



Excellence in Integrative Medicine

by Philip Rouchotas, Msc, ND

The path taken by Dr Francesco Anello to arrive at the creation of the *Complementary Healing Arts* clinic in Cambridge, Ontario is indeed unique and influenced my several phenomena outside of any one individual's control. Yet the story unfolds in a manner familiar to IHP readers: rigorous training in conventional therapeutics, considerable time spent applying the conventional medical model, a feeling of being "unfulfilled" by the care being delivered, and the inevitable search for better solutions to common, debilitating problems.

Francesco Anello, MD

Dr Anello completed his undergraduate (HBSc genetics) and medical training at the University of Western, completing a family practice residency in 1984. He opened a family practice in Cambridge in 1986, providing a full- spectrum of care, yet with emphasis on obstetrics and neonatal/ pediatric care, and maintained emergency room rotations and surgical assisting at a local hospital. The healthcare crisis of the mid 1990's and accompanying cutbacks left Dr Anello feeling the style of practice he was engaged in was no longer tenable. He closed down his private practice and undertook a role with the Woolwich Community Health Centre in 1995. At the same time, he began building what is known today as the *Complementary Healing Arts* clinic, which he fully transitioned to in 2002.



Dr Anello always maintained an active interest in integrative medicine. His original conventionally- focused facility in 1986 was seeing a lot of obstetrics patients, and quickly his clinic gained a reputation as being “midwife friendly”. In Dr Anello’s words, “a holistic perspective on birthing was required... people were wanting it, asking for it”. His work during a locum in the town of St Jacobs served as an excellent introduction to more holistic birthing practices, as he served a large Mennonite community within the town. The roots of Dr Anello’s interest in integrative medicine began much earlier, however. During his last year of medical school, Francesco spent six months in India delivering a rotation in obstetrics and infectious disease. He met up with an individual he described as a “wandering healer” whom he spent the majority of the trip with, and was introduced to the art of meditation. Shortly after his return to Canada, Dr Anello continued his pursuit of training in integrative medicine through a channel familiar to most integrative MD’s; the seminars hosted by Jeffrey Bland and Alan Gaby.

The clinic is situated in a stunning, large home on a main street in Cambridge, Ontario. An initial visit with Dr Anello is a one- hour intake, involving a complete medical history, a battery of common lab tests, and discussion of one or two relevant integrative diagnostic tests. Subsequent visits review relevant laboratory outcomes, an individualized treatment plan specific to the patient is created, and Dr Anello plus the impressive support staff of the facility implement recommendations as a team. The clinic performs a large number of IV therapies, used to address a wide array of patient concerns. Chief among them is the reputation the clinic has garnered as a facility of cardiovascular disease management, with IV EDTA emerging as among the most relied upon interventions.

The team at the *Complementary Healing Arts* clinic is as diverse and skilled as the clinic’s founder. Marianne Anello brings a wealth of clinical experience as an RN in a broad array of hospital settings including ER and pediatric nursing. At

the facility Marianne oversees laboratory testing and IV therapies. Michael Reid is an ND graduated from CCM. He beams with praise and admiration for Dr Anello, describing him as a gifted, selfless, and extremely knowledgeable practitioner of integrative medicine, sighting his time with Dr Anello as largely responsible for the skillset he possesses today as an ND. Alex Audette is an Asian- trained physician of traditional Chinese medicine. In addition to conventional TCM practices, Dr Audette delivers Japanese deep tissue lymphatic drainage at the facility, a labour- intensive, hands on form of acupuncture that may be time consuming yet delivers important outcomes quickly for patients. The clinic also boasts highly skilled and experienced practitioners in psychotherapy (Kristin Trotter), and registered nutritionist (Donna Reik). Trudy Schneider rounds out the team by acting as office manager.

Dr Anello did not let me spend much time getting to know about his style of practice. Instead, he would make a comment about some new happening in the world of medicine, and I would eagerly delve into the topic mostly out of personal interest. It began with a discussion of Dr Garth Nicolson, a researcher from Anderson, Texas who is responsible for coining the term “golf war syndrome”, a phenomena whereby it is hypothesized a mycoplasma organism was weaponized and used against US soldiers. The organism is believed to be responsible for chronic fatigue, chronic rheumatic pain type syndromes common among soldiers who served in the golf war. Dr Nicolson has developed a private lab that tests for the mycoplasma organism, and advocates for the use of intermittent doxycycline for treatment of the disorder. Most astonishing to me, a handful of days before my interview with Dr Anello, a surgeon from the US was claiming 50%+ of individuals seeking back surgery for chronic pain can avoid the surgery entirely with an aggressive six month course of antibiotics.

I asked Dr Anello about the CPSO, and whether or not he has faced controversy from them. He described a few inquiries, all of which occurred in his first 10 years of practice. I was then immersed in a



fascinating discussion of a well-known Ontario physician, Jozef Krop. Dr Krop practiced integrative medicine in Ontario for many years, and was sited as a major contributor to the modern integrative practices that define management of chronic lyme. Dr Krop found himself in a lot of trouble with the CPSO, yet his patients rallied at Queen's Park and not only vindicated Dr Krop, but also helped to pass the Kwinter Bill in Ontario. In brief, the Bill enshrined a patient's freedom of choice in healthcare, and went a long way in preventing the stripping of a medical license for reasonable practice outside of conventional scope for physicians in Ontario.

IHP is grateful to Dr Anello and the *Complementary Healing Arts* team for allowing us to showcase their efforts to you. Dr Anello embodies everything one hopes to encounter in a practitioner of

integrative medicine, and like a handful of others we have had the privilege to meet, he arrived at his current destination during a time when the path was much more difficult to follow than it is today. I am normally quite good at keeping an interview with integrative MD's focused on the type of information gathered for a story. Dr Anello's passion and knowledge simply made the task impossible in this case. Every side-bar, story, "hey did you hear this?" had me mesmerized and fascinated. Francesco truly is a wealth of knowledge and wisdom... Our profession will be richly rewarded if we can pry him from his clinic and get him delivering a lecture circuit of his own? Dr Anello, you are likely to serve as the "wandering healer" who inspires the next generation of physician to deliver the best system of medicine going...