

JOHN DIRKS, FRSC

Charles H. Hollenberg
1930-2003



Charles H. Hollenberg played a unique role as a leader of academic medicine, a physician, an educator and a scientist. He was without doubt the clinical academic leader of the last three decades. A native of Winnipeg, he attained his MD from the University of Manitoba in 1955. Following postgraduate training in internal medicine and endocrinology at McGill University and Tufts University in Boston, he joined the Department of Medicine at McGill as a Markle Scholar in Medical Science. The field of his research was the regulation of fat tissue metabolism.

In 1970 he was appointed Sir John and Lady Eaton Professor of Medicine and Chair of the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto and Physician-in-Chief at the Toronto General Hospital, positions he held until 1982. During his tenure he built an outstanding research, clinical and teaching department, one of the foremost in North America.

In 1981, Dr. Hollenberg was appointed Charles H. Best Professor of Medical Research and was instrumental in developing the Banting and Best Diabetes Centre. In 1983, he was appointed Vice-Provost of Health Science at the University of Toronto and in 1991 became President of the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, guiding its transformation to Cancer Care Ontario. Dr. Hollenberg was President of the Gairdner Foundation (1976-1993), which gives international awards for biomedical discovery research and he initiated the development of the foundation's National Program. He was also President of the Canadian Society of Clinical Investigators, the Canadian Society for Endocrinology and Metabolism and the Canadian Institute for Academic Medicine.

Dr. Hollenberg was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1987 and Officer of the Order of Canada in 1991. He received honorary degrees from the University of Manitoba and McGill. Charles Hollenberg was enormously respected and admired by all in the university and clinical community, but never lost his personal touch, nor his principled approach. He is survived by his wife Mimi, his son Tony and daughter-in law Judy Levenfeld and their three children, all of Boston, and his brother Martin, Professor Emeritus of UBC.

He died on April 7, 2003.

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(Author's title given as of the time of writing)