RECENT EVENTS

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH WELCOMES MPH STUDENTS

The School of Public Health welcomed 41 new Masters in Public Health students on 25 January 2012. The students come from diverse backgrounds and represent a range of different disciplines. We have students working in the mining sector in occupational health, in the Department of Health and a range of non-governmental organizations. There are a number of Witsies among the new students including two GEMP graduates.

Photograph: Staff involved in MPH and MMed: Dr Ruxana Jina, Gill Nelson, Professor Laetitia Rispel (Head of School of Public Health), Nicola Christofides, Ntokozo Dube, Maggie Mokonoto, Mercy Hlungwani, Leane Ramsoomar, Ntsiki Mapukata-Sondzaba and Sara Nieuwoudt

WELCOME DAY 2012

The Linder Auditorium was packed to capacity with parents and students attending Second Year Welcome Day on 27 January 2012. Students took an abbreviated Hippocratic Oath and the Dean, Professor Ahmed Wadee, addressed and welcomed students to the Faculty.

Photographs: Students taking the Hippocratic Oath; The dean, Professor Ahmed Wadee addressing students and parents
MÖBIUS AWARENESS DAY (MSAD), 24 JANUARY 2012

This date is significant because it is the birthday of Paul Julius Möbius, the neurologist who discovered the disorder in 1888. Möbius Syndrome results from the underdevelopment of the sixth and seventh cranial nerve. The six cranial nerve controls lateral eye movement, and the seventh cranial nerve controls facial expression. People with Möbius syndrome are born with facial paralysis and the inability to move their eyes laterally. The extremity of this disorder is their inability to smile. Often, the upper lip is retracted due to muscle shrinkage. Occasionally, the cranial nerves five and eight are affected. If cranial eight is affected, the person experiences hearing loss.

Smile Foundation in conjunction with MFSA celebrated this occasion wearing purple clothing in order to highlight this rare congenital neurological disorder, which is characterised by facial paralysis and the inability to move the eyes from side to side.

Facial reanimation or “smile surgeries” is performed to create some expression. Professor George Psaras, Medical Director of Smile Foundation, has performed over 32 “smile surgeries” since 2000. These specialised surgeries can last between 8 – 14 hours!

All seven academic hospitals, Plastic Surgery Departments and theatre personnel supported this worthy cause by wearing purple scrub caps to mark this significant day.

Smile Foundation together with Africa Tikkun were fortunate to be part of this special day and celebrated it with a tea and Skype link up with Professor Psaras in Europe. Four of the Foundation’s previously operated patients came to enjoy the purple iced cookies and get together. They each spoke about their own experiences of having the opportunity to have a smile and be part of their school and community in which they live. Next year we will take this project further and offer educational pamphlets in a wider awareness campaign about this condition.

For more information, please visit the website www.manyfacesofmoebiussyndrome.com, www.moebiussyndrome.co.za and www.smilefoundation.co.za

The organisers of MSAD: Mr Hedley Lewis, CEO; Ms Doreen Makamure, CMJAH & CHBAH Hospital Liaison; Ms Moira Gerszt, COO; Mrs Belinda Long, Office Administrator; Mr Duncan Moeketse, Fundraising and Marketing Intern; Ms Michelle Gerszt, Fundraising and Marketing Executive

LIVE AT LUNCH, 8 FEBRUARY 2012

The MSC 2011 held its final Live at Lunch on 8 February 2012. The event was a resounding success and the whole of Medical School campus was treated to an exhibition of the vast array of hidden talents that medical students possess. A plethora of varied performances involving song and dance left the crowd wowed and unable to decide upon a definitive winner. To add to the fervor, a Valentine's Day auction was hosted by the Medics’ Ball Committee to raise funds for this year's Ball, which, the organisers tell us, left many hot and flustered.
On 15 February Professor Ruediger Gerstberger presented the Paul Levy Memorial Lecture, which is a Faculty eponymous lecture hosted by the School of Physiology. Professor Gerstberger is Head of the Department of Veterinary Physiology and Biochemistry at the University of Giessen in Germany and he is visiting the School of Physiology from 16 January until 24 February 2012 to carry out collaborative research with staff in the School. The lecture focussed on the brain structures known as the circumventricular organs (CVOs) and their function as sensory targets for blood-borne compounds due to the fact that the CVOs are devoid of a blood-brain-barrier (BBB). Professor Gerstberger’s interesting talk described findings that indicated how activation of specific CVO-located receptors for compounds such as hormones and cytokines ultimately lead to the triggering of complex physiological and behavioural responses, often involving brain areas far removed from the CVOs themselves.

Photograph: Professors Ruediger Gerstberger with Professor David Gray, Head of the School of Physiology

SANBS BLOOD DRIVES AT MEDICAL SCHOOL

Wits Medical School has been greatly supportive of the South African National Blood Service for decades. Regular drives are held at Medical School annually. Pictured here donating blood in the foyer of Medical School on Wednesday 15 February 2012 are Ms Shirley Kaburise and Dr Jurgen Staats with Mr Lazarus Ramolefo from SANBS.

Please support SANBS and note the dates of the following blood drives in 2012:

- April 16, 17, 18;
- July 30, 31;
- August 1;
- October 8, 9, 10.

CONGRATULATIONS!

WITS PERINATAL HIV RESEARCH UNIT IN THE NEWS

The Wits Perinatal HIV Research Unit at the Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto is the first site to join an American-funded paediatric tuberculosis vaccine study. The Unit, under the Executive Directorship of Professor Glenda Gray, has been involved in research, training, policy formation and advocacy in issues concerning HIV-positive women and their children since 1996.

Wits is one of six National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) supported clinical trial sites in sub-Saharan Africa in an ongoing clinical trial testing an investigational tuberculosis (TB) vaccine in infants at risk for TB infection.

The trial began in October 2010 and is now ongoing at three sites in Kenya, South Africa and Mozambique. It is sponsored by Aeras and receives funding from Aeras, Crucell and the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership. The study is expected to be completed in 2015.

For more information please visit www.clinicaltrials.gov
RESEARCH CO-ORDINATOR IN THE FACULTY

Professor Elly Grossman is delighted to be back in the capacity of Research Co-ordinator (part-time).

She writes: I have put together a programme of workshops and tutorials which I hope will interest and support all researchers, from first time novices to experienced PhDs’. A stimulating range of courses will be run throughout the year and will include the Research Techniques Course, the ‘Twenty Minute Tutorials (which could take Thirty Minutes)’ series, touching on aspects of research and thesis preparation which so often get overlooked during supervision, an exciting writing programme which will support both postgraduates and staff in their writing endeavours. A Supervisor Support Group started the year with a stimulating discussion on co-supervision and contributions to the discussion are still flying in by email. Do keep your eye on the Research Office Courses site for further details.

Professor Grossman says: I look forward to contributing to the research climate within the Faculty and would welcome any suggestions and ideas which would stimulate the Faculty’s research environment.

DR BAVESH KANA GARNERS IMPORTANT AWARD

We are delighted to congratulate Dr Bavesh Kana who was selected as one of the recipients of the inaugural Howard Hughes Medical Institute’s (HHMI) inaugural International Early Career Scientist (IECS) awards – one of only two South Africans. Dr Kana is Senior Research Scientist and Head of Unit in the DST/NRF Centre of Excellence for Biomedical TB Research at Wits and the National Health Laboratory Service and completed his Doctorate in 2004, after which he accepted a postdoctoral fellowship at the Molecular Mycobacteriology Research Unit (MMRU) based at Wits.

He is the recipient of a Friedel Sellschop Award, the Medical Research Council Career Development award and is a National Research Foundation rated researcher.

A full report on Dr Kana’s achievements appeared in Wits News 23 January 2012.

ALUMNUS IN THE NEWS: PROFESSOR PETER JACOBS

We warmly congratulate alumnus Professor Peter Jacobs, (MBBCh 1959, PhD (Medicine) 1974), on being elected as a Master in the American College of Physicians (ACP) in December 2011. He was also recently elected as a Member of the Academy of Science of South Africa.

Peter Jacobs, Emeritus Professor and Head of Haematology at the University of Cape Town, currently Professor Extraordinaire in Haematological Pathology at Stellenbosch University and Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Nebraska, is one of South Africa’s leading lights in the fields of haematological pathology and clinical haematology.

He has contributed greatly to academic medicine, played a pioneering role in stem cell transplantations in South Africa and mentored and inspired hundreds of students and colleagues.

He was also honoured with a Special Achievement Award at the 10th annual ball of the Sunflower Fund (Friends of South African Bone Marrow Registry) for having introduced bone marrow transplantation into South Africa.
OBITUARY: PROFESSOR H DE V (BOET) HEESE

It is with sadness that we record the death of Professor H de V (Boet) Heese, former head of Paediatrics at Wits and UCT, on 27 January 2012. Professor Heese was the first Head of Department of Paediatrics and Chief Paediatrician, Johannesburg Hospital, Transvaal Memorial Hospital for Children, Baragwanath Hospital and Coronation Hospital, from January 1968 to June 1970 when paediatrics was in its infancy. Prior to this paediatrics functioned as a sub-division of the Department of Medicine.

He subsequently served as the second Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health, UCT, from 1970-1989. The Department grew in remarkable ways under his leadership, becoming a major academic centre and force for child health. He was a great advocate for child health who leaves a wonderful legacy of many structures that he created or grew and many people whom he mentored who became leaders in their fields. The standing of the Department today and of Red Cross War Memorial Children’s Hospital nationally and internationally is a great tribute to his leadership, vision and many contributions.

Professor Heese was a highly respected academic, having trained in pulmonology in Bristol and obtained his MD in lung function testing. He was known for his outgoing personality, integrity, sincerity, extraordinary vision and superb ability to mentor and develop people. As a consultant at Groote Schuur Hospital he started the first neonatal ICU, raising funds for Fellows and equipment and introducing ventilation of neonates.

Sincere condolences are offered to his son Jake, his daughter Sue and his grandchildren Ashleigh and Abbey.

Photograph: Professor Heese at the College of Paediatricians Founders Dinner, 2007

INVITATIONS

INVITATION
PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY 2012
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

The Dean, Professor Ahmed Wadee, cordially invites you to attend the Annual Prize-Giving Ceremony

Date: Wednesday 28 March 2012
Time: 15h30 for 16h00
Venue: Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital Auditorium

RSVP: Mrs J Hesk on jennefer.hesk@wits.ac.za
FOURTH ETHICS ALIVE WEEK EXPLORES SHARING HEALTHCARE RESOURCES

The fourth Ethics Alive Week, jointly hosted by the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics and the Wits Faculty of Health Sciences, takes place from 12 to 16 March 2012.

This annual weeklong event consists of debates and discussions, this year exploring issues revolving around Sharing Healthcare Resources.

Exciting and knowledgeable speakers on healthcare ethics and economics will talk about their respective areas of expertise. Speakers include Professor Gavin Mooney, health economist with a particular interest in political economy, Aboriginal health, equity and ethics; Professor Di McIntyre, health economist and Professor in the School of Public Health and Family Medicine at the University of Cape Town; and Mr Mark Heywood, Executive Director of Section27, one of South Africa’s most successful post-apartheid human rights organisations. Sharing Healthcare Resources is appropriately timed as, with the publication of the Green Paper on the National Health Insurance (NHI), South Africa is now on its journey to health care reform and wider engagement and discussion on the proposed NHI in the country is inevitable.

The main event of the week is the symposium on 14 March at 17:30 in the Hospital Auditorium. Further activities for the week include hospital presentations, debates and student seminars. The student seminar on Examining the Challenges to Professionalism: The Student’s Perspective is scheduled for 14 March from 11:00 – 13:00.

HOSPITAL TALKS SCHEDULE

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Sharing Healthcare Resources

As part of our activities for Ethics Alive 2012

Date: Wednesday 14th March 2012
Time: 17h30

Venue: Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, 7 York Road, Parktown, Johannesburg

Proceedings:
17h30 Welcome Cocktails
18h00 Formal Programme: Chaired by Professor Phumzile Hongwa, Head of School, Oral Health Sciences, Faculty of Health Sciences

Opening of Symposium:
Professor Ahmed Wadee, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Symposium
“Universal Health Coverage: Realities and Myths”
Professor Gavin Mooney

“The NHI: An Economists Perspective”
Professor Dianne McIntyre

Panel Discussion
Closure
Professor Aner Drai, Director of the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

20h00 Finger Supper

“It is better to die for an idea that will live, than to live for an idea that will die”
Steve Biko

RSVP: Kurium Govender
Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics
Tel: 011 717 2190
Email: Kurium.Govender@wits.ac.za
By: 27 February 2011

2 CPD units for ethics
The Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
And the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics invite you to presentations on

Healthcare Resources: Equity and Access

by

Professor Gavin Mooney
MA (Edinburgh); PhD (UCT)

Professor Gavin Mooney is a health economist with nearly 40 years of experience and has published extensively on the subject. He is an advocate for Citizens’ Juries and has pioneered its implementation in Australian health. He has served as an advisor to the WHO and OECD as well as various governments and health departments. Professor Mooney’s main interests within health economics are political economy, Aboriginal health, equity and ethics. In 2008 he initiated a fundraising-drive which raised over $8,000.00 for victims of South Africa’s xenophobic attacks.

and

The importance of communication in an ethical relationship

by

Dr Mamsallah Faal
MBBS(Lond)1996,DCH(Lond),DRCOG(Lond),MRCGP(Lond),DTM&H(Wits)

Dr Mamsallah Faal is a Lecturer in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Witwatersrand. She trained as a family physician and worked in a 5 partner family medicine practice in the UK where she was involved in both undergraduate and postgraduate medical training. On relocating to South Africa in 2008, she pursued dual interests in infectious diseases and medical education. As an accredited Faculty presenter for the Medical Protection Society Education Services, she delivers workshops nationwide on risk management in medical practice.

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CPD Accredited
Faculty of Health Sciences

Teaching and learning symposium – Conversations in the Complexities of Learning

First Announcement

The Faculty of Health Sciences’ 3rd teaching and learning symposium, Conversations in the Complexities of Learning, will take place on 18 April 2012.

Invited speakers are Professor Dilip Menon from Wits’ Centre for Indian Studies and Dr Jacky van Wyk from the Nelson Mandela School of Medicine at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Professor Menon will address the complexities of learning grounded in the use of language. Dr van Wyk is the education consultant and staff developer for the College of Health Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Her PhD focused on the value of formative student assessment in relation to the use of the progress test at the NRMSM.

A panel discussion with students will follow the two speakers.

Time: 12:30
Venue: Marie Curie Lecture Theatre

Book this date and time in your diary now!! Registration forms will be sent out in the next few weeks.

Centre For Health Science Education

Workshops / Seminars offered in February 2012

14-16 February 2012
Health Science Educators Course
08:15 – 16:00 (Daily): CHSE Boardroom

20 February 2012
Development of a teaching Portfolio
13:00 - 15:00: Wits Learning Centre (Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital)

28 February 2012
Development of a teaching Portfolio
14:00-16:00: CHSE Boardroom

24 February 2012
Journal Club
12:00-13:00: CHSE Boardroom

Please contact Norman Motlhabani for bookings:
011 717 2329 or gobotsamang.motlhabani@wits.ac.za

And

Professor Patricia McInerney for more information:
011 717 2073 or Patricia.McInerney@wits.ac.za
International African Vaccinology Conference

Advocating for efforts to protect African children, families and communities from the threat of infectious diseases

Hosted by the Vaccines for Africa Initiative (VACFA), University of Cape Town (UCT), the conference is jointly organized by UCT and the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD/NHLS). The conference chairs are Prof Gregory Hussey (UCT), Prof Shabir Madhi (NICD/NHLS), Prof Barry Schoub (NICD/NHLS).

The conference will focus on critical vaccine and immunisation issues for Africa and the world as we approach the 2015 deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals including research, policy, advocacy, and communication. It will provide a forum for discussion on vaccinology in Africa, including science, clinical, public health and health systems research.

Be part of the rendezvous: A vaccine conference in Africa, for Africa,

Venue: Lagoon Beach Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa
Dates: Friday 9 to Sunday 11 November 2012
Deadline for abstract submission: 31 March 2012
These can now be submitted on the conference website.

Some sponsorship is available for African delegates whose abstracts are accepted for either oral or poster presentation.

For further information and registration forms please contact: Bianca Allison Conference Management Centre, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town, Anzio Road, Observatory 7925, Cape Town, South Africa Tel: +27 21 406 6407. Fax: +27 21 448 6263. Email: Bianca.Allison@uct.ac.za
Important information for applicants to the Human Research Ethics Committee (Medical) from Professor Peter Cleaton-Jones, Chair of the Committee

During 2011 there was more than the usual disappointment of applicants over a delay in knowing the outcome of their applications for ethics clearance. Here is an explanation of the challenge we face.

Between 2002 and 2011 there was an increase in applications from 440 to 685, a total of 245 over 10 years. In 2011 the Health Professions Council of South Africa, made new regulations for the registration of clinical specialists in medicine and dentistry – a research ‘dissertation’ of the Wits research report type for the MMed and MDent degrees is now necessary. This explained the increase in applications we noticed during that year – we had no less 94 to consider at the November meeting.

Discussions with the Faculty of Health Science administration show that, based on current postgraduate registrations, we must expect 250 more applications in each of 2012, 2013, and 2014 until a plateau is reached. The pattern is shown in the accompanying X-Y plot.

![Wits Research Office applications to the HREC (Medical)](image)

What is important to understand is that there is one staff member in the Research Office to handle all the applications and the many tasks associated with these. We are in the process of making representations to the University for another staff member but until that happens, both applicants and committee members are going to experience frustration.

Please try to submit applications well ahead of deadlines because there is no doubt there will be delays this year.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER! THE NEXT GENERATION OF CLINICAL SCIENTISTS: CARNEGIE PHD FELLOWSHIPS, WITS FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES (FHS)**

**PhD Fellowship** in the Faculty of Health Sciences (Clinical field)

Scientific **clinical research** is vital for contributing to the improvement of the health of the people of our country. The Faculty of Health Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand recognising this, wishes to revitalise and strengthen research in its clinical arena by fostering the training of the next generation of **clinical scientists**. To this end we are advertising a highly prestigious **Fellowship** to enable a clinician with an interest in research to obtain a PhD. The appropriate training in research methodology, statistics and in teaching will form part of the Fellowship in order to support the successful candidate in obtaining the degree, as well as preparing him/ her for a research career/track in the future.
The Fellowship will fall under the auspices of the Carnegie Foundation and is available for a period of two years. Should you already be registered in the FHS for a PhD in a clinical field (within your first year of registration) or, if you are wishing to register for a PhD in a clinical field, you would be eligible to apply. The successful candidate will be nested in a research-rich environment which would foster success and growth.

**Start date:** March 2012; **Closing date:** 20 February 2012

**For further information and to apply please urgently email:** Ms Mandisa Habana (Research.Health@wits.ac.za), Faculty Research Office. For any questions pertaining to the Fellowship please contact Professor B Kramer, Assistant Dean: Research and Postgraduate Support (Beverley.Kramer@wits.ac.za) or Professor J Veriava (yosuf.veriava@wits.ac.za).

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**And finally ...** for a Friday smile please enjoy this poem shared with us by Professor Elly Grossman

**ODE TO MULTI-AUTHORSHIP: A MULTICENTRE, PROSPECTIVE RANDOM POEM**

All cases complete, the study was over
the data were entered, lost once, and recovered.
Results were greeted with considerable glee
p value (two-tailed) equalling 0.0493.
The severity of illness, oh what a discovery,
was inversely proportional to the chance of recovery.
When the paper's first draft had only begun
the wannabe authors lined up one by one.
To jockey for their eternal positions
(for who would be first, second, and third)
and whom „et al-ed” in all further citations.
Each centre had seniors, each senior ten bees,
the bees had technicians and nurses to please.
The list it grew longer and longer each day,
as new authors appeared to enter the fray.
Each fought with such fury to stake his or her place
being just a „participant” would be a disgrace.
For the appendix is piled with hundreds of others
and seen by no one but spouses and mothers.
If to „publish or perish” is how academics are bred
then to miss the masthead is near to be dead.
As the number of authors continued to grow
they outnumbered the patients by two to one or so.
While PIs faxed memos to company headquarters
the bees and the nurses took care of the orders.
They'd signed up the patients, and followed them weekly
heard their complaints, and kept casebooks so neatly.
There were seniors from centres that enrolled two or three
who threatened „foul play” if not on the marquee.
But the juniors and helpers who worked into the night
were simply „acknowledged” or left off outright.
„Calm down” cried the seniors to the quivering drones
there's place for you all on the RPU clones.
When the paper was finished and sent for review
six authors didn't know that the study was through.
Oh the work was so hard, and the fights oh so bitter
for the glory of publishing and grabbing the glitter.
Imagine the wars when in six months or better
The Editor's response, „please make it a letter”.

RPU = repeating publishable unit; PI=principal investigator

Quoted from Horowitz et al. (1996)

NEXT ISSUE OF HEALTH SCIENCES REVIEW: 16 MARCH 2012