have their local accommodation and living expenses sponsored and facilitated through the St. Joseph’s International Outreach Program (SJIOP) and McMaster’s Department of Postgraduate Medical Education. It costs about $15,000 to sponsor a six month fellowship, with the visiting scholar and their home institution providing airfare and ongoing home salary support. We are grateful to the Charles Johnson Charitable Fund for donating $25,000 over the past two years to the SJIOP to support our surgical visiting scholar program. If you would like to support this work, please consider making a donation to the SJIOP to assist us in our partnership training projects.
Dr. Brad Petrisor, (Associate Professor, Orthopaedic Surgery, McMaster University), travelled to Port-au-Prince, Haiti in May 2017 with Team Broken Earth. The mission of the pan-Canadian team was focused on the delivery of a third orthopaedic trauma symposium to approximately 60 medical residents and physicians representing four local hospitals: Haiti’s University and Educational Hospital (HUEH); Hôpital Université de la Paix; Hôpital Justinien; and, Hôpital Bernard Mevs. The purpose of the symposium was to upgrade knowledge and skills for those practicing orthopaedic trauma care, including the treatment of upper and lower extremity injuries. An extensive lab was set up that allowed participants to practice drilling, and choose screws, plates and other equipment typically used in orthopaedic surgery. Those taking part received a Broken Earth certificate upon completion of the two-day course. The event was funded by an educational grant from DePuy Synthes, part of Johnson and Johnson Medical Products.

Dr. Brad Petrisor (far right) with members of Team Broken Earth in Haiti in May. [Photo credit: Karen McCarthy, ‘Not for the faint of heart’, St. John’s Telegram, May 20, 2017]

Recent Events: The Global Surgery Forum was S.R.O. (*Standing Room Only) and Yale guest highlighted Academic Global Surgery.

Over 100 residents and faculty from the Departments of Surgery, Anesthesia and Obstetrics/Gynecology attended a May joint rounds presentation: “Making Global Surgery Part of Your Career”. Speakers were: Dr. Jean Chamberlain, Dr. Hilary McCormick and Dr. Stephen Foster, with Dr. Andrew Giles as panel moderator. There was lots of great questions and discussion by attendees at MUMC and the linked-in sites. Two weeks later, the Division of Pediatric Surgery welcomed as its Visiting Professor, Dr. Doruk Ozgediz from Yale University, who referenced his recently co-authored textbook entitled, Academic Global Surgery.

Travis Schroeder: ISD 2017 Resident Scholarship Award Winner

Congratulations go to Dr. Travis Schroeder (PGY3 General Surgery), winner of the 2017 ISD Resident Scholarship.

Dr. Schroeder plans to complete a 7-week rotation at the Centro Evangélico de Medicina do Lubango (CEML), Angola, in early 2018. His primary supervisor will be Dr. Stephen Foster. It was Dr. Foster’s vision of providing a stable, central hospital in southern Angola that could serve as a base for remote clinics throughout the region that led to the opening of the CEML in 2006. We look forward to including a report on Dr. Schroeder’s experiences in a future edition.
Editorial: Global Surgery - Getting Involved

The McMaster Department of Surgery has a large global footprint. We are proud of the dozens of surgical faculty who are engaged in groundbreaking international education and research projects and partnerships. Many of these have been highlighted in the McMaster International Compendium. International engagement attracts faculty, residents, and grants and is part of our academic mission.

The International Surgery Desk has since 2010 facilitated, shared, and led some of these international activities – particularly focused on our partnerships in Guyana, Uganda, and Haiti. Our faculty have also worked with numerous non-governmental organizations providing surgical missions for patient care and clinical capacity-building, often taking our residents with them. Those who visit a low-resource setting always learn more than they give, and come home changed and motivated. The growing interest in global surgery was illustrated in May when over 100 McMaster residents and faculty attended grand rounds on ‘Making Global Surgery Part of Your Career’.

There is an overwhelming unmet need for surgical care globally. It may be hard to know where to start, whether you have the time, and how you might contribute. Surgeons planning to visit a low-income country don’t want to just be a ‘medical tourist’, and also may be concerned about the practicalities of personal health and safety. Here are a few suggestions for getting involved:

⇒ Educate yourself about global health. McMaster residents have started a new Global Health Innovation Forum (MacGlobal.org) with a program of monthly evening Modules and a Certificate for graduates. Read the new Global Surgery: The Essentials textbook for a great overview with many practical details (see below).

⇒ Join a colleague on a trip. Often a good starting point is to join a colleague on an overseas visit, but you will make the most impact when you go back again. Repeat visits to the same location build relationships and capacity. For example, the Canadian Association of General Surgeons is looking for surgeons to teach in Mombasa, Kenya.

⇒ Join and Donate. The Canadian Network for International Surgery, St. Joseph’s International Outreach Program, Guyana Help the Kids, and Save The Mothers are examples of registered charities with strong McMaster links and leadership. They deserve our support – if you can’t visit, donate!

Global Surgery: The Essentials provides an introduction to the unmet needs, epidemiological, socioeconomic and even political factors that frame Global Surgery. Following upon an understanding of these issues, the text is a practical guide that enables the reader on several levels: to work cross culturally, build relationships and negotiate the logistical challenges of bringing surgical care to low resource settings; to develop an approach to the management of various clinical conditions that would be unfamiliar to most “western” surgeons.

Thanks to all of you who volunteer so much time for others! Please contact me if you would like to share your global surgery successes or are looking to find out how you can get involved.

Sincerely,

Brian H. Cameron, MD
Director, International Surgery Desk
McMaster University