
Tribute

Tribute to Dr. Maureen Andrew

Very few of us are able to truly change our field or the way physicians practice. In 1994, when Maureen Andrew established 1-800-NO-CLOTS, a toll-free answering service for physicians dealing with childhood thrombosis, she did just that. Through this unique service, she supported the needs of hundreds, if not thousands, of doctors, worldwide, dealing with clots in children and adolescents.

Her interest in thromboembolic complications dates back to the late 1980s. At that time, the children's cancer program at McMaster University Medical Centre, Hamilton, Ontario, joined a new study for the management of children with acute leukemia that included the administration of L-asparaginase. One of the first children treated with this regimen developed a stroke. Moreover, more and more children with cancer were being offered central venous catheters, and the incidence of thromboembolic complications associated with the presence of these foreign devices grew exponen-

tially. Maureen recognized that the knowledge regarding thrombosis in children was very limited and decided to devote her unique energy and vision to addressing this important clinical need. In order to familiarize herself with the field of thrombosis, she joined Dr. Jack Hirsh's world-renowned program for the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of thrombosis in Hamilton, Canada. Henceforth, she dedicated her academic endeavors towards understanding, treating, and preventing thromboembolic events in neonates, children, and adolescents. She established an outpatient anticoagulation program at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto and became the international resource for childhood clotting. As the number of publications increased, so did the number of people seeking her opinion. Eventually she recognized that her institution could not continue handling the volume of calls, which led to the birth of the 1-800-NO-CLOTS service.

Maureen established her own thrombophilia program in 1991, attracting students, physicians, and nurses seeking to learn about childhood thromboembolism. It will be their difficult task to continue her legacy. 1-800-NO-CLOTS became a household name in the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology community and beyond. While she talked about this incredible service at meetings, it was hardly necessary; its value spread like wildfire by word of mouth. As more and more physicians contacted her, she had the foresight to establish a database, which allowed her to report on relatively rare thromboembolic problems in children and develop therapeutic hypotheses. She addressed these hypotheses in prospective multi-institutional studies.

As an investigator, Maureen was prolific with almost 150 peer-reviewed manuscripts, over 25 book chapters, over 20 invited reviews, as well as educational materials on thrombosis for parents and children. Recently, she published a book entitled *Thromboembolic Complications During Infancy and Childhood*. Her unique expertise and strong didactic skills made her a much sought-after speaker. Consequently, she traveled on a regular basis. Despite her very busy and exacting schedule, she remained available to her colleagues and promptly responded to 1-800-NO-CLOTS calls from wherever she was. Some of us got her on the line from an airport lounge, others while she was crossing an ocean or from a hotel on the other side of the world. For those that actually took notice, it was not unusual for her to answer at 2 A.M. local time from wherever she would be. In addition, Maureen would frequently call back to assess



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whether the problem had resolved or whether additional suggestions would be of help. She truly cared for the children and accepted her responsibility to help each of them wherever they were being treated.

Her leadership in the field led to several national and international elected appointments. Among them she served as Secretary-Treasurer, Vice President and President of the Society for Pediatric Research (1991-1999) and, since 2000, was a Board Trustee of the American Society for Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. Meanwhile, each and every one of us, her peers and friends, was treated with dignity and respect. At meetings, she would make time to listen, in particular to trainees, whom she infected with an insatiable enthusiasm for the specialty of pediatrics and the new subspecialty of pediatric hemostasis. She has left her personal stamp on this new and important field in pediatric hematology, and it will be our difficult task to take over the torch and keep her radiant light shining.

It was our privilege to have known and worked with Maureen for a number of years and we, along with her many colleagues in Canada and across the world, will miss her. She truly was an extraordinary clinician scientist with the added dimension of a warm and caring attitude towards family, friends, professional colleagues, and, especially, for the children with hemostatic disorders whom she so dearly loved.

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