

## Jill Matsuo MD CCFP(EM)

*A summer evening, the Relay for Life: Dr Jill Matsuo is part of a team, working with her colleagues from the hospital, walking around the high school track. They share the responsibility: one doctor goes until she is tired, then Dr Matsuo goes until she is tired; the team never rests because cancer never rests, so goes the motto. The Relay started in the afternoon and it goes until the late morning, when there will be a pancake breakfast, but for Dr Matsuo the important piece is how the Relay began: the survivor lap, with a host of cancer survivors walking and rolling around the track. She watched one family she's followed in her practice for years make their collective way: geriatric to pediatric, four generations, the matriarch now dead from breast cancer that Dr Matsuo palliated. A disease that, in time, afflicted the matriarch's daughters. When Dr Matsuo watches the family move around the track, she feels that family medicine is a profound kind of witnessing, that a stranger watching this family would never know what she is privileged to know. The local Relay's symbolism and power has led to other, bigger events: Dr Matsuo took up bicycling with two emerg nurse friends and joined the Princess Margaret Ride to Conquer Cancer (250 km). In allegiance, the multigenerational family made a significant donation to the Ride. Dr Matsuo also participated in the RONA MS Bike Tour (180 km) to battle another disease that afflicts the same family. This investiture reflects the reciprocity of family medicine: that the relationships family physicians develop with their patients not only help them as clinicians, but also as citizens. Taking families as far as they will be taken. The cost of such journeys is time, however, and Dr Matsuo, who does family practice work as well as emergency shifts, inpatient care, and nursing home coverage, pays the unbalanced price of being part of a team. ❁*

**Cover photo:** Alex Webster, Toronto, Ont

**Story:** Shane Neilson MD CCFP, Erin, Ont

Additional photos and the French translation of the story appear on page 504.

D'autres photos et la traduction en français du récit se trouvent à la page 504.

**THE COVER PROJECT** Canadian Family Physician has embarked on a project to assemble the portrait of family medicine in Canada. Each cover of the journal will feature a family physician chosen at random from our membership list, along with a short essay—a brief glimpse of the person and the practice. Over time, the randomness will become representative and the differences, taken together, will define what it is that all family physicians have in common.

*Inside half-cover (IHC)*