

News from Nova Scotia

By Trudy Taylor, MD, FRCPC

Greetings from beautiful Nova Scotia! We have been busy as ever in our small province and are making headway on improving access to rheumatology care. We now have four rheumatologists practicing outside of the Halifax area: Dr. Julie Mongeau in Truro, Dr. Juris Lazovskis in Cape Breton, and Drs. Diane Wilson and Zach Shaffelburg in Lunenburg. When I reached out to our community colleagues for any news to contribute to this update, I received this lovely reply from Juris (pictured on the right):



Community Rheumatology in NS:

I think that much of what we do can be related to what we are expected to do for the community. Health care system aside, it depends on us how we hear those needs. "I hear" or "audio" in Latin can be expressed as an acronym AUDIO:

Assuming responsibility and acceptance; we may see patients who need acknowledgement, assurance, or who have arthralgias or even orthopedic issues;

Uncovering with ultrasound; this has allowed us to "unhide" the under the skin structures. We all have experience in MSK US and we may use it daily;

Discussion and, sometimes, simultaneous Dictation with Dragon and prescribing drugs and filling out applications through EMRs in the presence of the patient increases efficiency;

Inquiring about immunizations and inhalations helps with motivation to live a healthier life;

Optimizing waiting list (by catching arthritis early) and optimizing use of time by "AI" (algorithm implementation), to avoid going through hundreds of messages at the end of the day.

In addition to our community colleagues, we've had a few changes in the Halifax region: In January, Volodko Bakowsky completed his term as Division Head after 7.5 years expertly leading the charge. I have taken over his role on an interim basis, wondering how I can fill these tremendously large shoes! We've also had a new addition to the Nova Scotia rheumatology family, Jack, who is the son of our rheumatology trainee Mary Purcell (pictured below with Jack and her husband Hamid).

Trudy Taylor, MD, FRCPC
President, Canadian Rheumatology Association
Associate Professor,
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

