

Dr. Deborah (Debbie) O'Connor is the Earle W. McHenry Professor and Chair of the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the University of Toronto. She also holds scientific appointments in the Translational Medicine Program at the Hospital for Sick Children and the Department of Pediatrics at Mount Sinai Hospital. At SickKids she served as Director of Clinical Dietetics and Breastfeeding Support from 2000 to 2012 and then as Associate Chief of Academic and Professional Practice until 2013. She currently serves as Chair of the Advisory Board for the Rogers Hixon Ontario Human Milk Bank located at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Professor O'Connor's research is focused on maternal and infant nutrition and she has published extensively in the area of the nutritional requirements of pregnant and lactating women; most especially their folate requirements. In addition, she systematically investigates strategies to support provision of human milk and adequate nutrients to vulnerable infants including very preterm infants. Her work is funded by CIHR, NSERC, the Sprott Foundation, and the Lawson Centre for Child Nutrition.

Dr. O'Connor has served on national and international committees and working groups, including the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada Nutrition Practice Guidelines, US-Canada Governments Joint Dietary Reference Intake Working Group on Chronic Disease Endpoints, US National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Exploration of New Evidence for Nutrition During Pregnancy and Lactation, and the World Health Organization on technical aspects of human milk banking and use of powdered formulas.