



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 for this issue of the newsletter focuses on the UNAIDS - CAPRISA Roundtable on maximizing the opportunities created by new scientific discoveries to reduce new HIV infections.

On page 2 we congratulate Professor Jerome Singh on his election as a founding member and Co-Chair of the South African Young Academy of Science and Professor Salim Abdool Karim on his Gold Medal award from the South African Medical Association in recognition of his contributions to science and medicine.

We also congratulate Francois van Loggarenberg on his PhD from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine on page 3.



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UNAIDS - CAPRISA Roundtable



Participants of the Roundtable discussions included from L-R (Standing): Annemarie Hou (UNAIDS), Renu Chahil-Graf (UNAIDS), Nonkosi Khumalo (TAC), Glaudina Loots (DST), Gavin Churchyard (Aurum Institute), Nonhlanhla Dlamini (National Dept of Health), Eva Kiwango (UNAIDS), Mbulawa Mugabe (UNAIDS), Thabo Mayise (KZN Dept of Health), Aparna Kollipara (National Treasury), and Marina Novachuck (UNAIDS). Seated from L-R: Helga Holst (McCords Hospital), Salim Abdool Karim (CAPRISA, UKZN), Michel Sidibé (Executive Director - UNAIDS), Quarraisha Abdool Karim (CAPRISA, UKZN) and Lizo Mazwai (MRC Board)

A roundtable discussion was recently held at CAPRISA's headquarters at the University of Kwazulu-Natal entitled "Closing the gap between science and implementation: Accelerating science to get to South Africa's vision of zero new HIV infections", with UNAIDS officials, scientific researchers, and representatives from the government, civil society, and the private sector. The purpose of these discussions were to look at ways of maximizing the opportunities created by scientific research around HIV prevention in the past year to reach the country's target of halving new HIV infections by 2016.

The Executive Director of UNAIDS Michel Sidibé, who was on a seven-day visit to South Africa, engaged in the discussions. He said, "In the last year science has given us the tools to reach our goals, the challenge now is how to apply them."

Discussions focused on the recent groundbreaking scientific results which have provided the evidence needed to move forward with a new range of HIV prevention technologies—microbicides, medical male circumcision and treatment for prevention. However, delegates of the roundtable dis-

ussion raised concerns about the length of time it is taking to get these lifesaving interventions to the people that need them most.

"We cannot afford to wait – bold leadership is needed to turn the epidemic around", said Salim Abdool Karim. "In the face of cost, it is more costly to do nothing", he added.

In addition to the new prevention technologies, participants agreed that HIV counselling and testing remains critical to a robust HIV prevention response. They also underlined that high burden countries need to be prioritised and that policymakers and implementers should not use a one-size-fits-all approach to HIV prevention, but rather tailor local responses to local contexts.

While in Durban, Michel Sidibé also had the opportunity to visit the CAPRISA eThekweni Clinical Research Site to learn about the HIV prevention and treatment research being conducted at CAPRISA. He also had a tour of the Prince Cyril Zulu Communicable Disease Centre where patients receive TB treatment.

For more information see: <http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2011/october/20111003asciencroundtable/>



Jerome Singh elected as a Founding Member of SAYAS

Professor Jerome Singh, Head of CAPRISA's Bioethics Department, was recently elected as one of the founding members and Co-chairperson of the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS).

SAYAS was officially launched by the Deputy Minister for Science and Technology, Mr Derek Hanekom, on Tuesday, 26 September at a function in Pretoria. Twenty leading young scientists were inaugurated as founder members of SAYAS. The group were selected from among the best scientific minds in South Africa and represent a diverse range of talent in terms of race, gender and scientific discipline.

SAYAS was borne out of the need for young scientists to contribute towards solutions to the important national and global challenges facing society. It will represent the voice of young scientists on national and international issues and give them a platform to influence policy decisions. It is envisaged that SAYAS would become one of the apex advisory structures to government on science and policy matters, along with Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), the SA National Innovation Council and the Council for Higher Education.

SAYAS also aims to contribute towards the development of scientific capacity in South Africa, through mentoring and role-modelling of future scientists, and by fostering opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborations between young scientists. It particular, it will bridge the gap left between the more senior and well established Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) and the younger scientists who



represent the future but are not part of ASSAf. SAYAS will also promote science awareness among learners, young scientists and society in general and act as a bridge between young and senior scientists. At a global level, SAYAS will link up with the Global Young Academy of sciences to provide opportunities for South African young scientists to interact internationally with other young scientists.

ASSAf has blessed the formation of SAYAS, recognising the importance of establishing a forum for younger scientists and has provided support for turning the concept into a reality. The Department of Science and Technology has also given its approval and will meet with SAYAS in the near future to discuss future opportunities. SAYAS was taken from a concept to launch by a dedicated team of young scientists working with ASSAf in less than a year. At the first General Assembly, the founding members thanked the working group for their dedicated hard work and promised to work hard to make SAYAS a success.

For more details please visit: http://www.assaf.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/YS-launch_FINAL-PROOF.pdf

CAPRISA Director receives South African Medical Association Gold Medal award



CAPRISA congratulates Professor Salim Abdool Karim on recently being awarded the South African Medical Association's Gold Medal Award for Fellowship in Art & Science of Medicine for 2011. This award recognises persons who contributed significantly to medicine in particular and healthcare in general, or have added to the esteem of the profession. Prof Salim Abdool Karim accepted the awards from the President of SAMA at the Premier Hotel OR Tambo, Gauteng on the 8 September 2011.

The SAMA award is just one of numerous awards that Prof Abdool Karim has received in recognition his excellence in research on microbicides, vaccines and TB-HIV treatment. Earlier this year he accepted the Drug Information Association's "President's award for outstanding achievement in world health"; the South African Department of Science and Technology's NSTF-BHP Billiton award for "Research leading to Innovation"; and the Allan Rosenfield Alumni award for 2011. In October he will be collecting Academy of Science in South Africa's (ASSAf) "Science-for-Society Gold Medal Award" in recognition of excellence in the application of outstanding scientific thinking in the service of society and the EDCTP Award for Outstanding African Scientist for 2011.



PhD awarded to Francois van Loggerenberg by the University of London

CAPRISA congratulates Francois van Loggerenberg on being awarded his PhD in Public Health Medicine through the Faculty of Infectious and Tropical Diseases, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM).

His research focussed on behavioural interventions to enhance adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART), in a study conducted at the CAPRISA eThekweni Clinic in Durban.

Concerns that the current didactic adherence counselling may be responsible for low antiretroviral therapy adherence have led to calls for more intensive individualised adherence counselling approaches which require substantial additional health care staff time and resources. Results from his study, which was supervised by Dr Alison Grant, Head of the Department of Clinical Research and Professor of International Health, LSHTM, showed that individualised motivational counselling did not achieve higher treatment adherence or virologic suppression rates than the routinely provided three-session didactic adherence counselling.

Virologic suppression at nine months was achieved in 89.8% of control (n=) and 87.9% of intervention patients (RR 0.98, 95% CI 0.90-1.07,

$p=0.62$). At least 95% adherence by pill count was achieved by 82.9% of control arm patients and 79.5% of intervention arm patients (RR 0.96, 95%CI 0.85-1.09, $p=0.51$). These data are reassuring that didactic counselling, which can be provided in groups and is less costly and less time-consuming, is not inferior to intensive individualised motivational counselling.

The study was funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, through an Operations Research on AIDS Care and Treatment in Africa (ORACTA) grant. Francois's tuition and related costs (2006 – 2011) were covered by a Commonwealth PhD scholarship.

Francois is a registered research psychologist who spent several years teaching psychology, statistics and research methodology at the tertiary level before joining CAPRISA in 2002. At CAPRISA, Francois served as the study manager and behavioural interventions co-investigator for the NIH-funded acute HIV infection project. He is currently the co-principal investigator for CA-

PRISA 007, an impact assessment study of a randomised controlled trial examining a cash incentivised combination prevention intervention which aims to reduce HIV infection in adolescents.



Showing support for National Casual Day

On Friday 2 September 2011 CAPRISA staff supported national casual day by dressing as "Stars from the 60's". Ms Natasha Naidoo, dressed as Audrey Hepburn (second from right), was voted as the best dressed on the day. The Finance Department won the prize for the most enthusiastic department.

Each year the national Casual Day campaign raises funds for persons with disabilities and encourages people to dress for work in something unusual and to wear the official Casual Day sticker. This year CAPRISA raised R960 and the money was donated to the KwaZulu-Natal Society for the blind.



CAPRISA Scientific Publications in 2011



National Institute for Communicable Diseases



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

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*this list continues from the previous newsletter - providing all CAPRISA publications in 2011

Upcoming Conference & Workshop Reminders

Conference	dates	Deadlines Abstracts	Registration	website
Microbicides 2012	April 2012	17 Nov 2011	15 Mar 2012	http://www.microbicides2010.org/microbicides-2012
19 th CROI	5-8 Mar 2012	5 Oct 2011	3 Feb 2012	http://retroconference.org/
3 rd SA TB Conference	12-15 Jun 2012	20 Jan 2012	18 May 2012	http://www.tbconference.co.za/

Board of Control: JM van Bever Donker (Chair) SS Abdool Karim AC Bawa D Clark • LP Fried NM Ijumba • S Madhi • S Naidoo • DP Visser PN • Langa

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