

Chair: Dr. Jack Taunton

Biography of Jack Taunton - Chief Medical Officer, VANOC

When Dr. Jack Taunton combined his love of sport and interest in medicine to practice Sports Medicine in the 1970s, it was still a rare specialty. Since then, he has been at the forefront of the field, pioneering its development and helping countless athletes to avoid injury and enhance performance. He is now considered one of North America's leading practitioners.



He established Vancouver's first sports medicine clinic in 1977 with fellow practitioner Doug Clement. It had humble origins in the office of their family practice in Richmond before moving into new premises on UBC's campus, where Taunton is a professor in the Faculty of Medicine. A subsequent move into a larger building established the Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Centre. As director of the centre for the past 25 years, Taunton has worked with athletes as both as a doctor and a coach (he was a nationally-ranked marathon runner) and with students as a graduate supervisor, clinical teacher and mentor.

Alongside his practice, Taunton has committed many volunteer hours to providing medical care for national sports teams in major competition. He was a medical officer for Olympic Games in Los Angeles ('84), Seoul ('88) and Barcelona ('92), and Chief Medical Officer at the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

This wealth of experience led to his selection as Chief Medical Officer for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This task included overseeing the training of 2,700 volunteers, organizing medical stations and staff for every venue for the provision of basic and emergency healthcare, running doping control programs (a top priority), as well his involvement in broader public policy matters associated with large gatherings.

As well, he is or has been team physician for Vancouver sports teams including the Grizzlies and Canadians. For 24 years, he had the same role for the Women's National Field Hockey Team.

Taunton is also a keen promoter of public health. He raises awareness around health issues through television and radio appearances and public presentations and, together with Clement, co-founded the Vancouver Sun Run. While at VANOC, in conjunction with the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport, he established an educational outreach program on the dangers of performance-enhancing drugs and the use of safe alternatives. This was presented at the 17 test events prior to the Games.

Taunton is a past president of the Canadian Academy of Sport Medicine, SportMed BC, which he co-founded in 1982, and the Sport Medicine Council of Canada. In 1999, he received the Canadian Sport Medicine and Science Award and in 2000 was elected Canadian Sports Physician of the year.

This month, Taunton has recently been awarded the Outstanding Faculty Community Service Award from the University of British Columbia. In 2010, Taunton was also awarded with the BC College of Family Physicians Award for Exception Contribution to Family Medicine.