

# Obituaries

## Dr Peter Morrin

# Pioneer in treatment of kidney diseases

Dr Peter Morrin, who has died aged 75, was professor emeritus of medicine at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. A specialist in nephrology, the treatment of patients with diseases of the kidney, he was a medical ethicist, teacher and innovator. During his postgraduate training he carried out the first successful use of blood purification - dialysis - in St Louis, to save the life of a nine-year-old child.

Later, with his colleague Fred Siemensen, he developed the Kingmed Dialysis machine, a modification of the Kolff dialyser.

Dr David Walker, dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences (Medicine) at Queen's University, praised Dr Morrin's enormous contribution to the medical school. "His incisive mind, broad clinical and diagnostic acumen, engaging sense of humour . . . affected generations of students, residents, staff, colleagues and friends."

A former colleague, Dr Ross Morton wrote in the *Kingston Whig-Standard*: "Dr Morrin's insights in the realm of medical ethics came from additional training he under-

took in this challenging area, but were based on his own sound principles of fairness, beneficence and justice."

Born in 1931, he was the son of Francis Joseph Morrin, a surgeon at St Vincent's Hospital, St Stephen's Green, and his wife Eileen Mary (née Dowling), who also was a physician. The family lived at Fitzwilliam Place, Dublin. Among the first batch of pupils to enrol at St Conleth's College, Clyde Road, he later attended Ampleforth College, Yorkshire. He then studied medicine at University College Dublin, graduating in 1954. Following a stint at St Vincent's Hospital, he continued his studies at the Liverpool Royal Infirmary and Boston City Hospital.

In 1960 he was appointed acting director of the renal division at Barnes Hospital, St Louis, Missouri. Appointed in 1961 to the department of medicine at Queen's University, his work led to the establishment of the renal programme and the nephrology division.

This division now consists of eight nephrologists providing care to more than 350 patients receiving dialysis. It has seven satellite

dialysis centres in the surrounding district, and provides care for more than 100 patients with functioning kidney transplants and almost 600 individuals not yet requiring renal replacement therapy.

In 1967 the first renal unit at Kingston General Hospital was opened under his direction. He oversaw further expansion of the unit in 1982 and again in 1990. Appointed professor of medicine at Queen's University, he retired in 1995.

At his retirement, renal treatment had progressed from a time when kidney failure meant death to the existence of an extensive renal programme to treat kidney patients. No longer did patients have to meet stringent criteria such as being between 15 and 45 years of age, with no other serious disease apart from the renal failure, a capability of being restored to "normal functioning" and a willingness and ability to comply with the restrictions of the programme.

All patients who can benefit from dialysis are now accepted for treatment, regardless of their age and condition.

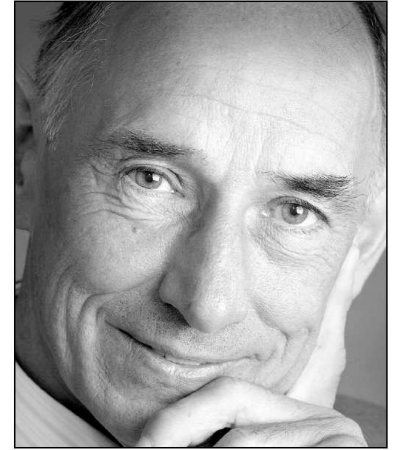
The author of many conference papers, he contributed articles to a range of academic publications, including the *American Journal of Medicine* and the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*. The Peter Morrin Prize in Nephrology, established by colleagues and friends on his retirement, is awarded annually to the fourth-year medical student at Queen's University obtaining the highest overall standing in nephrology.

As a young man he enjoyed shooting and fishing with his father, and he also played rugby at UCD. In later life, as a sailor, skier and fly fisherman he shared his love of the outdoors with family and friends.

All family members sailed and his son, Hugh, became a member of Canada's national sailing team.

Dr Morrin is survived by his wife Mariella, sons Peter, Hugh and Robin, six grandchildren, sister Alice (Smyth) and brother Francis.

*Peter Arthur Francis Morrin: born October 8th, 1931; died October 3rd, 2007*



**Peter Morrin: sound principles based on fairness, beneficence and justice**