

Dr. Mary L'Abbé has contributed passionately to the Canadian Nutrition Society activities and its pre-merger society – the Canadian Society of Nutritional Sciences (CSNS) where she served as President and played an influential role in the merger that formed CNS. She is a current member of the CNS Advisory Committee, and previously served on the CNS Advocacy Committee and several CNS working groups, review committees, and has been an invited speaker at many CNS events.

Dr. L'Abbé is a Professor and former Chair (2009-2018), Department of Nutritional Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, where she leads a research group on Food and Nutrition Policy for Population Health. She is an expert in public health nutrition, nutrition policy, and food and nutrition regulations and in 2018 was named to the Order of Canada. The main goal of her Food and Nutrition Policy for Population Health Research is to provide an evidence base to support public health nutrition policy in areas such as nutrient profiling methods, children's marketing, front-of-pack labelling, nutritional quality of packaged and restaurant foods (Canadian and international), menu labelling, dietary intake patterns and consumer research on food choices related to obesity and chronic diseases. She has published over 250 peer-reviewed research papers, government reports and book chapters, research that has resulted in >75 peer-reviewed publications in the last 5 years. She has received research contracts from the WHO and FAO to study or lead global initiatives on nutrient profiling, nutrition labelling, and front of pack labelling etc. As a result of Dr. L'Abbe's efforts and leadership in this area, the University of Toronto's Department of Nutritional Sciences was designated as a WHO Collaborating Centre on Nutrition Policy for Chronic Disease Prevention.

Dr. L'Abbe is a member of several WHO committees and is on the technical and scientific advisory committee of World Obesity: Policy and Prevention Advisory Group, London UK. As a Chair of the PAHO Technical Advisory Group on Sodium Reduction for CVD prevention, she led the sub-group on dietary salt surveillance; chaired a PAHO consultation meeting of Canada, US, Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina to develop a guidance document to assist governments in the Americas to establish sodium reduction targets and processes to effectively engage industry (published May 2013). Dr. L'Abbé was co-chair of the Canadian Trans Fat Task Force, and Chair/Vice-Chair of the Canadian Sodium Working Group and most recently (2017-2018) was a member of the US National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine, Panel on Global Harmonization of DRIs. She is the Canadian lead and one of the founding members of INFORMAS (International Network for Food and Obesity/Non-communicable Diseases Research, Monitoring and Action Support), which published over 11 articles in Obesity Reviews, (Sept 2013). Before coming to the University of Toronto, Dr L'Abbé was Director, Bureau of Nutritional Sciences, Health Canada.