



Cheryl Rockman-Greenberg, MDCM

In the great central prairies and northern provinces and territories of Canada, isolated Indigenous and early-settler communities have experienced serious genetic disorders seldom shared by the majority of their fellow citizens living in larger population centres with greater access to abundant resources and advanced medical technology. Conditions rare or almost unknown in our general urban population have occurred with devastating effects. Dr. Cheryl Rockman-Greenberg, Distinguished Professor of the University of Manitoba and clinician scientist in the Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba, has devoted her long and distinguished career to bringing advanced medical knowledge and care to these isolated and often vulnerable populations.

By developing diagnostic tests, screening programs, and treatments for disorders once untreatable and poorly understood, Dr. Rockman-Greenberg has improved the lives of generations of children and their families. Working closely with the communities themselves, she has carried advanced knowledge and skills from the research facilities of major universities directly to people who need them. Her life's work fulfills a great aspiration of humane medical practice: not only the needs of the majority shall be met, but the needs of all, no matter how rare the disorder, no matter how remote a patient may be from the centres of population or power.

While completing her degree in medicine, Dr. Rockman-Greenberg developed an early interest in rare and ultrarare genetic disorders, which led to a career in pediatrics and medical genetics. As an academic clinician, she focused her research on applied molecular genetics and the identification of the molecular basis of genetic disorders overrepresented in unique populations, notably hypophosphatasia (HPP), a metabolic bone disorder, and glutaric aciduria type 1 (GA1), a complex disorder of organic acid metabolism, affecting Mennonite and Indigenous populations respectively. Most recently she was the Canadian principal investigator for an industry-sponsored clinical trial of a new enzyme replacement therapy (ERT) drug for the treatment of HPP, a treatment that recently received Health Canada approval and has already transformed an untreatable disorder into a treatable one.

From 2004 to 2014, Dr. Rockman-Greenberg served as Head of the Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, University of Manitoba, and Medical Director, Child Health Program, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. In this role, she assured that residency training would include mandatory rotations in rural and remote areas to improve access to health care throughout the province. As an administrator, researcher, practicing physician, and author of 195 publications, Dr. Rockman-Greenberg has consistently sought, and achieved, practical applications for relevant patient care. She has received many awards, and was named one of Canada's Most Powerful Women (2012). In Dr. Rockman-Greenberg's case, powerful to do good, which she has done for so many, and often for the most vulnerable.