In this issue...

In our feature article this month we congratulate Professor Salim Abdool Karim on being awarded an honorary Doctor of Science degree from the University of Cape Town.

On page 2, we highlight some of Dr Andrew Tomita’s qualitative research investigating quality of life dynamics in the context of HIV and treatment.

Visits to CAPRISA by officials from PEPFAR, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and UNAIDS is profiled on page 3. We also congratulate Dr Leila Mansoor on her appointment to the Microbicide Trials Network (MTN) Evaluation Committee.

CAPRISA’s Director, Professor Salim Abdool Karim was recently awarded an honorary Doctor of Science degree in Medicine from the University of Cape Town (UCT) in recognition of the international impact of his research on HIV/AIDS. A media statement released by UCT stated: ‘His work epitomises the momentous contribution that innovative multidisciplinary science and medical technology can make to disease prevention, treatment and global health. Professor Abdool Karim’s highest-impact scientific discovery was the effect of tenofovir gel, as a microbicide, in preventing both HIV and genital herpes. This landmark study, which he co-led with his wife, provided the first evidence that antiretroviral drugs can prevent sexual transmission of HIV’.

One of Professor Abdool Karim’s early studies which he undertook with his wife, Quarraisha Abdool Karim, showed that young women, especially teenage girls, who were most vulnerable to infection from older men, so the problem needed both behavioural and technological solutions.

This was the context for more than 25 years of HIV prevention research that has included everything from strategic planning and epidemiological studies to clinical trials.

Professor Carolyn Williamson from UCT said “Today Slim Karim is known as “an excellent scholar and an exceptional leader. He has clarity of thought. He understands where things are going, not just in his own field, but in inter-related fields as well.”

CAPRISA congratulates Professor Abdool Karim on this well-deserved honour.
HIV and quality of life

Being diagnosed with HIV is a life-changing event. Although HIV infection is no longer a death sentence with access to antiretroviral therapy (ART), its impact on overall quality of life and sense of well-being are serious concerns. In addition, concerns remain about the long-term side effects of ART and their possible impact on quality of life.

To gain a better understanding of quality of life dynamics in the context of HIV and treatment, Dr. Andrew Tomita and colleagues at CAPRISA repeatedly interviewed 160 South African women from KwaZulu-Natal about their quality of life over a period of several years from early HIV infection. Results from our studies showed that overall quality of life was at its lowest during newly diagnosed HIV infection, but rapidly improved within six months, and continued to improve until ART initiation. Furthermore, Dr. Tomita found that ART improved overall quality of life (including physical, emotional and social well-being), and no long-term adverse impact of ART was detected.

Bearing in mind that many of our study participants received various interventions including post-infection counselling and educational support, we concluded that women diagnosed with HIV showed a remarkable resilience over time, and ART is one of several interventions to maximize quality of life.

For further information on these studies see:

HIV Vaccine Trials Network meet to discuss HVTN 107 study

The HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN) held a face-to-face protocol team meeting at their offices in Seattle for an upcoming HVTN 107 protocol on 21-22 May 2014. In attendance from CAPRISA was Dr. Kathryn Mngadi who is the co-chair for this protocol, Lon-dwiwe Luthuli representing community and Diantha Pillay as the clinic coordinator representative. The meeting was highly productive and we look forward to opening this protocol in 2015.

CAPRISA staff, including Dr. Kathryn Mngadi, Dr. Nigel Garrett, Londwiwe Luthuli and Diantha Pillay also attended the annual HVTN meeting for 2014 between 3 and 5 June 2014 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington DC. At the annual meeting exciting new prospects in the way of vaccine design and development was presented. Also many sessions on clinic operations and community were presented and are beneficial for preparing for upcoming protocols that will be open in 2015. We look forward to working with the HVTN on these protocols.
**Director of Fogarty International Center visits CAPRISA**

Dr Roger Glass (seated centre), Director of the Fogarty International Center, visited CAPRISA in June and took the opportunity to meet with some of the current and past Fellows who have benefitted from training received through the Fogarty-funded Columbia University-Southern African AIDS International Training and Research Program (CU-SA AITRP). Over 500 South African researchers, including several disadvantaged students, have been trained in AIDS and TB through this programme.

**Delegates attending 2014 PEPFAR Annual Meeting visit CAPRISA eThekwini Clinic**

Several international delegates, who were in Durban for the Annual PEPFAR meeting, visited the CAPRISA eThekwini Research Clinic to discuss the HIV treatment and prevention research being done by CAPRISA. The eThekwini Clinic is one of the PEPFAR / U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-funded sites addressing TB and HIV co-infection in South Africa. The delegation included Dr Tom Frieden, Director of the CDC, Carmen Villar, Chief of Staff at CDC, Kimberley Dills, Special Advisor to CDC Director, Dr Nancy Knight, Country Director of CDC South Africa as well as a number of US ambassadors, key PEPFAR, USAID, CDC Atlanta, Fogarty and FDA representatives.

**Dr Mansoor appointed to MTN Committee**

Congratulations to Dr Leila Mansoor on her recent election as a member of the Microbicide Trials Network (MTN) Evaluation Committee. This important committee functions as an arm of the MTN Executive Committee and provides feedback to the network regarding areas for improvement and suggestions for best practices in all areas of the MTN. Dr Mansoor is currently the Co-PI of the CAPRISA 008 tenofovir gel implementation trial.

**Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS visits CAPRISA**

Dr Luiz Loures (right), Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS, recently visited CAPRISA to meet with Professor Salim Abdool Karim who is the Chair of the Chair of the UNAIDS Scientific Expert Panel.
**Scientific papers published in 2014**

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<th>Abstracts submitted for review</th>
<th>Manuscripts submitted for review</th>
<th>Ancillary studies submitted for review</th>
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*continuation from previous newsletter*

**Conference & Workshop Reminders**

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<tr>
<th>Conference</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Abstracts</th>
<th>Registration</th>
<th>Website</th>
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**Deadlines**

- **AIDS 2014** | Closed | 2 May 2014 | www.aids2014.org/
- **Southern African HIV Clinicians Society** | Closed | 1 May 2014 | http://sahivsoc2014.co.za/;
- **Third Global Symposium on Health Systems Research** | Closed | 2 June 2014 | http://hsr2014.healthsystemsresearch.org

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**Conference**

- **AIDS 2104**
  - Melbourne, Australia
  - 20-25 Jul 2014
  - Abstracts: Closed
  - Registration: 2 May 2014
  - Website: www.aids2014.org/

- **Southern African HIV Clinicians Society**
  - Cape Town, Spout Africa
  - 24-27 Sept 2014
  - Abstracts: Closed
  - Registration: 1 May 2014
  - Website: http://sahivsoc2014.co.za/

- **Third Global Symposium on Health Systems Research**
  - Cape Town, South Africa
  - 30 Sep - 3 Oct 2014
  - Abstracts: Closed
  - Registration: 2 June 2014
  - Website: http://hsr2014.healthsystemsresearch.org

- **HIV Research for Prevention 2014: AIDS Vaccine, Microbicide, & ARV-based Prevention Science**
  - Cape Town, South Africa
  - 28-30 Oct 2014
  - Abstracts: Closed
  - Registration: 15 Oct 2014
  - Website: www.hivr4p.org