



A Doctor's Story

Mary Morris, MD

Hometown: Pierre

Current Hometown: Redfield

Practice: Redfield Clinic

Family: Daughter, MaryBeth Morris; grandson, Joseph Morris

Dr. Mary Morris travels all over the country on her Harley Fat Boy with her faithful papillon, Poncho, in tow. But the road always leads her home to northeast South Dakota.

"This is a good place to come back to and relax," said Dr. Morris, a family practice physician in Redfield.

The call of the open road has led Dr. Morris to 46 states on her motorcycle outfitted with a dog carrier on the back. She tries to ride 10,000 miles per year. It's a much-needed form of relaxation for Dr. Morris, who sees patients at the Redfield Clinic and also serves as the medical director for Golden Living Centers in Redfield and Ipswich.

"I am always trying to improve. I strive to be better in all areas: mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually," Dr. Morris said. "I want to be a good example for others –

especially my grandson. I hope this will make me a better doctor as well."

A love of medicine began early in childhood for Dr. Morris, who attended the University of Minnesota – Morris, then the University of South Dakota for medical school. She completed her family practice residency in Sioux Falls and started her career where she is today.

A member of the Aberdeen Medical Society, Dr. Morris has served as vice president of the district since 2004 and is a past district delegate, and she also has served on the Medical Legal Committee and is a past chair of Women in Medicine. Dr. Morris also has been active as a board member, vice president and national delegate for the South Dakota Medical Directors Association. She's been a member of the AMA since 1988.

Q&A

Q: What or who inspired you to become a physician?

A: Dr. Swanson. He was my family physician as a child. Every time I saw him, he would say "Mary, you are going to be a doctor."

Q: What do you love about practicing medicine?

A: I love getting to know my patients and their families. I love the variety. It is never boring.

Q: What frustrates you about the profession?

A: People not being able to afford to get adequate medical care and/or not able to get insurance. (I am a salaried employee of the city of Redfield. I get paid whether or not my patients can pay. Knowing we will not turn people away because of finance is a plus to my job.)

Q: What advice do you have for young people considering a career in medicine?

A: Go for it. The benefits are much greater than the minuses.

Q: What do you think is the most critical health care issue facing South Dakota today?

A: I think there are two. I feel obesity is the most critical health problem. But the most critical issue is insurance and making sure everyone has access to affordable medical care.

Q: What do you think is the most troubling aspect of your profession?

A: The shortage of rural primary care physicians.

Q: Is there a single event or person in your career that stands out or made a unique contribution to your professional development?

A: Dr. David Brechtelsbauer. He was my teacher and has been my mentor for LTC medical directorship and geriatric medicine. He is never too busy to help someone out. His advice has helped me out more times than I can count. I can only hope to be as good a physician someday.

"A Doctor's Story" is a monthly feature that highlights physicians throughout South Dakota who are contributing to the quality of health care and the overall good of the community. The goal of this feature is to connect the faces and work of these doctors with the South Dakota State Medical Association (SDSMA). Would you like to be featured in "A Doctor's Story"? Please contact Megan Myers at 336-1965 or mmyers@sdsma.org.