

Overworked doc turns to the Web

By **HEATHER ENNIS**
Staff Writer

A local physician is turning to cyberspace to help him manage an overwhelming—and ever-increasing—number of patients.

Dr. Kenneth Handelman, a child psychiatrist at Peel Memorial Hospital, spends at least 40 per cent of his time helping children and teens with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Though statistics show approximately four per cent of Canadian children have the disorder, Handelman is one of only two full-time child psychiatrists in Brampton. His young patients wait an average of four to six months to see him, he said.

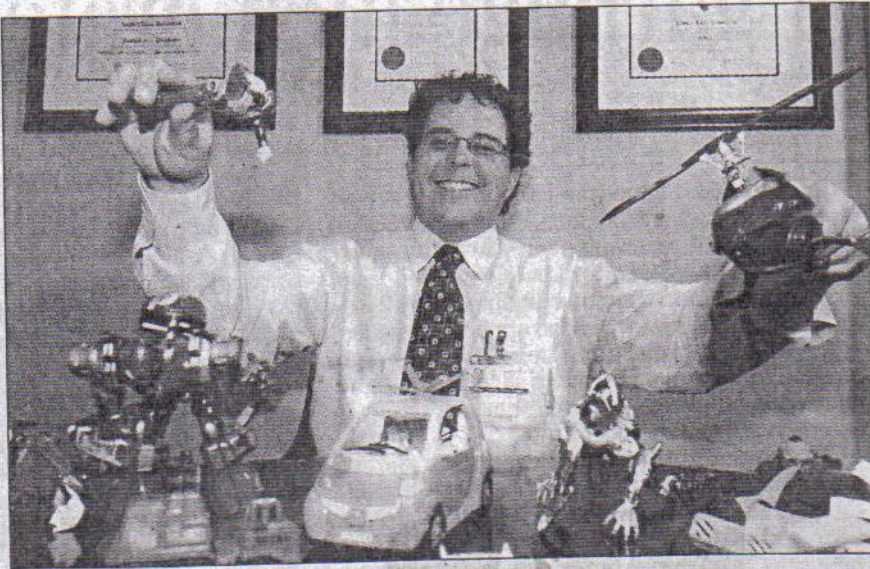
"There is a huge demand," said Handelman, who gets approximately 10 new patients every week. "There's just not enough time and not enough resources."

In addition to assessing a child with ADHD's medical needs, Handelman is also responsible for teaching patients, parents and other caregivers about the disorder. Education takes time, which he has precious little of, he said.

"I spend one hour on a new consult, which is kind of bare minimum," he said. "There are times when I'd like to take more time, but my practice would grind to a halt."

Struggling to find a way to do more with less, Handelman tuned in to his inner technophile and created a Web site and weekly audio newsletter dedicated to ADHD questions and concerns.

"It just hit me," he said. "My goal is to raise the knowledge of evidence-based, scientific information in the communi-



DR. KENNETH HANDELMAN

ty about ADHD so we can improve the quality of life for those with ADHD."

Each week, subscribers to the free newsletter get Handelman's audio answer to a real question delivered right to their inbox. There are already 200 people on the mailing list—each of whom submitted a question at registration. Dictating the answer saves Handelman the time of writing an appropriate response, he said.

"If I had to type up articles every week, it would feel like a burden to me," said Handelman.

There are a lot of misconceptions about ADHD out there, he said, and you don't have to be one of Handelman's patients to subscribe to the newsletter.

"There are still a lot of people who be-

lieve that this it's a parent's fault or video games that cause ADHD; and it's not," said Handelman. "With the new school year started, I've had parents, teachers, adults with ADHD, behaviour therapists and special education teachers sign up."

Handelman usually sees the most complicated cases of ADHD, with busy family doctors shouldering the burden of more mild situations. Those patients could benefit from the newsletter as well, he said.

Handelman also has an eye on expanding the services available on his Web site.

"This is just an introduction," he said.

For information or to subscribe to the newsletter, visit www.theadhd.doctor.com.