



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MEDICINE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 21, 2012

**AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY HONOURS U OF T PROFESSOR PRABHAT JHA FOR
GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH ON TOBACCO CONTROL**

TORONTO, ON—U of T Medicine Professor Prabhat Jha was honoured today with the 2012 Luther L. Terry award for Outstanding Research Contribution from the American Cancer Society for his globally influential work on tobacco control.

Prof. Jha, who was presented with the award at a ceremony in Singapore earlier today, was recognized for his research on the epidemiology and economics of tobacco control, including a renowned 1999 World Bank report on which he was the lead author, *Curbing the Epidemic: Governments and the Economics of Tobacco Control*. The report was translated into over 25 languages and led to the first global treaty on tobacco, signed by more than 160 countries.

The treaty—the *Framework Convention on Tobacco Control*—provided nations with a blueprint to adopt clean air laws, restrict advertising for smoking and raise cigarette taxes, among other measures.

"It's a recognition that books do save lives," said Prof. Jha of the award. "Good analytic work is important for good advocacy and I'm honoured to receive this award," said Prof. Jha, who holds the University of Toronto Chair in Disease Control and is the director of the Centre for Research in Global Health at St. Michael's Hospital and U of T.

Prof. Jha continues to conduct research on tobacco control in developed and developing countries. He recently showed that tobacco control has reduced differences in mortality risk between the wealthy and poor in Canada. And he is the principal investigator of the "Million Death Study," an ongoing examination of health, disease and mortality launched in India in 2002. That study's researchers move door-to-door to collect data on 15 million people—many rural and poor, with little access to institutional medical care—and whose exclusion from previous research may have contributed to inaccurate assumptions about disease prevalence and risk.

Prof. Jha and his colleagues will publish further results from the "Million Death Study" in the journal *The Lancet* on March 28, including data on prevention of tobacco-related cancers.

“Professor Jha is a superb scientist and a most fitting recipient of this prestigious global award,” said Dr. Catharine Whiteside, Dean of U of T Medicine and Vice-Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions. “His innovative research and advocacy have brought the campaign for tobacco control to nations where it is now most urgently needed.”

While developed countries have seen a long-term drop in smoking rates—in Canada, more than one million Canadians have quit smoking over the last decade—many developing countries such as China, India and Indonesia have been beset by increases. Rising incomes and the decreasing relative price of cigarettes have combined to make smoking more affordable, and several developing countries now have smoking rates comparable to those of developed countries in the early 1960s.

“In China and India, one million people are dying every year from smoking in each country,” said Prof. Jha. “There's no reason they can't knock those rates down in the same way Canada has. If the world did more of what Canada has done, particularly in terms of higher tobacco taxes and restrictions on advertising, it would save not just tens of thousands of lives, but tens of millions. That's what's important about tobacco control.”

About the Luther L. Terry Award for Outstanding Research Contribution:

The American Cancer Society bestows the Luther L. Terry award for Outstanding Research Contribution triennially. The awards are named for the former U.S. Surgeon General whose 1964 Surgeon General's Report provided scientific evidence linking smoking to lung cancer and other diseases. That report generated opposition from tobacco companies and smoking advocates, but is credited with contributing to a wholesale change in public attitudes towards smoking and prompting a sustained decline in smoking rates in developed countries.

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