

International Society of Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE) COVID19-related Award: Robert T. Chen MD MA FISPE

On August 27, 2022, Dr. Bob Chen, Scientific Director of the Brighton Collaboration, received a special award for “Contributions to Public Health Associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic” from the International Society of Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE) at its 38th annual meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark. ISPE is an international organization dedicated to the science that applies epidemiologic approaches to studying the use, effectiveness, value and safety of pharmaceuticals. Dr. Chen’s nomination reads:

- Public acceptance of rapidly developed and deployed COVID19 vaccines have been controversial.
- Dr. Bob Chen’s career has focused on vaccine safety and its impact on hesitancy.
- Dr. Chen formed the first immunization safety office at the US CDC (1988-2004). He helped to create [, train the staff, stabilize funding, and operationalize in an integrated (but independent way from the National Immunization Program responsible for vaccine coverage)] each infrastructure subsequently critical for assessing and mitigating the risk of COVID 19 vaccines:
 - the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#) for hypothesis generation,
 - the [Vaccine Safety Datalink \(VSD\) project](#) for hypothesis testing,
 - the [Clinical Immunization Safety Assessment \(CISA\) networks](#) and
 - the [Brighton Collaboration](#) for hypothesis clarification
 - the Vaccine Acceptance and Risk Perception team for communications
 - the Vaccine Development team for improving safer vaccines.
- Dr. Chen advocated for replicating these infrastructures in other countries, leading to the creation of the [VAC4EU](#), [Global Vaccine Data Network \(GVDN\)](#).
- Dr. Chen served as the project (co-)leads for:
 - the [Safety Platform for Emergency Vaccines \(SPEAC\) project](#) funded by the [Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation \(CEPI\)](#). SPEAC developed
 - the [list of Adverse Events of Special Interest \(AESI\) for COVID19 vaccines](#)
 - [Standardized templates describing the risk-benefit of new vaccines for each platform technology](#).
 - the [CARESAFE project](#) funded by US CDC to advance safety in low and middle income countries.
 - the [COVAX](#) Vaccine Safety Working Group; coordinating activities by global stakeholders (e.g., [CEPI](#), [WHO](#), [GAVI](#), [IFPMA](#), [DCVMN](#)).