

CSCC Award for Education Excellence

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Dr. Laurel Thorlacius



Dr. Laurel Thorlacius is the recipient of the 2024 CSCC Award for Education Excellence. This award is presented to an individual or group as a mark of recognition of outstanding contribution to education in the field of clinical chemistry. Dr. Thorlacius is a Medical Director at Shared Health Manitoba and Associate Professor in the Department of Pathology and in the Department of Biochemistry and Medical Genetics at the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba. Dr. Thorlacius is also a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Clinical Biochemistry, and member of CSCC Quality Indicators and Point of Care special interest groups.

Dr. Thorlacius has been a mentor in education, both in formal and informal settings, as she is an inspiring and dedicated colleague and teacher. Dr. Thorlacius joined Shared Health in 2006, and since then she has trained six Clinical Biochemistry Post-Doctoral trainees. She is an engaged teacher who encourages trainees to think critically, to evaluate and to have open discussions. She dedicates numerous formal and informal teaching hours to trainees in areas such as pre-analytical topics, automated chemistry testing and quality in laboratory medicine. She is known to always keep her door open, supporting trainees to reach out regardless of their current area

of rotation. She truly leads by example, creating a positive environment and endless opportunities to learn and collaborate.

Numerous clinical biochemists have had Dr. Thorlacius as a mentor, including those that continue to work with her at Shared Health and others that have moved to new opportunities across North America. She is always welcoming and willing to teach and share her extensive knowledge and experience as a clinical biochemist, whether you are across the hall or across the country. In addition, she formally serves on the committee for the University of Manitoba Clinical Biochemistry Post-Doctoral training program, dedicating her time to the review of applications, trainee selection, curriculum updates and leading monthly trainee academic sessions. She was also the co-chair of the CSCC 2020 and the 2023 Annual Meeting that were held jointly with the Canadian College of Medical Geneticists.

Dr. Thorlacius' commitment to education extends far beyond training young clinical biochemists. She has contributed to teaching various courses at the University of Manitoba, sharing her knowledge and passion for laboratory medicine with undergraduate and graduate students. She has been actively engaged with medical students and residents, medical laboratory technologists and lab assistants, supervisors, and managers.

Her passion for education extends into ensuring her knowledge is shared in publications, at conferences, and through other collaborative opportunities with colleagues. For example, within her team participation on the Kidney Check project, she was awarded the 2022 UNIVANTS Healthcare Excellence Award for Kidney Check, The Next Generation Surveillance for Hypertension, Diabetes and Chronic Kidney Disease, winning best in North America and one of 3 for Top Global. In 2021, she also received the CSCC Award for Innovation in Laboratory Medicine for Kidney Check project. She has always been actively engaged with clinicians in Manitoba on implementation of Choosing Wisely, test utilization and provincial standardization initiatives.

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