

Dr. Fiona Crow

Dr. Crow comes across as a very gentle and unassuming individual and is described as a wise woman of few and measured words, with a vulnerable and ever-present humanity. She is an experienced physician who is well known and admired in her home of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Even though her accent hints at her English upbringing, she has called Canada home for fifty years. It is at the University of Calgary and the University of Saskatchewan that she completed her medical degree and her internship, respectively.

Dr. Crow spent the majority of her career as a busy family physician with an enthusiasm for a full spectrum practice and a particular interest in obstetrics and palliative care. She expresses a sense of comfort in having been able to care for her own patients at their extremes of life, emphasizing her deep appreciation of connecting with her patients and their families at such intimate times as birth and death.



Fiona (second from left) and some of her palliative colleagues

Twenty years ago, an opportunity arose for Dr. Crow to work on the Palliative Care Unit of Winnipeg's St. Boniface General Hospital, and so began her devotion toward the field of palliative care. For the last ten years she has focused solely on palliative care, working part time in the specialty, and is now on the brink of retirement. She is one of many full and part time physicians that serve within the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's Palliative Care Program. Her colleagues, who will miss her dearly, describe her as a physician who represents the best of holistic, family-medicine-driven palliative care, with a gentle and comforting way that has not gone unnoticed. Teaching students and mentoring family medicine trainees are among the highlights of Dr. Crow's career. She has donated her time and knowledge as a CFPC palliative care program committee member over the last three and a half years and has contributed her writings to the Canadian Family Physician "Palliative Care Files".

Dr. Crow enjoys all aspects of the discipline stating "once you're in with a patient, it doesn't matter what the setting is – that's where you are." This demonstrates her selflessness and her concern for her patients' wellbeing first and foremost. She is most passionate about connecting with her patients and helping them and their families through such difficult times. When asked what her patients have taught her, she calmly responds "you learn something all the time, you hope. I am always learning from them, no one is ever like the other." She ponders, too, thinking of her patients and wonders if she could ever be as brave as some of them if faced with their difficult situation – a portrayal of her humility. She is thankful to them stating " ...they taught me so much about life in general and of ways to live through and support each other at the beginning, during and at the end of life."



Fiona, her husband and their granddaughter Madeleine, Fox Lake, Yukon

At the end of March 2017, Dr. Crow will officially be departing her career to join her husband in retirement and to begin an array of activities including catching up with family and friends, gardening on their acre of land, camping and adding to their list of travel destinations. She recalls certain noteworthy travel endeavours including a memorable two- year work placement with C.U.S.O. in Ghana, West Africa where she taught chemistry before venturing into Medicine, and her last special trip to the heart of the Arctic with her husband for their 25th wedding anniversary.

As she approaches retirement, Dr. Crow also wishes to thank her husband, family and work colleagues and acknowledges her father, who was also a medical doctor, for teaching her to see the whole person in every patient and for unwittingly influencing her work as a physician. She leaves us with a quote by William Osler: "The practice of medicine is an art, not a trade, a calling, not a business: a calling in which your heart will be exercised equally with your head."

Dr. Saneea Abboud