

## Kathleen Ross MSc MD

***The Guiding Law challenges me to be honest and trustworthy, use my resources wisely, respect myself and others, recognize and use my talents and abilities, protect our common environment, live with courage and strength, share in the sisterhood of Guiding.***

*Guiding the doctor: Dr Ross has been a Girl Guide leader for more than 15 years. In the past 5 years, she's worked with teenagers. Dr Ross first developed her own leadership skills by positioning teens to create their own Guiding programs: if the teens want to go on a bike camping trip, she advises them about financials, timing, how to choose a location. Her public speaking experiences grew by talking to Sparks, Girl Guides, Pathfinders, and Rangers.*

*The doctor leading other doctors: Nine years ago, Dr Ross was part of a group of doctors growing disillusioned with the role of family physicians in local communities. Family physicians withdrew from Eagle Ridge Hospital and Royal Columbian Hospital, reducing the visibility of family practice in the largest local health care institution—a problem shared provincewide. To address this lack of engagement, the family physicians of British Columbia formed into 31 community divisions. Dr Ross is Chair and Physician Lead for Fraser Northwest Division, which suffers a common problem: recruitment. Fraser Northwest addresses the problem by filling gaps in care—making Coquitlam a better place to work. Fraser Northwest identified an issue with transition from hospital to community-based care in its elderly orphan patient population. The division worked with government to hire a nurse practitioner to smooth transitions.*

*The doctor in the Girl Guide: Dr Ross occasionally serves as camp physician for Girl Guide Jamborees. This usually means tending to bumps, bruises, and lacerations, but one year in Agassiz, Dr Ross treated a girl just off the bus from the interior of BC—a ride of 8 hours. During the bus trip the girl became short of breath; sores burst on her mouth. Amoxil had been started a few days before—Dr Ross diagnosed Stevens-Johnson syndrome and transferred the patient from camp to the hospital.*

*Last October Dr Ross traveled in Nepal with a group of current and former Girl Guide leaders. While moving through Upper Mustang, with the nearest medical clinic a 2-day walk, Dr Ross was approached by villagers carrying a tachypneic and cyanotic infant. Dr Ross diagnosed pneumonia and gave the baby's parents antibiotics (carried on her person in order to be prepared for medical emergencies within her hiking group). She'll never know if the medicine worked, if the baby turned out all right.*

***The Hippocratic Oath (abridged): Whatever houses I may visit, I will come for the benefit of the sick. I will hold him who has taught me this art as equal to my parents and to live my life in partnership with him. What I may see or hear in the course of the treatment, I will keep to myself. I will keep the sick from harm and injustice and live my life in partnership with them. If I fulfil this path, may it be granted to me to enjoy life and art.*** 🌿

---

Cover photo: Gabrielle Beer, Coquitlam, BC  
Story: Shane Neilson MD CCFP, Erin, Ont

Additional photos and the French translation of the story appear on page 578.  
D'autres photos et la traduction en français du récit se trouvent à la page 578.