

BC's Roving Nephrologist

Who says doctors don't like house calls?



Vancouver-based nephrologist Dr. Paul Taylor is happy travelling as far as the Yukon to be with his peritoneal dialysis (PD) patients in their home communities. In fact, with his semi-annual visits to patients in Whitehorse and the BC coastal communities of Prince Rupert and Bella Coola, Paul is BC's roving nephrologist.

"I love meeting people in their home communities," says Paul. "These places are generally underserved by the health system and the people are wonderful. It's very rewarding work."

It's also cost effective. Paul visits his nine PD patients in the Yukon twice a year for three days. That saves the Yukon government the cost of flying those patients down to Vancouver twice a year. The same is true for his coastal BC patients who no longer have to fly south for PD clinic visits.

Paul says his trips away have little impact on his Vancouver patients who receive good care from his coworkers at the PD program at St. Paul's Hospital and from his nephrologist colleague Dr. Abeer Jamal.

"We think the same way, so our patients get good continuity of care," explains Paul. "I generally have a pretty easy time of things because my colleagues at the St. Paul's kidney clinic answer most of the questions from patients before I get to see them."

Paul completed medical school at the University of London in 1974. He only moved to Vancouver after meeting his Canadian wife, who was in Edinburgh training to be a nurse. After 36 years of marriage, they have three grown children, including a recently married daughter in Vancouver, a son working on his Ph.D. at University College in London, and a second son who currently lives in a log cabin in the Yukon and will be starting his studies for a Masters degree in public health this fall.

Paul says he was drawn to the field of nephrology under the influence of Dr. Angus Rae, former head of nephrology at St. Paul's Hospital, and by the satisfaction he found from working with renal patients. His interest in PD is also easily explained.

"I'm not a high tech sort of guy, so hemodialysis machinery doesn't interest me at all," says Paul. "But I found PD offered a simple method for looking after people with kidney disease that has certain advantages over hemodialysis."

One of those advantages is that PD enables patients to travel – a pursuit that Paul personally considers vital to quality of life. He and his wife have recently returned from a trip to Scotland and Milan, and are planning a return trip to the UK in September.

"I love to travel," he says. "In fact, if someone were to offer me a job in Italy, I would go there quite happily tomorrow."

Admittedly that's a long shot, but in the meantime Paul can ease his wanderlust through his role as BC's roving nephrologist.

Incidentally, Paul is chair of the [Western Canada PD Day](#) event being held in Vancouver August 27, and is on the planning committee for the [3rd North American Chapter Meeting](#) of the International Society for Peritoneal Dialysis, in Vancouver August 27 – 29.