

Obituaries

We welcome original tributes of less than

700 words; we may edit them for clarity and length. Email obituaries to 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 Shunmoogam "Willie" Wolaganathan Pillay

1941-2025

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Dr Shunmoogam "Willie" Wolaganathan Pillay on 10 November 2025, at the age of 84. Willie was a devoted father, physician, and community leader, and his life was a testament to resilience and unwavering commitment to others.

Willie was predeceased by his parents, Meenachee and Kisten Shunmoogam Pillay, and two brothers, Krish and Parmas Pillay. He is survived by another brother, Praga Pillay; his sisters, Uga Nichols (Pillay) and Nat Moodley; his children, Simon, Mark, and Soraya Pillay; his grandchildren, Stephen and Katherine Pillay; and many nephews and nieces living abroad.

Born in Durban, South Africa, on 17 August 1941, Willie came from a prominent family in Greenwood Park, a close-knit Indian-South African community. His early years were marked by both privilege and hardship. After losing his parents at

a young age, he stepped into a leadership role early in life, a responsibility that shaped his character and became a defining thread throughout his life.

Willie was deeply engaged in the struggle against apartheid. His activism was not a passing phase but a lifelong conviction. The government's crackdown on student leaders forced Willie to leave his homeland and seek a future abroad. He chose Ireland, a country whose own history of struggle resonated deeply with him.

In Dublin, Willie pursued medical training at the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. He embraced Irish culture wholeheartedly, to the extent that friends often joked he knew more about Ireland than many native Irish people. His years there were marked by rigorous study, enduring friendships, and a zest for life. In 1969, he met Margaret, who would become his wife.

In 1972, Willie and Margaret immigrated to Canada, where Willie specialized in internal medicine. They married in 1975 and began building a family, welcoming their first child, Simon, in 1976. They eventually put down roots in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, where their family grew with the births of Mark and Soraya.

For more than 2 decades, Willie served as a respected physician and community leader in Moose Jaw. He built a thriving medical practice, earned admiration as a cardiologist, and held key positions, including chief of staff and medical director. Willie chaired the Canada Day Committee; championed civic initiatives; and opened his home for gatherings that brought together neighbors, colleagues, and the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul.

The Sisters of Providence, a Catholic congregation, had a long-standing mission

to serve society's most vulnerable. Willie found in them kindred spirits and became one of their most trusted partners.

Willie's passion for eldercare became a defining chapter of his career. In the early 1980s, he proposed replacing an outdated hospital with a modern, integrated approach. At age 50, Willie returned to school to specialize in geriatrics, a testament to his determination. For 15 years, he worked tirelessly alongside the Sisters of Providence and government partners to bring this dream to life. In 1995, their shared vision was realized with the opening of Providence Place for Holistic Health, a state-of-the-art facility that transformed eldercare in the region.

In 1996, Willie relocated to Surrey, where he continued his work as a geriatrician in private practice and the first staff geriatrician at Surrey Memorial Hospital. His expertise was widely recognized. He served as president of medical staff, chief of geriatrics, and a key interest holder and expert panel member for the Fraser Health Authority's Code Plus initiative, which focused on elder-friendly hospital design and improved geriatric care. Willie continued practising medicine until 2016, reluctantly stepping back when illness made it impossible to continue.

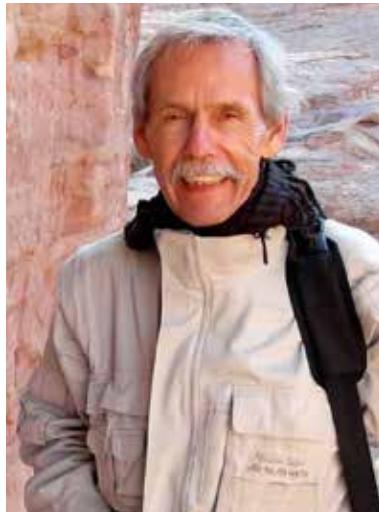
From 2017 onward, Willie himself lived in care homes, facing complex medical challenges with courage. His instinct to nurture and guide never faded but rather was taken by illness, despite a relentless battle against this inevitability.

A funeral service celebrating Dr Pillay's life was held on 29 November 2025 at Victory Memorial Park & Funeral Centre in Surrey. In lieu of flowers, the family invites donations to CanAge (www.canage.ca/donate),

Canada's leading independent advocacy organization dedicated to raising standards in eldercare, preventing abuse and neglect, and ensuring dignity for seniors in long-term care and beyond. ■

—Krishnan Simon Pillay

Ottawa



Dr Andrew Farquhar 1947–2025

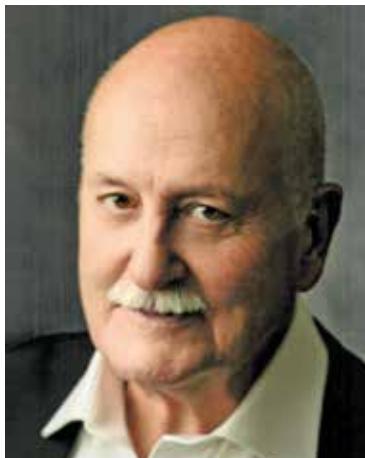
Dearly loved husband, father, grandfather, friend, and physician, Dr Andrew Farquhar has completed the adventure of a life lived to the fullest.

Dr Farquhar was born in Scotland, where he spent a carefree childhood with his sister, Margaret, and brothers, John and David. Diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at a young age, Andrew was determined to make the most of every day. He excelled at whatever he turned his hand to, whether as captain of the rugby team at school, winning the class medal at Edinburgh Medical School, or achieving international recognition as a photographer with a cover photo for a *National Geographic* calendar. His unique perspective, combining personal experience and clinical expertise in diabetes, made him invaluable locally and sought after internationally as an educator and guest speaker. He was remarkably kind and will be best remembered for his genuine nature, his sense of humor, and his ability to connect with everyone.

His greatest love was his family—his wife Stephanie, with whom he shared over 50 years of adventures; his daughter Jaclyn (Deke) and their daughter, Eberly; and his daughter Vanessa (Aaron) and their sons, Shepherd and Arlo.

A celebration of life was held at Springfield Funeral Home in Kelowna on 14 November 2025. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Breakthrough T1D Canada in Andrew's name to support diabetes research (<https://breakthrough1d.ca>).

—Stephanie Hayden
Kelowna



Dr David Gilmore Hunt 1944–2025

Dr David G. Hunt died on Thursday, 30 October 2025, as a result of an overwhelming chest infection and pulmonary fibrosis.

David, the youngest of four boys, was born in Victoria on 15 March 1944 to Jean and Leigh Hunt, where Leigh was in the army. The family returned to Vancouver in 1945, where David attended Prince of Wales Elementary and High School, graduating as school president in 1962. The school's motto remains *Ich Dien* ("I serve"), and it embodies David's entire life. He entered the University of British Columbia and followed in his father's and two older brothers' footsteps, choosing a career in medicine.

His postgraduate training began in 1969 in Toronto, after which he practised

medicine for over 50 years with passion, empathy, and, above all, a sense of humor. His career had three phases, the first being emergency medicine, where he received a fellowship.

Returning to Vancouver, David worked in the Vancouver General Hospital emergency department and devoted many volunteer hours to creating the paramedic program, including the publication of the *Handbook of Industrial First Aid*. Following his time as an on-call emergency physician, David joined the Workers' Compensation Board medical team, where he ran the Business and Employer Emergency Preparedness (BEEP) program—a revolutionary approach to integrate injured workers for early return to work.

David completed a graduate program in pain management at the University of California, San Francisco, which enabled him to enter his second phase of medical practice by joining the St. Paul's Hospital Complex Pain Centre. Then he had more time to connect with his patients, forming strong bonds of support and compassion.

David's work in complex chronic pain and his service with Pain BC and the BC Hospice Palliative Care Association earned him recognition in the field that led him to his final career phase: a palliative care practice at Lions Gate Hospital.

He was an active member of the Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem for over 15 years, serving as commander of the local chapter and advocating passionately for its work in the palliative care sector. He was a longtime supporter of the Lumara Society, Doctors Without Borders, and the Salvation Army. He was also awarded Doctors of BC's 2025 Silver Medal of Service.

David's life was not all work and no play. He loved parties; fishing; hunting in the Cariboo; skiing at Whistler; bike trips; walking his faithful labradoodle, Sophie; and boating, particularly to Centre Bay Yacht Station as skipper of *Piccolo*.

David's signature presentation, and his strong belief, was that laughter is the best medicine.

Family was always at the centre of David's life, and he spoke often and lovingly of his

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2025 J.H. MacDermot writing prize winners

Ms Stephanie Quon is the winner of the J.H. MacDermot Prize for Excellence in Medical Journalism (Independent), which recognizes a BC medical student's significant achievement in writing an article without any physician coauthors, for her article "Witnessing the in-between."

Ms Quon is a second-year medical student at the University of British Columbia, in the Vancouver program. She previously completed a degree in electrical engineering and is interested in health care accessibility and health equity. Ms Quon is co-president of the UBC Refugee Health Initiative, Women's Health Initiative, and Correctional Health Initiative, and founder of the Canadian Network for Accessibility in Healthcare. She was inspired to write "Witnessing the in-between" following her participation in the Making a Legacy Palliative Care Project, where she was paired with an individual who was receiving end-of-life care to create a legacy piece.

Ms Lucy Hui is the winner of the J.H. MacDermot Prize for Excellence in Medical Journalism (Mentored), which recognizes a BC medical student's significant achievement in medical writing as part of an author team that includes physicians, for her article

"Artificial intelligence in family medicine: Opportunities, impacts, and challenges."

Ms Hui is a third-year medical student at UBC with an interest in the responsible integration of emerging technologies into clinical practice. Under the guidance of Dr Rohit Singla, her work explored the practical use of artificial intelligence in primary care, with attention to its effects on clinical workflows and patient care. Ms Hui has also contributed to initiatives aimed at improving data science literacy among medical trainees and encouraging thoughtful engagement with the ethical and equity-related challenges of new technologies. Looking ahead, she hopes to continue engaging in work that explores how technology can support clinicians and strengthen health care delivery, particularly in community-based, rural, and underserved settings.

The *BCMJ* welcomes article submissions from BC medical students and offers these prizes for the best submissions accepted for publication. A winning article for each prize is selected from all eligible articles published in a calendar year. For more information about the prizes, visit <https://bcmj.org/about/writing-prizes-medical-students>.

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deceased grandparents and parents. He was predeceased by two older brothers, John, the eldest, and his infant brother, Andrew, from sudden infant death syndrome. He is survived by his next-older brother, Brian.

David will be sadly missed by many friends and family members: his wife, Carol Kerfoot; his sons, Simon, Cameron, and Peter; his brother, Brian (Barbara); his sister-in-law, Beverly (John); his former wife, Dr Elaine Drysdale; Carol's children, Joy, Michael, and Sylvia Kerfoot (Harrison); and his grandchildren, Emily, Madeline, Gabriella, Juliana, Charlie, Hannah, Ollie, and Natalie.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to a charity whose goals align with yours. And have a good long laugh for David; it's what he would have wanted.

—Carol Kerfoot

Vancouver

—Brian Hunt, MD

North Vancouver

JCC

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ICU coverage, easing the on-call burden for intensivists. Clinicians report positive experiences, with emergency physicians gaining valuable ICU exposure and intensivists welcoming the added support and relief.

Several programs focus on building physician skills and capacity in rural emergency departments. The Emergency Education Program, funded by the JSC and delivered in partnership with RCCbc and the Rural Education Action Plan (REAP), offers family physicians a 3-month, full-time, remunerated fellowship in emergency medicine at sites across the province. Participants gain advanced clinical, procedural, and leadership skills, enabling them to serve as emergency care leaders in their home communities.

For physicians preparing for or returning to rural practice, the Rural Skills Upgrade Program, also funded by the JSC and administered by REAP, provides up

to 20 days of one-on-one preceptorship in training areas including emergency medicine, obstetrics, oncology, mental health, and Indigenous health.

Recognizing the physical and emotional impact of critical incidents, the Isolated Medical Provider Aftercare Team, funded by the JSC and administered by RCCbc, offers confidential peer-to-peer support from experienced rural clinicians, with connections typically made within 72 hours.

Collectively, these complementary initiatives strengthen rural emergency care by meeting physicians where they are—clinically, geographically, and emotionally—ensuring that high-quality emergency care remains available close to home.

For more information on these initiatives, please visit the respective organizations' websites. ■

—James Card, MD

Family Physician, Valemount

Co-Chair, Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues