



William A. Cochrane, MD

Recognized early on as a leader in pediatrics, Dr. Cochrane's career evolved through medical research, medical education, biotechnology and business. A visionary who never gave up, Dr. Cochrane had an extraordinary ability to attract and encourage others to join him in his pursuit for excellence in Canadian medicine. As a pediatrician, Dr. Cochrane was one of the first non-hospital subspecialists to practice in Ontario. His research interests led to the development of an acetone tolerance test to diagnose glycogen storage disease of the liver (1953) and to the Cochrane (L-leucine) test still in use today to identify a form of hypoglycemia that is sensitive to protein intake (1956).

A strong believer in the power of education, Dr. Cochrane was lured towards an academic career at Dalhousie University in 1958. While in Halifax, he initiated the first Cystic Fibrosis clinic in the Maritimes, formed the Atlantic Research Centre for Mental Retardation, and most significantly, secured funding and government support for the Isaac Walton Killam Hospital for Children, which opened in 1970.

Driven by a desire for new challenges, Dr. Cochrane left the Maritimes with a mandate, but limited resources, to develop a medical school at the University of Calgary. Attracted by the opportunity to start afresh, he introduced a systems-based approach to teaching medicine and began one of only two three-year MD training programs in North America.

Numerous successful ventures followed. Dr. Cochrane became Alberta's Deputy Minister of Health (1973-1974). As President of the University of Calgary (1974-1978) he established Faculties of Humanities and Law. Moving into the realm of business, as Chairman and CEO of Connaught Laboratories (1978-1989), Dr. Cochrane championed a new strategy for the company that focused on genetic engineering. He also sat on 30 Boards of corporations ranging from biotechnology to real estate, in addition to being a dedicated community leader. Among numerous awards, Dr. Cochrane received the Order of Canada (1989), the Queens Golden Jubilee Award (2002), the Alberta Order of Excellence (2007) and was elected to the Biotechnology Hall of Fame by the BioAlberta Association (2009). He was named one of 100 Alberta Physicians of the Century (2005) and has received four honorary doctorates. His interest in helping First Nations communities earned him an honorary membership in the Stoney Indian Band (1972) and the title "Medicine Chief".