

The first two rheumatology graduates in Quebec were Dr. Monique Camerlain and Dr. Henri Ménard, in 1973.

In 1975, the Université de Montréal's RDU was inaugurated; Dr. Guy Germain of Notre-Dame Hospital was its director, assisted by Dr. Jacques Gascon and Dr. Alain Prat. The RDU held a special association with Montreal's Hôtel-Dieu Hospital through Dr. Jacques Durivage, Dr. J.A. Blais, Dr. Vaillancourt and Dr. Demers, all of whom trained in rheumatology in the United States or in Europe. St-Luc Hospital participated courtesy of the involvement of Dr. Murat Kaludi and Dr. Claude Blondin.

Around 1975, McGill University's RDU was formally established, with Dr. Kirk Osterland of the Royal Victoria Hospital as its director, assisted by Dr. Louis Johnson, Dr. Cooper Stacey, and Dr. Douglas Kinsella. The RDU was also able to draw on the expertise of many other specialists, including rheumatologists Dr. John Martin, Dr. David Hawkins, and later, Dr. Hyman Tannenbaum and Dr. John Esdaile from the Montreal General Hospital, and Dr. Lyon Lapin, Dr. Morton Kapusta, and Dr. Murray Baron from the Jewish General Hospital.

In 1976, the last RDU was established in Canada at Université Laval in Quebec City. Dr. Lucien Latulippe was named its director, assisted by Dr. Jean Rousseau and myself.

In the early 20th century, rheumatology was generally misunderstood, ignored, and not viewed as a priority by most universities in the Western world. Due to sheer ignorance, the prevalent belief was that rheumatology had nothing to

offer arthritis sufferers. The result was a teaching void. Thanks in large part to the RDUs' threefold vocation of care, research, and teaching, a new generation of highly skilled practitioners was trained.

In 1970, there were approximately 25 rheumatologists in Quebec. The majority of these were internists and physiatrists who had taken advantage of the grandfather clause prior to certification. In 2014, there are more than 100. Since the advent of biotherapies in the early 2000s, a major step forward has been taken in the fight against arthritis. Let us hope that this continues.

#### References

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