

Dr. Brian McDonough '72 P'06'08'10

**Chair of Family Medicine at St. Francis Hospital
Trinity Health Mid-Atlantic Regional
Medical Director of Informatics**



NEWTOWN SQUARE, PA



Son Brian '08, Dr. Brian McDonough '72, wife Diane, daughters Ashleen '06 and Cristin '10, and Ashleen's husband Patrick

Dr. Brian McDonough '72 P'06'08'10 is an alum of many interests and accolades. You may recognize him as a Medical Editor on KYW or from his 20 years in broadcast on Fox News. During the global pandemic, he's been sharing his wisdom through his popular "Coronavirus Today" audio podcast and YouTube channel, all while working on the front lines as a Chair of Family Medicine at St. Francis Hospital in Wilmington, Delaware. He also recently accepted a position as Trinity Health Mid-Atlantic Regional Medical Director of Informatics. What's unique about Brian is that he has found a way to merge his interest in English, medicine, and technology into a career that he not only loves, but also that impacts his practice, this region, and, potentially, the nation.

Some of Dr. McDonough's interests were first fostered at Holy Child School at Rosemont. "At the time, we had this advanced English course with a teacher named John McGarry. We were reading books by Albert Camus or the book *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*—books that were way beyond what you'd be reading in seventh grade. That started my lifelong love of literature." This love of literature continued all the way through college when Brian attended LaSalle University as a biology major and then switched to a double major of biology and English. In medical school, he began to see all the pieces come together. "When I got into medical school, I was working really hard on the science, but what I started to like was all the communication parts—that was the family practice in me. I just looked at family practice and said, 'Wow! This is everything I like in English, and literature, and communications, but in the medical world.'" By sophomore year, Dr. McDonough knew family medicine was his concentration, and he also began to see more that his genuine desire to know and truly listen to his patients' stories

would become a key facet of his philosophy of a doctor.

"I went into [the field] with academic curiosity and ended up finding the perfect career for me. Family practice has never let me down because every patient you see is another story. It's like reading a book. When you meet a patient, they have their masks off, they're not trying to impress you. When people are sick, they are who they are. You meet real people; it's a real gift that I get to meet people when they drop all the stuff around them," said Dr. McDonough.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, spending a large chunk of time with sick patients carries the risk of exposure. However, this challenge has spurred Brian to use his love of informatics and technology to impact the healthcare system. "Sometimes you experience a tough situation like we are in the world, and it makes you more inventive," said Dr. McDonough. Now on top of seeing patients, he is using his talents to alter processes that will influence his hospital network. Dr. McDonough has spent the past decade working on converting the doctors' patient information systems from engineering terms into "conversational doctor talk." He's also been integrating telehealth into hospital rooms so isolated patients can communicate with their doctors. "What we've done in the 92 hospitals of my healthcare network is start using iPads and other devices. Every patient gets one so that doctors can check-in through a HIPPA-protected way from outside the room, so the patient has someone to consistently communicate with even though they're in isolation," said Dr. McDonough. As for what's on the horizon, Brian also serves as the Chairman of Pharmaceuticals and Therapeutics for all the 92 hospitals in the network. The hospital system is evaluating how to be innovative either through such measures as saving patients money by buying in bulk and viewing data from doctors across the board and using that information to inform treatments and improve patient care. Brian is heavily involved in this process. "It's taking what we're doing locally, and using it regionally and nationally," said Dr. McDonough.

In addition to all of his work as a doctor, Brian and his wife Diane have three children who also attended Holy Child—Ashleen '06, Brian '08, and Cristin '10. "The reason my wife and I sent our kids to Holy Child was because the school makes everyone feel like they have to contribute to the world in some way; it's expected of you. They build confidence in you that you have a talent and you have to use that talent to help other people." With his patients, through educating audiences with his podcasts and videos, and in utilizing technology to influence the medical field, Dr. McDonough is definitely using his talents and doing just that in our world today. ❖