

# Obituaries

We welcome original tributes of less than 500 words; we may edit them for clarity and length. Obituaries may be emailed to [journal@doctorsofbc.ca](mailto:journal@doctorsofbc.ca). Include birth and death dates, full name and name deceased was best known by, key hospital and professional affiliations, relevant biographical data, and a high-resolution head-and-shoulders photo.



**Dr Michael McCann**  
1958–2021

Dr Michael McCann was born in New Westminster, the second of six children, and grew up in Surrey, where his dad was a dentist in Whalley. Mike met Cynthia on the surgical ward at VGH, where she was a nurse, and they were married in 1986. Mike was the consummate husband and proud father of three sons, Ryan, Kevin, and Matthew.

Mike completed his medical degree at UBC in 1984, followed by a 1-year rotating internship at Dalhousie and a return to BC in 1985. At first he did locums in various parts of BC, centred in the Lower Mainland, and then set up as a solo family physician in Langley in 1987, where he served his patients and his profession until he was diagnosed with metastatic colon cancer in January 2019.

Mike got involved in politics from an early age, serving as president of the UBC Science Undergraduate Society as well as class president in his first year of medical school. He also served on the UBC Senate for 3 years as a representative of the student body. When asked why he became interested in politics at UBC, Mike's answer was, "girls!"

Mike served on the Doctors of BC Board for 10 years as the District 7 representative. He

was chair of the Insurance Committee from 1999 until the summer of 2021, as well as co-chair of the Joint Benefits Committee from its inception until the summer of 2021. He also served on the Finance Committee. Many of the benefits that physicians have through Doctors of BC are due in part to the foresight, wisdom, and tireless efforts of Dr Mike McCann.

Mike took great pride in serving the members. He was instrumental in improving our situation, both individually and collectively. We have Mike to thank for a large part of the offerings available in the "Your Benefits" section of the Doctors of BC website.

He worked quietly behind the scenes for many years. The physicians and Doctors of BC staff with whom he worked all describe him the same way—calm, fair, incredibly knowledgeable, dedicated, considerate, kind, trusted, thoughtful, professional, and respected by all. He had no ego. At Doctors of BC he would listen to others' ideas, and after consideration, make suggestions gently, on which everyone else could agree.

While on the medical staff of Langley Memorial Hospital, Mike served as chair of the Credentials Committee, vice chair of the Medical Advisory Committee for several years, and as a member of the Doctors' Needs Committee. He was one of the founding members of the Regional Medical Society. He was selected by the medical staff of South Fraser Health Region to serve, by appointment of then Minister of Health, Joy MacPhail, on the South Fraser Regional Health Board as its first physician member.

In addition to his office practice, Mike also delivered babies, assisted in surgery, and did shifts in the emergency department. He enjoyed the intellectual stimulation and variety of his general practice, never knowing what may come through his office doors on any given day.

Mike described himself as a GP dinosaur. Others describe him as one of the Good Guys.

—David Chapman, MBChB  
Surrey



**Dr Robert Douglas Burgess**  
1950–2021

My dear friend Rob passed away at home in his bedroom overlooking his gorgeous lake and mountain vista. He had been lovingly cared for by his wife, Jan; daughter, Micky; and son, Johnny. His illness was sudden and cruelly aggressive. Thankfully, he stuck to his life's motto—if you are going to go downhill, make it fast!

Rob and I met in 1968 in first-year premed at the University of Toronto (my God, we were only 18) and became lifelong friends. In 1972 we drove to Banff for summer employment. While there we both realized that the mountains were going to dominate our future. Amazingly, we navigated the intern matching service and were both accepted into the rotating intern program at St. Paul's Hospital. We also discovered Whistler.

Our first job after St. Paul's took us to the Vernon Jubilee Hospital Emergency Department. Two summers of Vernon, multiple locums, and extended travel led Rob to inquire about a job as physician with the Whistler

Mountain ski patrol. My advice was, take it! He quickly learned that mountain medicine was much different than that in the confines of a hospital, and he thrived. He spent time with the orthoped Dr Pat McConkey and honed his physical diagnostic skills in sports medicine. Rob often complained that he felt bad having his patients pay for an MRI of their knee when he had already given them their diagnosis.

In the early 1980s, Rob, along with Dr Christine Rodgers, offered full family practice services out of an ATCO trailer. The medicine was never boring and was often carried out in challenging outdoor settings. Rob joined an energetic community and worked to expand Whistler's health care facilities to the high standard that is provided today.

Rob gave a lot to the mountain community and the mountain community gave a lot to Rob. He relished the opportunities offered to him. Whether it was as physician to the National Alpine Ski Team or physician guide to various heli-ski companies, all parties benefited.

A few years ago, Rob gave up his family practice but was unable to give up on his community. He continued to be busier than ever with locums and his aviation physicals. He regretted having to give up a COVID vaccine clinic following his diagnosis. His friends and community have been widely supportive following his passing.

To a man well loved and a life well lived. We will all miss you, Rob.

—William Akeroyd, MD  
Vancouver

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## Physician wellness: Doctors taking care of doctors

Participating in a journal club can be a great way of staying connected with colleagues. However, finding high-quality articles to discuss can be time-consuming. That's where the College Library can help. Literature searches can be done on a one-time or ongoing basis, as needed. For topics of ongoing interest, there are two options: for specific topics (e.g., management of a particular disorder), a monthly automated search may be useful; for general topics (e.g., family practice in Canada or hospital medicine), the Library offers a table of contents service—an email is sent whenever a new issue of a selected relevant journal is available. Either service may be canceled at any time.

One-time literature searches are always available to College registrants. For best results, mention that it is for a journal club. Literature searches for other purposes are also welcome.

Registrants may use the Make a Request form on the Library's website ([www.cpsbc.ca/registrants/library/make-request](http://www.cpsbc.ca/registrants/library/make-request)) or email [medlib@cpsbc.ca](mailto:medlib@cpsbc.ca) with the request. Along with the topic, be sure to indicate the type of search you prefer: a one-time literature search, a monthly automated literature search, or the table of contents service. If you're not sure which option would be best, indicate that and Library staff may be able to make suggestions after seeing the topic. ■

—Niki Baumann  
Librarian

*This article is the opinion of the Library of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC and has not been peer reviewed by the BCMJ Editorial Board.*