



## SPEAKER PROFILE



### **Profile of Professor Stuart Whittaker CEO Of the Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa (COHSASA)**

Professor Stuart Whittaker, MBChB, FFCH (CM), MMed, MD, founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Council for Health Service Accreditation of Southern Africa, is recognized internationally as a leader in the field of healthcare quality improvement. In South Africa, he has been recognized as one of the top 25 influential leaders in the health field and in 2008 received a South African Medical Association Award for Extra-Ordinary Services to Medicine.

He is an Honorary Adjunct Professor in the School of Pathology: Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases in the Faculty of Health Sciences at the Witwatersrand University and the Extraordinary Professor in the School of Health Systems and Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pretoria.

In April 2009, Professor Whittaker was appointed as a member of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Health, advising the SA Minister of Health on standards, quality improvement and accreditation and he was also appointed to the Working Group for national standard development.

Dr Whittaker has frequently been appointed as a temporary consultant to the World Health Organisation. Projects in which he has participated have included the impact of accreditation on national health systems, choosing Quality Approaches in Health Systems and being an expert reviewer for Guidelines on Patient Safety – Learning and Reporting systems for adverse events and “near misses”. In 2008 he was appointed as a core member of the Technology for Patient Safety Project by the World Health Organisation’s World Alliance for Patient Safety.





He was also a member of the Research and Development Working Group of the International Alliance for Patient Safety for the World Health Organisation.

He was temporary advisor at a preparatory meeting convened by the World Health Organisation on the impact of accreditation of health services on a national health system and at a World Health Organisation summit on "Consultation on Patient Safety: Rapid Assessment Methods for Estimating Hazards".

In 2007 he was appointed as a Member of the Programme Reference Panel for the International Forum on Quality and Safety in Health Care (previously the European Forum on Quality Improvement in Health Care).

Dr Whittaker pioneered the concepts of a facilitated accreditation programme and graded recognition to assist disadvantaged hospitals in Southern Africa to comply with professional standards. For many years he has been involved in researching and testing appropriate adverse event monitoring systems for Southern Africa.

Professor Whittaker and his colleagues developed the COHSASA Quality Information System (CoQIS); a web-based information system to revolutionise the management of quality improvement. CoQIS is accessible, user-friendly and simplifies complex, multi-system environments. This means that healthcare personnel at all levels can obtain and work with information specific to their functions and roles. CoQIS is designed to identify deficiencies in healthcare organisations and enable managers to manage facilities better and to monitor quality improvement initiatives.

Professor Whittaker and his colleague Dr Siphon Kabane are involved in world-beating research to test the impact of using CoQIS in tandem with a web-based adverse event monitoring system to improve quality in healthcare. CoQIS, identifies flaws in healthcare systems while the other system, the Advanced Incident Management System (AIMS) identifies medical errors and incidents. Together, they form a powerful instrument, which assists in the mission to generate better healthcare in this country.

Professor Whittaker has represented South Africa in his professional capacity in the following positions:

- The Advisory Council of the International Society of Quality in Health Care (1995-1998)
- Member of the International Accreditation Principles and Standards Development Task Force of Joint Commission Resources, Africa Region (1998);
- Member of the International Principles Review Panel of the International Society of Quality in Health Care (1998-1999);
- Member of the Accreditation Federation Council of The International Society of Quality in Health Care (ISQua) from 1999 to present;
- Member of the ISQua Alpha International Accreditation Survey Team of Healthcare Quality Service (HQS) UK in 2000;
- Member of the ISQua/Alpha International Standards Assessment Team, Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (2001);
- External Consultant to the World Bank on health systems performance and quality (2001);
- Member of the International Society for Quality in Health Care Indicator Steering Committee (2001);
- Member of the Standards Subcommittee of the Accreditation Committee of the Joint Commission International (2001);
- Member of the ALPHA Council of the International Society for Quality in Healthcare (2001 to present);



- Member of the Editorial Committee of the International Journal for Quality in Health Care (2002 to present);
- South African representative at the World Health Organisation for a summit on “Consultation on Patient Safety: Rapid Assessment Methods for Estimating Hazards” (2002);
- Temporary advisor at the World Health Organisation summit on the impact of accreditation of health services on a national health system (2002);
- Treatment Access Coalition (ITAC) aligned with the goals of the Declaration of Commitment of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS to improve access to treatment (2003)
- Member of the Research and Development Working Group of the International Alliance for Patient Safety for the World Health Organisation (2003)
- Member of the Task Force on Health Technology in the WHO Regional Office for Africa (2004)
- Consultant to the World Health Organisation on a project to choose Quality Approaches in Health Systems (2005)
- Member of the core group of the Technology for Patient Safety Project by the World Health Organisations’ World Alliance for Patient Safety (2008)
- Member of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Health for the SA Government (2009)
- Member the Working Group on National Standards Development in SA. (2009)

