

Alberta Doctors' Digest

Dr. Harvey R. Rabin



Dr. Neil D.J. Cooper (L) and Dr. Harvey R. Rabin (R). (Photo credit: Curtis Comeau).

Dr. Harvey Rabin has provided compassionate and exemplary clinical care for many years, and he has generously shared his expertise in Calgary, throughout Alberta, across Canada, and around the world. In particular, patients with cystic fibrosis and those who care for them have benefited from his dedicated care, his passionately pursued research program, and his public advocacy. Despite retiring, he will continue to devote his time and energy to the expansion of federal and provincial government disability legislation to become more inclusive of those living with cystic fibrosis and the caregivers who support them. The changes he has fought for, by redefining disability to include chronic illnesses that are prolonged, severe and irreversible, have the potential

to benefit enormous numbers of people living with a variety of illnesses across the country.

After earning his MD from the University of Western Ontario, Dr. Rabin pursued specialized studies in internal medicine in Quebec and Alberta. His first academic appointment was at the University of Alberta, but in 1979 he came to the University of Calgary, where he became head of the Division of Infectious Diseases, Departments of Medicine and Microbiology and Infectious Diseases.

Dr. Rabin's research and medical focus is the diagnosis and treatment of chronic suppurative lower respiratory tract infections in patients with cystic fibrosis and chronic bronchiectasis. His collaborative research projects provide translational research as an extension of basic science research protocols on cystic fibrosis and chronic pseudomonas aeruginosa lung infections. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Division of Adult Infectious Diseases and the Adult Infectious Diseases Residency Training Program.

He has served many organizations, with special dedication to Cystic Fibrosis Canada in a variety of leadership positions, guiding the development of medical and clinical policies; helping to shape medical protocols in Alberta, across the country and beyond; and playing a key role in developing Cystic Fibrosis Canada's Strategic Plan to END CF.

Dr. Rabin founded the Adult Cystic Fibrosis Clinic at the U of C Medical Clinic, offering highly specialized outpatient and inpatient interdisciplinary clinical service to adult patients with cystic fibrosis in southern Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan. There he has brought together a devoted group of health care professionals that includes respirologists, psychiatrists, clinical trial administrators, a nurse practitioner, and nutritional specialists, and the disciplines of physiotherapy, respiratory therapy, social work, and nursing – all dedicated to improving the lives of adults with cystic fibrosis. The 50% survival curves for cystic fibrosis have improved from 20 years to more than 52 years, and Dr. Rabin's major goal for adults with cystic fibrosis is to guide their survival to old age with as little disability as possible.

His devotion to his patients is extraordinary: for more than 30 years, he was on call seven days a week for any CF patient needing admission, day or night. The clinic he founded and ran also acts as a specialized teaching resource for medical students, postgraduate medical residents, and specialist colleagues, ensuring that his work will continue to benefit patients and their families for many years to come.