



CAPRISA

CENTRE FOR THE AIDS PROGRAMME OF RESEARCH IN SOUTH AFRICA



CAPRISA IS A UNAIDS COLLABORATING CENTRE FOR HIV PREVENTION RESEARCH

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The lead story this month focuses on the recent visit to CAPRISA by the Director of the United States National Institutes of Health, the Head of the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the Director of the Fogarty Centre.

On page 2 CAPRISA congratulates Dr Vivek Naranbhai on being awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to complete a second PhD at Oxford University.

CAPRISA's Community Programme contributions towards the national sexually transmitted infections and condom promotion week are highlighted on page 3.



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NIH Director visits CAPRISA



Front (L-R): Nelson Ijumba, Roger Glass, William Makgoba, Francis Collins, Tahir Pillay and Nomonde Mbadi. Standing (L-R): Vivek Naranbhai, Stacey Wallick, Thumbi Ndung'u, Samuel Adeniyi-Jones, Salim Abdool Karim, Anita Naicker, Nesri Padayatchi, Jill Derderian, Daya Moodley, and Costas Criticos

On March 9, the Director of the United States National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Head of the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) led a US delegation on a visit of HIV/AIDS research projects at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Professor Salim Abdool Karim, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) and Director of CAPRISA, hosted the delegation. The group included Dr Francis Collins, the NIH Director who had played a leading role in the Human Genome Project, Ambassador Eric Goosby, the United States Global AIDS Coordinator in charge of PEPFAR, Ms Deborah van Zinkernagel, Deputy Global AIDS Coordinator, Dr Roger Glass, Director of the Fogarty International Centre and Dr Samuel Adeniyi-Jones, Director of the African Region-US Department of Health and Human Services and Ms Stacey Wallick, Public Health Analyst (NIH).

The NIH delegates started their visit with a tour of the Doris Duke Medical Research Institute, and an opportunity to see the building site and the plans for the new K-RITH building, currently under construction at the Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine. Guided by Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim and Dr Kogie Naidoo, the PEPFAR delegates made an early start with a tour of the CAPRISA eThekweni clinic and the adjoining Prince Cyril Zulu Communicable Diseases Centre, which is Durban's

busiest Tuberculosis (TB) clinic where approximately 5 000 TB patients are treated each month.

Visiting the groundbreaking Microbicide Gel Trial research site in rural Vulindlela (near Howick), delegates were impressed with the warm welcome received by the community. Dr Collins said, 'There has been very exciting work done on the microbicide gel here. However, one should never forget that the work was possible only through the vision and leadership of a Chief that saw the benefit in partnering with CAPRISA for his community. The eyes of the world are upon you and you're a beacon of hope to the world. Not only are you doing God's work for your community but also for the world at large'.

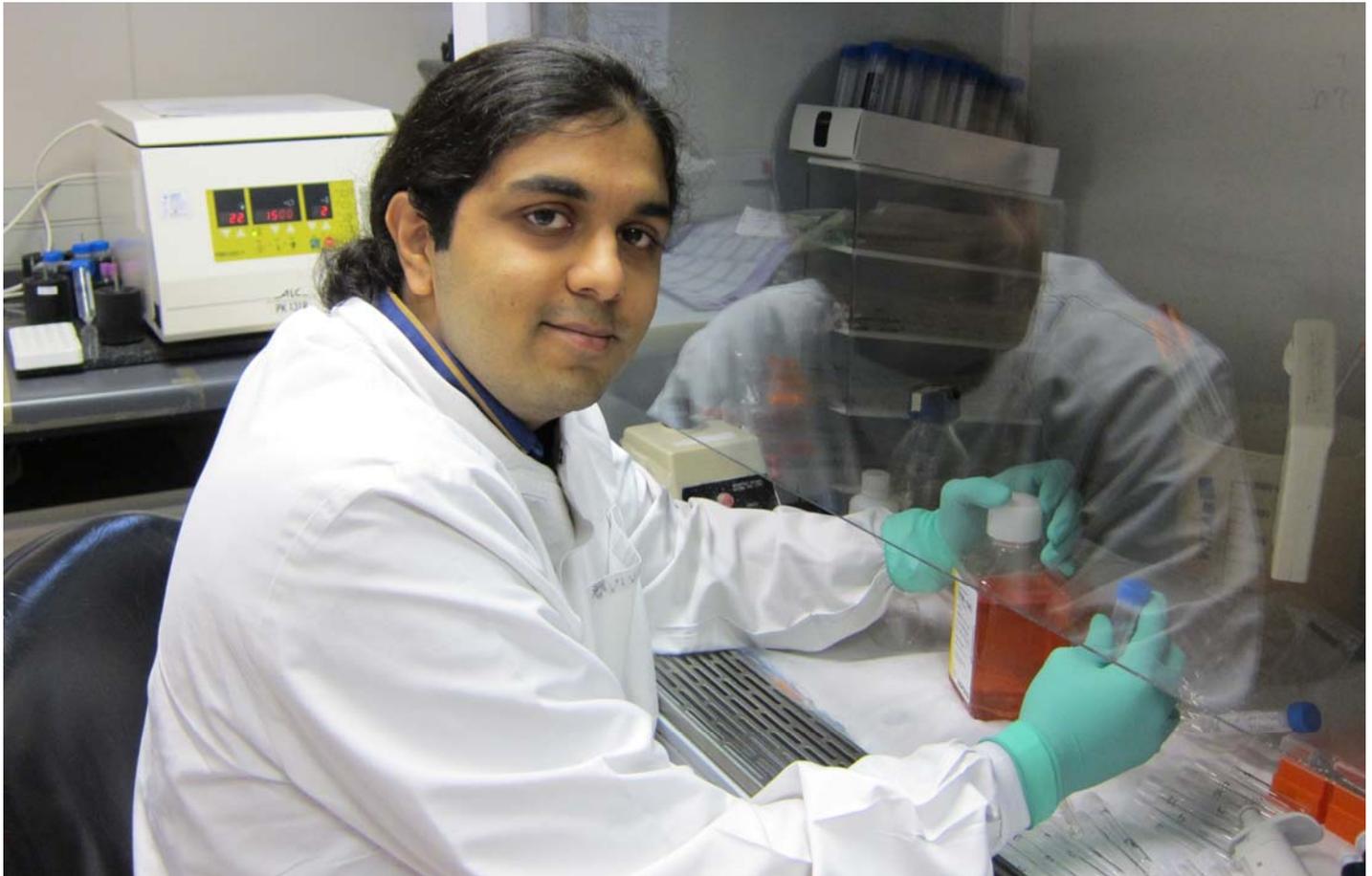
Inkosi Zondi, traditional leader of the Vulindlela District gave an emotional account of how CAPRISA has benefited the community by reducing the number of deaths caused by HIV/AIDS. He said that all lives belong to God and as the leader of the community, he thanked PEPFAR and the US government for providing the funding for research of this kind to take place and pledged the ongoing support of the Vulindlela community to the project.

Baba Sithole, the local pastor who chairs the Community Support Research Group in the district described how the project has impacted on the community by not only

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Dr Vivek Naranbhai awarded Rhodes Scholarship



Congratulations to Dr Vivek Naranbhai, the Deputy Head of the HIV Vaccine and Pathogenesis Programme at CAPRISA, on his recent award - as one of the 10 southern African 2011 Rhodes Scholars.

Naranbhai is currently completing his medical internship year at King Edward VIII hospital and is simultaneously completing his PhD, results of which were recently presented at the 18th Conference on Retrovirus and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) held in Boston. He will be leaving for Oxford University in October 2011, where he will be completing a second PhD/DPhil exploring computational biology and molecular genetic epidemiology.

Over the past seven years, Naranbhai has been mentored by, amongst others, Professors Quarraisha and Salim Abdool Karim. They describe him as 'a brilliant, hard-working researcher who has a flair for science' and speak of his unique ability to interrogate problems in multiple dimensions using his basic science skills to explore molecular and cellular intricacies right through to real-life clinical and epidemiological medicine, both at an individual patient, and also at a community level. 'Whether he is working on natural killer cells in the laboratory, treating patients with tuberculosis in the clinic or studying risk factors for HIV in a rural community, he is innovative, rigorous and meticulous', commented Professor Salim Abdool Karim.

At Oxford University, Naranbhai plans to broaden his already large skill set with the statistical and analytical skills of discovering genetic and genomic pathways of infectious diseases and proving their relevance with experimental data, based at the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics. He hopes these combined skills, harnessed and honed over time, will equip him to pursue vaccine development and design of other interventional technologies to confront problems pertinent to South Africa and beyond.

Naranbhai speaks excitedly about the new opportunities open to him as a Rhodes scholar-elect. Having just returned from a short trip to Oxford, he speaks of a community of like-minded scholars from across the globe, the palpable history and tradition of Oxford University's old sandstone buildings, green lawns and church steeples and a distinctive vigour for academic excellence and new knowledge. As a Rhodes scholar-elect, he finds himself already embraced by future colleagues, mentors and fellow students. He looks forward to being immersed in the richness of the place, and is already planning on attending open lectures on diverse disciplines so his mind is constantly stimulated and challenged.

- **Maryann Francis** (read full story in the 25 March 2011 (vol 5 (9)) edition of UKZN online at <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/publications/UKZNOnline.aspx>)

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....reducing the number of deaths but by educating the youngest members on HIV/AIDS. He said, 'A seven-year old at home knows how to take her AIDS medication and at her age, she knows that she



Inkosi Zondi presenting a local momento to Francis Collins

needs to take the medication for life'.

Ambassador Goosby thanked the community for their willingness to engage and respond to the growing needs of the community. He said, 'your ownership and investment in the project is gratifying'.

Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim recounted the initial *imbizo* with the community where two traditional healers already on antiretroviral drugs disclosed their status and encouraged the community to be tested for HIV and to attend the CAPRISA clinic for AIDS treatment. She went on to say that in those years, members of the community would never share utensils or even a toilet used by an HIV/AIDS infected individual. This has turned around significantly through awareness and interaction with the PEPfAR provided AIDS education and treatment at the CAPRISA Vulindlela clinic.

Ms Gethwana Mahlase, who assists the researchers as the community liaison officer in the district mentioned that the current challenge facing the community is the growing number of orphaned children. The community has taken the initiative with the support of the traditional leaders to provide a feeding scheme, home support and school uniforms and fees for 150 orphaned children in Vulindlela.

Ambassador Goosby and the PEPfAR representatives also visited Professor Nceba Gqaleni's traditional medicine laboratories and were met by senior leadership of the Traditional Healers Association in the Province.

- **Maryann Francis** (read full story in the 18 March 2011 (vol 5(8)) edition of UKZN online at <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/publications/UKZNOnline.aspx>)

Educating communities about sexually transmitted infections and condoms

In recognition of the National STI/Condom Week (14-18 February 2011), the CAPRISA Community Programme team, Research Counsellors and Research Placements from the CAPRISA eThekweni Clinical Research Site organised a community outreach campaign in the Welbedacht East and West Communities and the Claire Estate Clinic.

In partnership with the Olive Leaf Foundation, Mhlatuzana Community Based Organisation, staff from the Claire Estate, and the CAPRISA field DOT team, this campaign aimed to raise awareness, educate and sensitise community members about different Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and the importance of using both male and female condoms correctly and consistently in order to prevent unplanned/unwanted pregnancies, STIs and HIV.

Approximately 600 people; men, women, and youth were reached during the campaign. Partners from the Olive leaf discussion facilitated the education sessions on different types of STIs, symptoms, information on treatment opportunities and services as well as encouraged people to exercise responsibility and seek medical advice immediately after noticing any symptom which may indicate that they have an STI. Pictorial information on different STI used during the education sessions captured the audiences' attention and served as a good strategy to facilitate discussions on the importance of consistent and correct condom use.



Research Counsellors facilitated the education and discussion session on male and female condoms through involving volunteers from the audience and or groups to demonstrate how either a female and male condom is inserted, removed after use and discarded.

What was evident from this campaign was that information on female condoms is still not widely available and women are reluctant to use them. Some women and men were startled by the sight and size of the condom and even commented by saying... "Wow, So big!"

In addition to raising awareness of STIs and condom use, the campaign also served as an opportunity for making the communities aware of CAPRISA and its ongoing research. Specifically, the campaign was used as an opportunity to educate people about the NIH-funded MTN 003 VOICE trial. Almost 250 potential VOICE participants were told about the study and were invited to visit the CAPRISA Clinic if they were interested in enrolment. Thus far the response has been extremely positive.

The CAPRISA Community team thanks it's partners, Olive Leaf and Mhlatuzana CBO, the CAPRISA staff members who were involved in the planning and implementation of the campaign, and most importantly the community participants for their outstanding co-operation.

- **Londiwe Luthuli**, CAPRISA Community Liaison Officer



Scientific publications 2011



UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE



THE AURUM INSTITUTE

CAPRISA is an official research institute of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

CAPRISA was established in 2002 through a CIPRA grant from the NIH, as a multi-institutional collaboration, incorporated as an independent non-profit AIDS Research Organization

Registration Number: 2002/024027/08

www.caprisa.org

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Scientific Review Committee update

Abstracts submitted for review		Manuscripts submitted for review		Ancillary studies submitted for review	
Total [#]	Cumulative [^]	Total [#]	Cumulative [^]	Total [#]	Cumulative [^]
13	197	1	85	0	22

for month, ^since committee initiation

Upcoming Conference & Workshop Reminders

Conference	dates	Deadlines		
		Abstracts	Registration	website
6th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention	17-20 July, 2011	23 May (late breaker)	24 February 2011	www.ias2011.org/
4th SA AIDS Conference	7-10 June 2011	28 January 2011	20 May 2011	http://www.saaid.com/

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