

Rheumatology in Ottawa: Update

By John Thomson, MD, FRCPC

Greetings from the Nation's Capital. Rheumatology in Ottawa functions quite differently from the major Canadian institution up on the Hill: the Canadian Parliament. Ottawa rheumatologists are intelligent, like each other, work well together and have never been known to pro-rogue anything.

There are five full-time hospital-based rheumatologists in the Division of Rheumatology with offices at the Riverside Campus of the Ottawa Hospital. These include Dr. Doug Smith, our Head; the beloved Dr. Gunnar Kraag; our "senior" rheumatologist Dr. Bob McKendry; energetic teaching star Dr. Sue Humphrey; and the wise man Dr. Jack Karsh. Helping carry the load of patient care, teaching and call duties are six other rheumatologists in the division with university appointments all with primary private offices in the community. These include globe-trotting Dr. Al Jovaisas; Dr. Brian Boate, Canada's fastest moving and fastest talking rheumatologist; Ottawa rheumatology matriarch Dr. Pat Morassut; young dynamic Dr. Suneil Kapur; and yours truly, Dr. John Thomson. Dr. Charlie Shames has recently stepped away from call duties and Dr. Debbie O'Keefe is active in the CTU Medicine service, but also maintains a busy rheumatology practice.

There are several other rheumatologists in Ottawa who are very active in patient care and interact regularly at the numerous educational events which take place. These include Drs. Kathleen Davis, Susie Duff, Suzanne MacMillan, Bin Liu and across the river in Gatineau, Quebec, Oleg Zadorozny. Dr. Jeri Waltin-James has very recently decided to retire.

Rounding things out are our pediatric colleagues based at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario: Drs. Johannes Roth, Roman Jurecnak and Karen Palayew.

We have a nice scene in Ottawa. There is a collegial, cordial, and respectful atmosphere that helps make working an enjoyable experience. We are blessed with a physically beautiful city, just sophisticated enough but close, literally and spiritually, to the great northern lakes and forests. Ottawans love their city. We could do with some new rheumatologists, however, so why not come visit and stay awhile?

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Drs. Debbie O'Keefe (standing), Suzanne MacMillan, Pat Morassut and Brian Boate.



Drs. Oleg Zadorozny and Charles Shames.