

Editorial

Obituary: William J Sibbald, MD, FRCP(C)

Michael R Pinsky

Professor of Critical Care Medicine, Bioengineering and Anesthesiology, 606 Scaife Hall, 3550 Terrace Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15261, USA

Corresponding author: Michael R Pinsky, pinskymr@upmc.edu

Published: 30 November 2006

This article is online at <http://ccforum.com/content/10/6/177>

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Critical Care 2006, **10**:177 (doi:10.1186/cc5107)

William Sibbald was born June 28, 1946, and died September 14, 2006, at his home in Toronto, Ontario, surrounded by his family after a two-year battle with cancer. He was 60 years old. Up until two days before his death, he remained the Physician-in-Chief of Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Critical Care* and a lifelong dynamic force for the advancement of critical care medicine regionally, nationally and around the world. His last days were given to his family. His primary love was his children, for whom he was a tireless supporter. He was a committed and compassionate physician, healthcare pioneer, renowned researcher, tireless leader, inspirational teacher, and generous mentor. For those of us who knew him personally, he was truly an impressive force for good in acute care medicine. He was also a highly valued member of the Editorial Board of this journal.

Except for a fellowship in Critical Care Medicine at Wayne State University, Bill received all his medical school and internal medicine training in the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, where he subsequently helped create and run the Richard and Jean Ivey Critical Care and Trauma Unit of Victoria Hospital for 23 years from 1977 to 2000. Afterward he moved to Toronto to become the Physician-in-Chief at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, supporting the largest collection of intensive care unit beds in Canada.

Bill's academic career mirrored the man in that it was characterized by insightful and important observations, varied and evolving interests. His initial research focused on cardiovascular function as he worked to understand the physiology of sepsis and trauma. However, he rapidly branched into nearly every aspect of clinical research in the intensive care setting, including ethics issues in the intensive care unit setting, process control, technology transfer and the practical application of evidence-based medicine. Some of the more quantifiable products of these efforts were more than 260 peer-reviewed publications, 70 chapters and 9 monographs and textbooks. But these numbers cannot estimate the impact that Bill had on the practice of critical care medicine. He literally touched the lives of most of the

academic leaders in critical care around the world, personally trained countless students and helped forge insightful and reasonable healthcare policy for his native province of Ontario as well as defining similar principles worldwide.

In recognition of these efforts Dr Sibbald received the Dean's Award of Excellence, Faculty of Medicine, University of Western Ontario, in 1997, Distinguished Investigator Award, American College of Critical Care Medicine, in 1998, a fellowship at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Edinburgh, in 2002, and the Distinguished Service Award, Society of Critical Care Medicine, in 2004.

We shall all miss the dynamic presence and positive energy that Bill brought to every occasion. But he will be remembered for the large body of work etched into the fabric of medicine through his studies, teaching and personal efforts that will make his positive imprint everlasting as memories fade and life goes on.