

E. JENNY HEATHCOTE

Dr. E.J.L. (Jenny) Heathcote was born in the UK and graduated from the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, London, UK in 1968. She was introduced to the field of liver disease immediately as her first position as a resident was with the late Dame Professor Sheila Sherlock – the most famous hepatologist of her time. Following completion of her internal medicine training, Jenny returned to the Sheila Sherlock “empire” where she spent 4 years doing research on the transmission of Hepatitis B - she was awarded her MD thesis in 1976. Jenny emigrated to the USA and later accepted a staff position in Canada at the University of Toronto where she has remained for 33 years. From scratch she built a clinical program in Hepatology with a particular focus of viral hepatitis (B and later C) and autoimmune liver disease.

She has been a Professor at the University of Toronto since 1995, winning the Department of Medicine Clinician Teacher Award in the same year. She had been awarded the May Cohen Award by the Canadian Medical Association for her mentoring of trainees in 2003. In this same year she initiated the National Canadian Research Training Program in Hepatitis C (CIHR funded) where she was the PI until the program was refunded in 2009.

She is a recipient of the Queen’s Jubilee Gold Medal for her service to hepatology and received the Canadian Liver Foundation Gold Medal in 2004. In that year, she also received the Canadian Liver Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award.

In 2005, she was the recipient of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases Distinguished Achievement Award for her sustained scientific contributions to the field of liver disease. In 2006, she received the International Sheila Sherlock Award from the Falk Foundation. In 2008, she was awarded the Department of Medicine, University of Toronto Mentoring Award.

In 2008 she was the only successful Canadian centre applicant to the Hepatitis B clinical consortium funded until 2015 by NIH.

In 2009 she received the Chair in Hepatology at the University. She was awarded the EASL International Recognition Award (2010) for her sustained contribution to the knowledge and understanding of liver disease.

She has been funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research since 1988.

Over her career, she has published over 350 papers covering almost all topics in hepatology. She has mentored 64 medical residents during their research electives and has trained 31 fellows in hepatology. She has delivered close to 800 lectures, of which over half have been international.

On June 30th, 2013 Jenny fully retired from her position as Senior Scientist in the Toronto Western Research Institute where she was Division Head of “Patient Based Clinical Research”.

In the last decade, Jenny has built up a world renowned liver unit and fostered many new initiatives. Good scientists are not only credited for their achievements but more importantly for the legacy they leave behind.

Jenny, thank you so much for doing such a phenomenal job!