



2010 Distinguished Fellow - Dr. Cal Stiller

Dr. Stiller is well known nationally and internationally as an outstanding physician, scientist and entrepreneur who has championed innovation in health and biomedical research and its application for the improvement of health and the economy. He is a pioneer in multi-organ transplantation and diabetes in Canada and Professor Emeritus in the Department of Medicine, Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry at the University of Western Ontario. Dr. Stiller led the Canadian multi-center study that established the importance of cyclosporine in transplantation and led to its worldwide use as first-line therapy to prevent acute rejection. He was the first to demonstrate efficacy of immuno-suppression treatment in newly diagnosed Type 1 diabetes. He has published over 250 scientific papers.

Dr. Stiller's achievements extend beyond discovery and translational research into the establishment of public and private funds that have enabled the successful transfer of knowledge and intellectual property into practical clinical application. He is the co-founder of the Canadian Medical Discoveries Fund Inc., the founding Chair of the Ontario Research and Development Challenge Fund and Chair and co-founder of the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research.

Dr. Stiller is the recipient of the Order of Canada, the Order of Ontario and in 2010 he was inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. In 2010, he was also the recipient of the Canada Gairdner Wightman Award. His contributions have greatly enriched and transformed the health and biomedical research landscape of Canada.

President's Message

The Canadian Academy of Health Sciences is enjoying a busy and productive year. The forum at our AGM in early October focused on advances in "Personalized Health Care – Epigenetics, Ethics, Education and Economics". Presentations by Canadian experts, including many of our own members, were very well received and stimulated important discussion. Many of the presentations are now available on our website at <http://www.caHS-acss.ca/e/activities/>. The CAHS was privileged to host Dr. Shirley Tilghman, President of Princeton University, who was awarded the 2010 Henry G. Friesen International Prize in Health Research. Dr. Tilghman inspired us to focus on the importance of the contributions of the Academy to society. Dr. Calvin Stiller, an outstanding physician, scientist and entrepreneur who has championed innovation in health and biomedical research, and its application, for health improvements that are truly extraordinary, was formally recognized with the CAHS 2010 Distinguished Fellowship Award.



Dr. Catharine Whiteside

On December 7, the CAHS launched the report of the assessment "Transforming Care for Canadians with Chronic Health Conditions: Put People First, Expect the Best, Manages for Results", presented by the co-chairs Drs. Louise Nasmith and Penny Ballem first to representatives of the major sponsors including the Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada and contributors including the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation and the Canadian Physiotherapy Association. Then, the co-chairs presented the report to the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Ottawa. The full report is available at <http://www.caHS-acss.ca/e/news/>. The CAHS is greatly indebted to the co-chairs, the expert panel members and all who contributed to this important assessment. Over 100 copies of the report have been mailed directly to the politicians and senior bureaucrats in the health ministries and agencies of the federal and provincial Governments. The evidence-based recommendations create a new framework for improving the health of Canadians.

A new major assessment in progress is "Canada's Strategic Role in Global Health" chaired by Dr. Peter Singer. With project management assistance from the Council of Canadian Academies, the expert panel will assess Canada's comparative advantage in the context of global health needs and articulate a rationale for Canada to play a more significant role in global health leadership. More information about this assessment is available at <http://www.caHS-acss.ca/e/assessments/currentprojects.php>

During our last AGM, the CAHS members provided important advice about the future directions of our organization. Understanding the impact of our assessments that ultimately impact on improving the health of Canadians is central to enabling future success. The CAHS Board, together with guests Drs. Paul Armstrong, Henry Friesen and Eliot Phillipson, met on January 7 to engage in strategic planning with a three-year timeline. Below are highlights from that discussion. Following consultation with the CAHS membership our plan will be finalized by the end of March. A key challenge is to engage as many of our fellows as possible in the activities of CAHS.

(continued page 2)





President's Message (...continued)

Strategic Planning Discussion

On its five year anniversary the CAHS Board has launched a comprehensive strategic planning process that addresses the core function of the organization; to provide evidence-based, authoritative and timely analysis of key issues relevant to the health of Canadians. Fundamental to our objectives is the recognition that our fellows constitute the leading experts among the health and biomedical disciplines in Canada and as such a principal resource for Canada.

Since its inception in 2005, many of our fellows have engaged in the work of the CAHS including assessments and fora and represented the organization both nationally and internationally. Given the addition of new fellows and transition in CAHS leadership, as well as the emergence of several key health related issues of concern to all Canadians, it is now timely to more actively engage our fellows. Specifically we aim to enable them to network and collaborate in identifying urgent questions and to provide - as appropriate - sound advice/recommendations to stakeholders (government, the scientific/academic and health systems leaders and the public).

As we forge an enhanced relationship the Council of Canadian Academies and, with the assistance of our new secretariat, CAHS intends to significantly enhance its operational capacity and service to its fellows. Fellows can anticipate more timely and comprehensive communication, including the launch of a new CAHS website, will be forthcoming before our next AGM to be held in Ottawa September 14-16, 2011.

The CAHS Board is now preparing a draft strategic plan with implementation actions for review by our fellows by the end of March, 2011. We seek your feedback and engagement in this process. In the next few weeks the sub-committee of the CAHS Board, responsible for organizing the Annual General Meeting in September 2011, will be advertising the exciting agenda for our fellows aligned with our next assessments. Those who attended last year's AGM forum will recall that Henry Friesen challenged us to focus on the upcoming renewal in 2014 of the First Ministers Accord on Health Care. This provides an ideal opportunity, given the multidisciplinary nature of CAHS and the neutral space it provides, to potentially provide an evidence-based assessment to inform the terms and outcomes of this key process that will affect all Canadians for years to come.

The CAHS Board looks forward to input from all of our fellows. We will be providing you with an opportunity to respond by email to specific queries about the directions of your organization over the next few months. Thanks in advance for your input and please plan to join us at the AGM to be held September 14-16, 2011. The success of CAHS is dependent on the engagement of its fellows.

Yours sincerely

Catharine I. Whiteside
President, CAHS

Congratulations to our Fellows on their awards:

Michel G. Bergeron, C.M., O.Q. Member of the Order of Canada For his contributions to the area of microbiology, especially for his research on infectious diseases and for his development of ultra-fast diagnostic testing for bacterial infections.

James A. Dosman, O.C., S.O.M. Officer of the Order of Canada For his contributions to the advancement of agricultural health and safety in Canada.

Michael Hayden, C.M., O.B.C. Member of the Order of Canada For his contributions to our understanding of Huntington's disease and other genetic disorders as a physician-scientist.

Walter Rosser, C.M. Member of the Order of Canada For his leadership in the discipline of family medicine and primary care research, and for his contributions to the establishment of practice-based research networks in Canada.

Ernesto L. Schiffrin, C.M. Member of the Order of Canada For his contributions to the study of hypertension, notably through his research on the mechanisms underlying high blood pressure, as well as for his leadership roles in scientific committees and societies.

Mladen Vranic, O.C., O.Ont. Officer of the Order of Canada For his long-term contributions to the understanding, treatment and prevention of diabetes.