

# Reason and compassion

*Marco Terwiel MD CCFP FCFP (1937-2014)*

*An inspiration in life and through his death ...*

Dr Nick Busing, CFPC President, 1997-1998

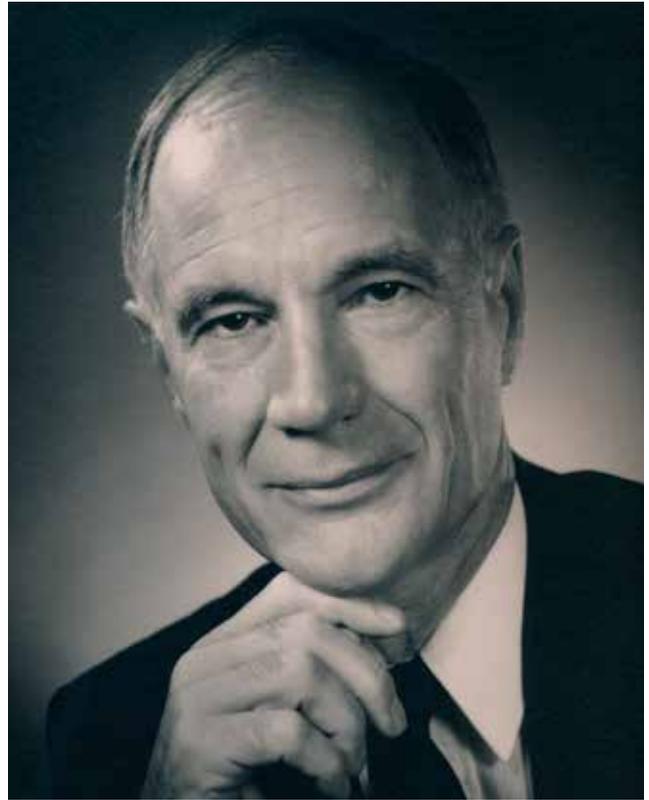
**D**r Marco Terwiel, an articulate and passionate advocate for family medicine, passed away on January 4, 2014, following a long battle with prostate cancer. Dr Terwiel, a family physician in Maple Ridge, BC, from 1968 to 1999, was President of the CFPC from 1992 to 1993. The College has received numerous tributes to Dr Terwiel since his passing. He will be sorely missed but not forgotten by his colleagues and friends in the CFPC family. He will be especially remembered for his infectious smile, eloquence, energy, compassion, and forthright but gentlemanly manner.

Marco Terwiel was a man of many roles and talents: a dedicated physician, a talented and prolific writer, a columnist and blogger, an active volunteer, a Rotarian, a teacher, a strong leader, a patient advocate, a husband, a father, a grandfather, and a great-grandfather. His motto was “reason and compassion.”

Born in Utrecht in the Netherlands on January 11, 1937, as a young boy Marco Terwiel lived in a country occupied by the Nazi regime (1940 to 1945). He earned his medical degree in 1961 at Utrecht University, completed postgraduate studies in Rotterdam, and then emigrated to the United States. After practising in the state of Washington for 5 years, he moved to Maple Ridge in 1968 to set up a family practice. Dr Terwiel served as Medical Director of Ridge Meadows Hospital in Maple Ridge from 1994 to 1995, was a faculty member of the University of British Columbia Department of Family Medicine from 1996 to 2013, and served on the Board of the British Columbia College of Family Physicians from 1988 to 1992. Dr Terwiel was elected President of the CFPC in 1992. Dr Terwiel practised part-time in Nunavut following his retirement from full-time practice. He was a proponent of family medicine in rural and remote communities, an advocate for vulnerable populations, and a strong supporter of the CFPC’s Research and Education Foundation.

“Marco was an outstanding family physician, a mentor, and a friend,” says CFPC Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, Dr Francine Lemire. “He was a visionary in terms of how he saw the College as a professional home, and how he saw the specialty of family medicine and the influence of the College at present and in the future. At the same time he was also very pragmatic. He was engaged locally, nationally, and internationally. He will be sadly missed.”

“Marco was a very dear friend,” stresses Dr Reg Perkin, CFPC Executive Director from 1985 to 1996. “I treasure



the memories of the good times and good conversations we shared. Marco and his wife, Lila Jane, both contributed so much to the life and work of the CFPC over a very long time. He had a broad perspective on family medicine, and he taught us a lot about how to face the end of life. He was so open and frank in his sharing of his own experience, teaching the rest of us how to deal with the everyday difficulties of dying. He was loved.”

“Marco Terwiel was an exceptional person,” adds Dr Calvin Gutkin, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the CFPC from 1996 to 2012. “As a family physician and organizational leader, he was an advocate for those less fortunate. He walked the talk of what he believed and positively impacted the lives of thousands. Perhaps his greatest attribute was his compassion. He was a kind and caring family man and family doctor, a warm and loving human being, and a good friend.”

Despite his ailing health, Dr Terwiel spoke at the CFPC Past Presidents breakfast at Family Medicine Forum in November 2013. He touched the hearts and minds of his colleagues with his humour, characteristic “brutal honesty,” and thought-provoking observations on life and death.

Dr Terwiel is survived by his wife, Lila Jane; 3 children, Anook, Bart, and Erik; 2 grandchildren; 5 stepchildren; 11 step-grandchildren; and 1 step-great-grandson.

The CFPC wishes to express sincere condolences to Lila Jane and her family. In Dr Terwiel’s memory, a donation has been made to the CFPC’s Research and Education Foundation.

