



Canada's Ebola Fighter is the 2017 recipient of the Royal College's Teasdale-Corti Humanitarian Award

April 19, 2017, OTTAWA – During the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, Dr. Robert Fowler, FRCPC, and his colleagues championed a common standard of care in Canada as a way to fight Ebola Virus Disease in West Africa. These clinical protocols saved thousands of lives and for the impact of his work, Dr. Fowler has won one of Canada's most prestigious medical awards: the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada's Teasdale-Corti Humanitarian Award.

Watch our short tribute video here: <http://www.kaltura.com/tiny/m9ydz>

Dr. Fowler is a professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Toronto and a senior scientist at the world-renowned Sunnybrook Research Institute.

Advocacy for life-saving, supportive care - Working alongside national and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) health care workers at Donka Hospital in Conakry, Guinea, Dr. Fowler and his colleagues pushed for new clinical protocols for the care of patients with Ebola Virus Disease, which was historically associated with a 70 to 90 per cent mortality rate. They focused on a much more aggressive, supportive method of care than was commonly delivered to these patients. This is the kind of care that we take for granted in Canada — fluid resuscitation for severe dehydration, and support for electrolyte abnormalities and organ dysfunctions that accompany critical illness. Rob and his colleagues showed the world that these strategies would help patients survive Ebola Virus Disease long enough for their own body to clear the virus.

Mortality dropped from 80 per cent to 20 - This type of aggressive care challenged the international status quo on Ebola management and eventually helped transform the world's clinical response to the disease, including management guidelines that the World Health Organization had published. At the onset of the outbreak, the mortality rate in West Africa was almost 80 per cent, but over time and with improved access to care, the mortality rate dropped to under 40 per cent.

Among the patients treated in European and American hospitals and critical care units with aggressive supportive care, mortality dropped even more — to less than 20 per cent, meaning that up to 80 per cent of people with Ebola Virus Disease survived.

"Dr. Fowler's training allowed him to see an important gap in patient care during the outbreak and take action – with life-saving results," said Royal College CEO Dr. Andrew Padmos, MD, FRCPC. "His actions are an example of the value of how Canadian experience and skills can transform the lives of patients at home and abroad."

"Rob actually escorted me into the red zone the first time I went in, watched me don,

watched me go in, kept an eye on me while I was there, and didn't leave me until after I had fully doffed and left," said Dr. Adrienne Chan, FRCPC, a specialist in infectious diseases who worked with Dr. Fowler in West Africa during the Ebola response. "As a colleague and as a person, it's very meaningful to understand that somebody's watching over you and that someone genuinely cares."

For more information about our awards and grants program, visit the Royal College website at www.royalcollege.ca/awards.

About the Royal College

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada is the home of specialty medicine in Canada, setting the standards for postgraduate medical education, supporting the continuing professional development of over 50,000 Fellows and affiliates, and supporting health system innovations nationwide. To find out more, please visit royalcollege.ca.

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