

Faculty Bio



William Schaffner, MD

Professor of Preventive Medicine, Department of Health Policy
Professor of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases
Vanderbilt University School of Medicine
Nashville, TN

Dr. William Schaffner is Professor of Preventive Medicine in the Department of Health Policy and Professor of Infectious Diseases at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville, Tennessee.

Dr. Schaffner's primary focus has been the prevention of infectious diseases. He is a strong proponent of collaboration between academic medical centers and public health institutions. He has worked extensively on the effective use of vaccines and has been a member of expert advisory committees that establish national vaccine policy.

Dr. Schaffner is committed to the communication of disease prevention with the general public and regards this as a teaching opportunity. He is often invited to comment on communicable disease issues on local and national media, translating research and public health events into language that the public can understand.

After graduating from Yale in 1957, Schaffner attended the University of Freiburg, Germany as a Fulbright Scholar. He graduated from Cornell University Medical College in 1962 and completed residency training and a Fellowship in Infectious Diseases at Vanderbilt. He was commissioned in the U.S. Public Health Service as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for two years. He returned to Vanderbilt after that tour of duty and established a long collaboration with the Tennessee Department of Health and the CDC.