



Dr. Robin Fainsinger: Winner of the 2016 Eduardo Bruera Award in Palliative Medicine

The Canadian Society of Palliative Care Physicians is pleased to award the 2016 Eduardo Bruera Award in Palliative Medicine to Dr. Robin Fainsinger. This award recognizes a physician who has made a difference, demonstrating excellence in the field of Palliative Medicine. It honors the achievements of Dr. Eduardo Bruera and is a celebration of his legacy during his tenure as Director of Alberta's Palliative Care Program.

Dr. Fainsinger began his career in palliative care in 1990, when he left a family practice in Saskatchewan to pursue a fellowship at the University of Alberta, under the mentorship of Dr. Eduardo Bruera and Dr. Neil MacDonald. He served as staff physician on the palliative care unit of Edmonton General Hospital from 1991 to 1994. He then moved to the Royal Alexandra Hospital, which is one of the two large teaching hospitals in Edmonton. There, he founded what became the busiest palliative care consultation service in the city. In 1999, he assumed leadership of the Capital Health Regional (now Alberta Health Services Edmonton Zone) Palliative Care Program, a position that he still holds. The program had been established in 1995 as the first fully comprehensive and integrated palliative care program in Canada. During his tenure, Dr. Fainsinger has successfully advocated for the preservation of this model within the context of successive changes in organization of the health care system. He became Director of the Tertiary Palliative Care Unit at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital in 2006, overseeing its expansion from a 14-bed to a 20-bed ward. The unit serves the most complex palliative care patients in the northern half of the province. In recent years, he has played a key role on the Provincial Palliative and End of Life Innovations Steering Committee. He has also assumed medical leadership for the Covenant Health Palliative Institute, which seeks to influence excellent palliative care in Alberta through research, policy input, clinical support, clinician education and public outreach. In 2015, he has been involved in Physician Assisted Death policy development through Alberta Health Services Provincial Expert Panel.

Dr. Fainsinger has also helped to shape the Division of Palliative Care Medicine in the Department of Oncology at the University of Alberta. He was appointed Assistant Professor in 1992, and became a full Professor in 2006. He served as the Director of the Division from 1999 to 2013. Dr. Fainsinger was able to engineer the recruitment of three PhD qualified scientists, as well as several clinical faculty members. He has encouraged Division-wide, multi-site participation in research and education. Dr. Fainsinger has also successfully mentored many residents, one of whom received the CSPCP Resident Research Award in 2015.

Besides contributing to palliative care locally and provincially, Dr. Fainsinger has made an impact nationally and internationally. He is past Secretary-Treasurer of the CSPCP, and currently sits on the Working Group of Physician-Hastened Death. He has published over 150 articles and book chapters, served on numerous editorial boards and review committees, and been invited to speak internationally on clinical, research and administrative aspects of palliative care.

Dr. Fainsinger's achievements have been recognized through:

- The REACH Award in the category of Leadership, Capital Health Royal Alexandria Hospital, 2005
- The REACH Award in the category of Teamwork, Capital Health Community Care Division, 2006
- The REACH Award of Distinction, Capital Health Community Care, Rehabilitation and Geriatrics, 2006
- A Certificate of Teaching Excellence in recognition of outstanding teaching of Family Medicine residents, 2008
- The National Institutes of Health Award of Merit (PDQ Supportive and Palliative Care Editorial Board), in recognition of dedicated and exceptional service to the National Cancer Institute in developing and maintaining evidence-based PDQ cancer information summaries for health professionals and the public, 2010

Congratulations to Dr. Fainsinger for his excellence in research, clinical practice and administration, and his contributions to the local, national and international palliative care community!