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Director of Gynaecologic Oncology, Monash Medical Centre
Founder & Former Director of Ovarian Cancer Research Centre

Tell us about yourself and how you came to be in your current role(s)?

I grew up in rural Victoria and moved to Melbourne for my schooling. After graduating high school I started the long journey to becoming a gynaecological oncologist, including training in the United Kingdom and subsequently Australia. I have been at Monash Medical Centre since 1991 and I believe we have a very well integrated unit with a very strong multidisciplinary approach to our roles.

What is your connection to SMICS?

My connection with SMICS has been present for many years, since the integrated services were set up in 2004-2005.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your role(s)?

Most rewarding aspect of my role is that I work with a group of people who are truly caring, respectful and I think we have a very collegiate feeling in the unit, involving our medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, nursing staff and support staff.

What is it about your work that makes you want to get out of bed each morning?

The challenges we encounter with the incredible variety of surgical presentations which occur in gynaecological cancer. Pelvic surgery can be very challenging and for reasons that nobody knows, women seem to be able to make masses, about ten times the size that men can! It is truly amazing that a female can grow an ovarian or uterine lesion that can weigh up to 20kgs.

What does a typical day at work look like for you?

Ward rounds in the morning, usually around 7am, consulting and operating four out of five days per week. We have a very co-operative team within the gynae oncology unit which means we are able to limit our 'on-call' roster, to one week in 4. This allows us to have some much needed time off with the family.

How do you manage work / life balance?

Work life balance is always challenging with both public and private patients, but I know how important it is to take time away from the hospital, to recharge and refuel. In the summer months I enjoy boating out on Port Phillip Bay and in the colder months I enjoy the football.

Are there any patient success stories that you can share?

The cases that I would be most jubilant about, are those of young women who have conservative surgery for either ovarian or cervical cancer, who are then able to have children, thereby enriching their life. This give us an enormous sense of satisfaction to be involved in that outcome.