

News from Your Colleagues in Newfoundland and Labrador

By Sean Hamilton, MD, FRCPC

When I returned from my sabbatical in October 2018, our number of adult rheumatologists in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) had grown to a total of six from just a nucleus of three for many years, which has increased greatly our capacity to improve rheumatic health care delivery in NL.

The old guard continues, though. These are Dr. Proton Rahman's words in the third person: "Proton has been a fixture for over 20 years as a rheumatologist at St. Clare's Mercy Hospital in St. John's. He has outlasted most of the furniture, ceiling and walls (three floods in his office during this time). He continues to see general rheumatology patients with a particular interest in spondyloarthritis. Along with his genetic and pharmacogenetic studies in psoriatic arthritis (still looking, but no clinically actionable genes have been identified), he has broadened his research program to look at real-world evidence and health services research in spondyloarthritis (strategies for wait-list management). His administrative duties are fewer now, as he is no longer Associate Dean of Clinical Research at Memorial University. In his leisure time, he is running the hills of St. John's, watching his daughter play tennis or pushing the Costco cart for his wife." In summary, Proton is beyond amazing and we are so lucky to have him in the fold.

Our three "newish" rheumatologists are Dr. Sam Aseer since 2014, Dr. Natalia Pittman since 2017, and Dr. Shaina Goudie since 2018. Here are a few comments from Sam and Shaina:

Dr. Aseer: "It has been almost five years that I have been in practice in St. John's, and I begin to realize how quickly time flies. I remember the jitters of transitioning from residency to staff and my anxiety-driven first month of seeing patients on my own. The last five years have been an incredible learning experience, which have given me opportunities for both professional and personal growth. I continue to engage in medical education at both the undergraduate



A few of Newfoundland's rheumatologists (clockwise from top left): Dr. Natalia Pittman, Dr. Shaina Goudie, Dr. Sam Aseer, Dr. Proton Rahman, and Dr. Sean Hamilton.

and postgraduate level, which I find quite rewarding. I am also involved in a few clinical trials that we have undertaken at our institution. I hope to continue my current career path and serve the wonderful people of this province."

Dr. Goudie: "As the newest rheumatologist in Newfoundland and Labrador, I am very happy to be back home and kept busy by a steady flow of interesting consults. This last year marks a record for the most rheumatologists in the province that we have ever had, which is wonderful. I hope it will serve to foster more interest in rheumatology among our local trainees."

Dr. Majed Khraishi continues in private rheumatology practice and with his rheumatology research.

Dr. Paul Dancey continues his stellar performance looking after the children of NL with rheumatic diseases.

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