

Update from Victoria

By Kimberly A. Northcott, MD, FRCPC

Victoria remains idyllic as the City of Gardens, boasting a mild oceanic climate with an average winter temperature of 8°C, an annual flower count scheduled every February, and 50% less rain than Vancouver (sorry Kam Shojania).

There are currently four full-time adult and one pediatric rheumatologist serving a diverse population base of 360,000 within the Capital region. We receive consults from throughout Vancouver Island, the surrounding Gulf Islands, and as far north as my one token patient from Nunavut. Our patients range from the stereotypical “newlywed to nearly dead,” and include the often interesting and complex First Nations people.

As solo practitioners, we consistently collaborate at monthly division meetings. We are excited about the recent arrival of Dr. Satish Rachapalli from London, England joining our team as of September 2011. We formally network with our Nanaimo colleague, Dr. Maqbool Sheriff, twice annually through our Island Rheumatology Meeting, one of which is designated as a memorial lecture dedicated to the late Dr. Peter Cosgrave, previously of Duncan, British Columbia, and hosts a prominent visiting guest speaker.



Dr. Northcott, her family, and some of Victoria's “nearly dead.”



Dr. Northcott with her daughters, Ava (8) and Faye (6).

We provide consultation services for two hospitals, The Royal Jubilee and Victoria General. We have access to an infusion clinic, basic science research and clinical studies, and teaching appointments in the Island Medical Program, a satellite of the University of British Columbia (UBC) medical school and resident training program. We work in collaboration with the allied healthcare team at the Victoria Arthritis Center which houses physiotherapists, occupational therapists, a nurse, and a social worker.

Despite the bustle of clinical practice to accommodate an expanding wait-list, there remains the guarantee of enjoying west coast living with a five minute commute to the office, thus allowing more time to indulge in year-round gardening, boating, bistro dining, boutique shopping, numerous sports, and community arts programs with the Victoria symphony, Canadian Pacific and Victoria ballet companies, and live community theatre productions to name just a few of the city's recreational attributes.

Think twice before buying a return ticket at the Annual General Meeting in 2012 – you may never want to leave!

*Kimberly A. Northcott, MD, FRCPC
Vancouver Island Health Authority
Victoria, British Columbia*