

Canadian Neurological Sciences Federation's 2022 Distinguished Service Award

Dr. Sharon Whiting, 2022 recipient

Dr. Whiting joined the Canadian Neurological Sciences Federation (CNSF) as a member of the Canadian Association of Child Neurology (CACN) and the Canadian Society of Clinical Neurophysiologists (CSCN), as a staff neurologist at Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO). She had just returned to the University of Ottawa, following her residency in Vancouver and a fellowship in epilepsy in London, Ontario. Her membership in the CNSF led to active involvement at many levels, including President of the CACN in 2011 and joining the CNSF board in 2010. She has served on several committees including the Clinical Practice Guidelines committee, the Scientific Program Committee and the CNSF Membership committee. She has participated in many areas of the annual meetings as a reviewer of abstracts, chairing sessions and presenting sessions.

Outside of the CNSF, Dr. Whiting has been involved in development of epilepsy resources for Ontario as a member of the expert panel on strategy for epilepsy care in Ontario. In 2013 the Ontario Ministry of Health [MOH], in partnership with epilepsy care providers undertook the establishment of District Epilepsy Centers [DEC] and Regional Epilepsy Surgery Centers of Excellence [RESC] throughout Ontario; issuance of Provincial Guidelines on Epilepsy Care, and creation of a Provincial knowledge translation [KT] strategy for epilepsy. Dr. Whiting was involved in the development of the Children's Hospital in Ottawa as a DEC, establishing an epilepsy monitoring unit and harnessing resources for the

ketogenic diet services, for use in children with intractable epilepsy. She was also involved in the development of the guidelines for various aspects of epilepsy and epilepsy surgery with wide dissemination in the province.

In 2018 Project ECHO: Epilepsy Across the Lifespan was launched to provide epilepsy KT in Ontario by connecting specialist multidisciplinary teams at academic health centres to community healthcare providers. This was used extensively at CHEO and led to partnerships with the adult services, as well as Epilepsy Ottawa. It has been rewarding to see such a novel partnership between government, epilepsy caregivers, patients, and families, which has resulted in the provision of unique end-to-end epilepsy care in Ontario with a resultant increase in patients evaluated for and receiving epilepsy surgery and specialised epilepsy care.

Leading from the increased services for epilepsy patients, she is the Program Director for a successful Epilepsy Fellowship Program for Canadian and international neurologists. Dr. Whiting also realised early in her career the difficulties faced by paediatric neurologists to get involved in research, given their small numbers in each centre. She founded the Canadian Pediatric Epilepsy Network (CPEN) to involve researchers and allied health across the country.

Her involvement continues in EpLink, the integrated discovery epilepsy program of the Ontario Brain Institute



(OBI) as a co-director and a researcher in intractable epilepsy.

Dr. Whiting was past President of the Canadian League against Epilepsy and a member of the North American Commission of the ILAE, where she worked to develop the establishment of the league in Jamaica to improve epilepsy services in the Caribbean.

As past Head of the Neurology division at CHEO, she encouraged residents, fellows and faculty to embrace their national organizations under the umbrella of the CNSF and continues with this support today. Her current areas of interest include developing a robust transition program for adolescents as they move into the adult system with a particular emphasis on the comorbidities of anxiety and depression.

The CNSF was instrumental in realising a leadership role for care of patients, education for young neurologists, networking and the future of neurology in Canada.

Sharon, on the behalf of the CNSF Executive and Board, CNSF Members and the Secretariat thank you for your dedication to the CNSF in the past, the present and hopefully for years to come.