



Queensway Carleton
Hospital

GIVING BACK TO THE HOSPITAL HE WORKS IN

During the nine years that Dr. Jasmeet Chawla has worked at Queensway Carleton Hospital, he has worked his way to becoming the Lead Hospitalist. Dr. Chawla specializes in Internal Medicine and Nephrology – something the hospital was looking for. “My wife had heard that there might be an opportunity for Internal Medicine Specialists at Queensway,” he starts. They’d been living out in Halifax after they both finished up their Residencies. “She emailed them, and happened to be redirected to Dr. Morrin, who was an Alumnus of the university where we did our post-graduate training. Dr. Morrin got my wife an interview, and she was hired the same day.” His wife is also a Doctor, who specializes in Internal Medicine. “My wife had mentioned that I was a Nephrologist, so they hired me as well.”

Dr. Chawla and his wife started the Clerkship Program at Queensway Carleton for the Medical School at the University of Ottawa, after Dr. Chawla joined the school as a seasonal lecturer. “We’ve been teaching Medical Students and Residents here at Queensway since then.”

When the two Doctors first started working at QCH, they immediately took a liking to Dr. Sharon Morrin. “She’s the one who brought us onboard,” Dr. Chawla says, mentioning how it helped in making him and his wife more comfortable in their new positions. “She’s been really like a mentor to us here. She guided us here; she’s helped us out coverage wise when my wife was pregnant. She’s gone above and beyond a colleague; she’s a friend, almost like family.”

Dr. Chawla’s favorite part about working at Queensway is that he finds that it’s a close-knit community. “It’s almost like family. Very collegial, friendly, and very good at getting things done quickly.” He affirms. “It’s different from working at the big institutes – I know we’re growing, but there’s a special culture here that we’ve had for the last few years.”

This hospital has become a large part of Dr. Chawla’s life, and his wife’s as well. “We’re here a lot, we’re on call a lot.” He says, touching on the long hours at the hospital. “Both of our children were born here, and we live close by. We’re involved in fundraisers for the hospital. My wife is involved with the QCH Foundation. I’ve been quite active in developing our program here. It would be hard to imagine my life without Queensway.” Dr. Chawla pauses, then talks about the people he works with. “Our colleagues are more than colleagues – they’re friends. We socialize with them; we share our troubles and our joys. It’s really like a family.”

The fundraisers that he is involved in were what Dr. Chawla touched on in regards to his memorable moment. “I remember we did a fundraiser last year for the hospital called SEVA Walk. It’s an event that my wife and I organized, to fundraise for the new ACE Unit. The community needed to raise \$3 million for this to proceed. My wife and I are from the Sikh faith, and we thought it was a good way to get our community involved in giving back to the hospital.” The event was held at the hospital, with a goal of \$50,000. They didn’t know how many people would come – they just wanted to raise a little bit of money. “By the time it was over, we’d raised about \$130,000. The turnout was incredible –we had about 700 people at the hospital. It was an amazing event. I remember that night after the event I couldn’t sleep, because it was so overwhelming. It was just so nice to see our community come together, for our hospital.”

Dr. Chawla said that it was important to him to get his community involved. “Historically, as Sikhs, we like to give back to the community. Coming to a new country, people have a hard time trying to find a niche in how to do this.” He explains. “The community was very receptive to this. They thought it would be great to show who we are, show that we are giving back to Canadian society. It was a nice way to bring up who we are.”

There is a noticeable tone of pride in Dr. Chawla’s voice when he speaks about the hospital he works at. “I’d like people to know that we are one of the best institutions in the city, if not the province. We strive for excellence, and we try our best to do the best for our patients.” He smiles, sitting up a bit straighter. “I’d like people to know that our Physicians are some of the best in the country – they work hard, they always put their patients first, and they’re very dedicated to this hospital.”

Dr. Chawla works with his wife, Dr. Ramandeep Chawla, in the same department. They got hired together, they organize events together, and they have a life outside of the hospital together. “Initially we used to work a lot more together, but we try to schedule it now so we’re not here always at the same time. It’s good though, because we can bounce problems and ideas off each other, can cover for each other.” Queensway Carleton has taught Dr. Chawla an important lesson. “It’s taught me how to balance work and life. At QCH we’ve been growing so rapidly, and workloads have been increasing so much, even since we joined. During that time, we’ve had to figure out that balance. QCH has allowed me to do that. I don’t think I’d be able to do that at other institutions.”

There were two words Dr. Chawla chose to describe QCH. “Friendly and collegial,” He begins. “That’s what makes us a community hospital. We try to keep that feel in here. That’s very important. I think as long as we maintain that, we’re going to be very successful in the future.”



Pictured with his wife Dr. Ramandeep Chawla at the SEVA Walk for QCH