



Two Saskatoon physicians receive top honors: the Dr. Dennis A. Kendel Distinguished Service Award

SASKATOON, NOVEMBER 23, 2015 – During a special awards banquet held on November 20th, 2015, the Council of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan presented Dr. Ryan Meili and Dr. Mark Wahba (see biographies below), both of Saskatoon, with the prestigious *Dr. Dennis A. Kendel Distinguished Service Award* for outstanding contributions to physician leadership and/or to physician engagement in quality improvements in health care in Saskatchewan.



Left to right: Dr. Ryan Meili, Dr. Dennis Kendel, and Dr. Mark Wahba.

“I’m extremely honoured to receive the Dr. Dennis Kendel Distinguished Service Award alongside Dr. Mark Wahba. Dr. Dennis Kendel has been an inspiration to a generation of community-minded physicians, and Dr. Wahba is a leader and innovator in moving us toward higher quality care. I’m humbled to be in their company, and pleased that my interest in and commitment to health equity was thought to be worthy of recognition by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan” stated Dr. Ryan Meili, a family physician at the Westside Community Clinic in Saskatoon.

Dr. Wahba, emergency physician in the Saskatoon Health Region, also shared his thoughts: “I’m humbled to be recognized for the Dr. Dennis Kendel Distinguished Service Award, and honoured to be sharing it with my friend and colleague, Dr. Ryan Meili. If I can try to improve healthcare at the sharp end and Dr. Meili can try to improve health at the blunt end, hopefully we’ll make things better for people.”

“This year, Council is very pleased to present the awards to two young but very deserving candidates. Their initiative, leadership and innovative ideas have already had very positive impacts on the health services provided in their workplace,” said Dr. Grant Stoneham, President of the College Council, who presented each physician with his award.

The *Dr. Dennis A. Kendel Distinguished Service Award* was named in honour of Dr. Dennis Kendel, who retired in 2011 after a long career as Registrar of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan. Past recipients are Dr. Oberholzer and Dr. Helms of Radville (2012), Dr. Marilyn Baetz of Saskatoon (2013), and Dr. William Albritton (2014).



Photo, upper left, left to right: Dr. M. MacNeil, Dr. D. Ledding, Dr. B. Colquhoun and Dr. D. Kendel were among the 8 recipients of Senior Life Designation. **Photo, upper right:** Dr. Dennis Kendel.

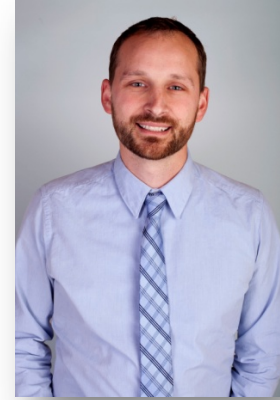
Eight recipients of **Senior Life Designation 2015** (for having held a license to practice medicine in Saskatchewan for a cumulative total of 40 years) were honoured at the same time for their lifelong contribution, as per the Medical Profession Act. These are **Dr. Brian Colquhoun, Dr. Dennis Kendel, Dr. Edwin Kusch, and Dr. Angela Naidoo** of Saskatoon; **Dr. James Ledding** of Rosetown; **Dr. Maitland McNeil** and **Dr. Steven Zacharuk** of Regina, and **Dr. David Crawford** of Prince Albert.

To complement the award ceremony, a painted portrait of Dr. Dennis Kendel was unveiled in recognition of his longstanding contribution as Registrar for the College from 1986 to 2011.

*The mission of the **College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan** is to serve the public by regulating the practice of medicine and guiding the profession to achieve the highest standards of care. It currently issues licenses to more than 2500 physicians and surgeons in the province, as well as over 1500 corporate permits.*

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Dr. Ryan Meili is a family physician at the Westside Community Clinic in Saskatoon and an Assistant Professor at the College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan, where he serves as head of the Division of Social Accountability, director of the Making the Links Certificate in Global Health, and co-lead of SHARE: the Saskatchewan HIV/AIDS Research Endeavour. Among other literary achievements, his 2012 book, *A Healthy Society: How a focus on health can revive Canadian democracy*, has sold over four thousand copies across Canada.



Dr. Meili also serves as vice-chair of the national advocacy organization Canadian Doctors for Medicare, is a Broadbent Institute Fellow, an Evidence Network Expert, and is the founding director of Upstream: Institute for A Healthy Society, a new national non-profit organization focused on the social determinants of health.

He is involved in ongoing research in HIV/AIDS as well as in the social determinants of health, including a new research project developing a screening tool for clinical intervention on the social determinants of health. He has also frequently been asked to speak at conferences.



Dr. Mark Wahba is an emergency physician in the Saskatoon Health Region, a Clinical Assistant Professor in the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, and Quality Improvement Consultant for the Saskatchewan Health Quality Council. He also works as a transport physician for the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service, better known as STARS.

Since moving back to Saskatchewan, Mark has been involved in numerous tangible and innovative contributions trying to reducing ER wait times, including the creation of a roving physician shift on long weekends as well as a process to predict admissions to hospital. His ongoing participation to key Saskatchewan Health processes includes a project for the reduction of time-to-consultation for cardiology referrals from the periphery; mistake-proofing in the Saskatoon Health Region, Implementation of LEAN processes in the ER, and the No-ER-Waits-2017 Initiative.

In 2010 Mark was interviewed for the article, "Engaging Physicians to Improve Quality" published in *Healthcare Quarterly*. He has also been recognized as a Physician Innovator by the *Medical Post* in 2012, and was the recipient for the FRCPC EM Senior Resident Teaching Award in 2013.

In addition to his official roles, he is also respected for his out-of-the box thinking. Mark further displays his concern for quality of care through his practice of handing out business cards to patients to solicit feedback.