
Why I Chose to #MakeRheum for Rheumatology

By Caroline Rita Barry, MD, FRCPC

As a small town girl from Rothesay, New Brunswick, I was born into a big family with parents in the health profession. I attended grade school in my hometown earning my bilingual certificate by the end of the twelfth grade. I balanced school with a career in competitive tennis that soon ended as I headed to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where I completed my science degree. Following my sister and father's footsteps with careers in medicine, I jumped ship to St. John's, Newfoundland, to obtain my medical degree at the Memorial University of Newfoundland.

My interest in rheumatology began in the early stages of my medical education. I was introduced to the specialty during a medical student summer observership supported by the New Brunswick Medical Society. I was then linked with a local rheumatologist, Dr. Eric Grant, who soon became a mentor to me. This early exposure triggered my immediate passion for rheumatology. I furthered my interest during my clerkship years, where I found musculoskeletal medicine and immunology appealing. Making the move back to Halifax in 2013, I chose to pursue a residency in internal medicine at Dalhousie University with the goal of specializing in rheumatology.

By my third year of residency, I had gained more experience in the field by completing electives both at the University of Toronto and the University of Western Ontario. I was fortunate to stay close to home and train with the rheu-



Our best attempt at an Ellen DeGeneres selfie, featuring (from left to right) Dr. Trudy Taylor, Dr. Caroline Barry, Dr. Alexa Smith, Dr. Evelyn Sutton and Dr. Alexandra Legge.

matology program at Dalhousie University where I am now in my fifth year with the most supportive Program Director, Dr. Trudy Taylor.

The specialty of rheumatology is a hidden gem. The ever-changing diseases, therapies and patient population make it appealing as a never-ending academic journey. Rheumatology allows for continuity of care and long term relationships with your patients. With the increasing need for rheumatologists across the country, there is ample opportunity for young physicians. I cannot imagine a more rich and rewarding specialty both in learning and in friendships.

As my time as a resident is nearing completion, I thank all the rheumatologists I have met along my journey, with an honourable mention to my staff in Halifax who

are more than just staff, they are family. My husband and I look forward to our move back to our home province in the summer of 2018 to start practice in Saint John, New Brunswick.

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