

Asian Heritage Month 2021 "Trailblazers in Social Justice"



DR. RITIKA GOEL COMMUNITY ACTIVIST AND PHYSICIAN

Dr. Ritika Goel is a family physician with St. Michael's Hospital Family Health Team and Sistering Drop-In. She obtained her Doctor of Medicine from McMaster University in 2010, and a Master of Public Health from The Johns Hopkins University in 2012. In her first decade of clinical experience, she has worked closely with marginalized communities to address their needs within healthcare and beyond. She has worked extensively within community health centres, sexual health clinics, and the shelter and drop-in system in Toronto.

Throughout her career, Dr. Goel has proven herself to be a tireless proponent for health equity and access to services for the most vulnerable communities within Canada. Most notably, her advocacy has included the "No IFH Cuts" campaign against cuts to the healthcare framework for refugees, and Canadian Doctors for Medicare. She is also a co-founder of OHIP For All, which campaigns for accessible healthcare for all, including those in Canada with precarious immigration status like newly landed permanent residents, migrant workers, international students, and those without any formal immigration status.

From June 2020 until May 2021, Dr. Goel was named the University of Toronto Department of Family and Community Medicine (DFCM)'s first Faculty Lead in Social Accountability. In this one-year role, she guided the DFCM community in informing their healthcare practice and methods with an equity lens, and drew the attention and efforts of individual actors towards the systemic factors and social determinants of health outcomes. In this regard, Dr. Goel's role as Faculty Lead was a continuation of her own equity- and social justice-informed practice. She has recently been appointed as the first MD-PGME Social Justice, Anti-Oppression and Advocacy Theme Lead, where she will support curriculum development that embeds social justice content into the education received by the next generation of physicians at University of Toronto.

We applaud the boundary-breaking work of professionals and advocates like Dr. Goel, whose career-long dedication to reimagining healthcare as a front for social change has made much-needed headway for goals of healthcare equity, social justice, better services, and balanced health outcomes for all. Dr. Goel's client-facing and systemic activism demonstrates that community activism has many loci, and her role as an outspoken and undeterred force for social justice continues to challenge and inspire others who seek to advance the interests of marginalized people across Canada.

See more of Ritika's work



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