



# SCHOOL OF Clinical Medicine NEWSLETTER

## EDITORIAL



Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the third and final SOCM newsletter for 2018.

There are a wide variety of topics in this edition, reflecting the excellence and diversity in our School.

Did you know that the School of Clinical Medicine is the

largest of the seven schools in the Faculty of Health Sciences?

Well done to all those whose achievements are featured in this edition.

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season!

Happy reading.

Please send items that you would like to be included in our next newsletter to Rita Kruger ([rita.kruger@wits.ac.za](mailto:rita.kruger@wits.ac.za)) by Thursday 31 January 2019.

## A LOOK AT OUR STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS:

### New HOD appointment:

#### Promotions:

We wish to congratulate the following staff members for their academic promotions:

*Senior Clinical Lecturers*  
- Dr Gloria Teckie  
- Dr Shivesh Maharaj

*Adjunct Professors*  
- Dr Andreas Chrysostomou  
- Dr Georgia Demetrious

#### Promotion statistics for 2018:

Emeritus Professors - 2; Professors - 2; Honorary/Visiting Professors - 4; Adjunct/Associate Professorship/Reader - 4; Honorary Adjunct/Associate Professorship/Reader - 5; Honorary Visiting Associate Professorship/Clinical/Senior Lecturer/Researcher - 3

#### Visiting and Honorary Staff:

We have the pleasure of

welcoming the following Honorary and Visiting staff to our School:

*Honorary Professor*  
- Prof Zodwa Dlamini

*Visiting Professor*  
- Prof Mark Orkin

*Honorary Senior Researcher* - Dr Motlatsa Mlambo

*Honorary Assoc Professor*  
- Dr A Kim

*Honorary Lecturers:*  
- Dr Marlene Bothma  
- Dr Julian Naidoo  
- Dr Atobra Antwi  
- Dr Andrew Grieve  
- Dr Mnyani

- Dr Jean Olsson  
- Dr Makgotso Mohapi  
- Dr S Hanson  
(\*The above information is as of 31 October 2018.)

#### Other Achievements:

Prof Ahmed Adam, Division

of Urology, has recently been elected onto the National Executive Committee of the SAUA (South African Urology Association) for a two year term.

Prof Ahmed Adam won the best Video Abstract presentation at the National SAUA 2018 meeting in Stellenbosch, September 2018 for the surgical study entitled: Trans-Urethral Snare of Bladder Tumor (TUSnBT) with Stone Basket Retrieval: A Novel Time-Saving Technique in the Endoscopic Management of Papillary Bladder Lesions.

Prof Ahmed Adam received the Publon's Peer Review Award, for being placed in the Top 1 percent of journal reviewers in the World (on the Global Publon's Peer

Review Database for Clinical Medicine (2017-2018)).

Dr Nathan Poppleton under the supervision of Prof Ahmed Adam and their collaboration with Researchers from the University of Newcastle, Australia was awarded the Kind Cuts for Kids Prize for their ObsCure study presented at the SAUA (South African Urology Association) National Congress in September 2018.

Dr Winston Padayachee, Urology Registrar (Division of Urology) was a finalist in the "National Urology Registrar Laparoscopic Challenge" and will be flown to Germany for a Laparoscopy course later this year.

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THE NEONATAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

Neonatology is an accredited division of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital is one of three Wits training sites for the Certificate in Neonatology.

The other two are Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital and Rahima Moosa Mother & Child Hospital.

Neonatal fellows work for two years in an accredited

training facility, do a research project, complete a logbook and write the CMSA certificate in Neonatology. Sub-speciality training in Neonatal care is aligned to National goals as Maternal and Child Health has been prioritised at National level. The impact of Wits training is far and wide. Two of our recent graduates were supernumerary fellows from Rwanda

and Zimbabwe. Two others were recipients of bursaries from the Nelson Mandela Foundation and

are now working in the recently opened Nelson Mandela Children’s Hospital.



L-R: Dr Robin Saggars (Neonatal fellow); Dr Tanusha Ramdin (Senior Neonatologist); Prof Daynia Ballot (Head of Neonates); Dr Aripfani Veronica Mphaphuli (Neonatal fellow); Dr Yoliswa Magadla (Neonatal fellow)

A TRIBUTE TO PROF SCHULZ

The Division of Dermatology at Wits were privileged to share in the beautiful occasion of Prof Shultz’s 90th birthday during October 2018.

There are no words, nor anything human, that one can pen on paper the sentiment and gratitude that we have for this legendary person.

Elenora Joy Schulz touched our lives when she became a Witsie in 1986 as Professor of Dermatology.

Her scholarly and academic achievements with her numerous publications and book chapters parallel that of any world class intellectual.

Her contribution to education and serving people is unparalleled.

She is the only leprologist of note in Africa. She was recognised and given a medal for distinguished service internationally for her life long contribution in this field of medicine and science.

Professor Schulz has educated us all through her wise teachings not only the contents of Dermatology but has nurtured and directed us to grow as people.

Her commitment to patient management though her vast knowledge and experience has



improved the quality of lives of many patients.

Professor Schulz lives in Pretoria and is currently teaching registrars at Wits on a Monday afternoon and tutors exam candidates from all three dermatology divisions in Gauteng at her home on a Saturday.

She never married but we all know that we are and always will be her family.

Prof Deepak Modi

ABDOMINAL WALL DEFECT

Abdominal wall defect is one of the challenges facing general surgery nowadays.

The most common cause is incisional hernia post laparotomy. The survival from ICU of worse case scenario of surgical patient post trauma or intra abdominal sepsis adds to the complexity of this condition.

The multiple relook laparotomy that these patients are subjected to preclude

closure of the abdomen leaving a huge defect that need reconstruction later.

Worse of all is full thickness defect of the abdominal wall post excision of large malignant tumour.

In this exceptional circumstance, most available options (tissue repair, synthetic mesh, biosynthetic implant, flap) are either unsuitable or fade away in comparison to the magnitude of the defect.

Here is an illustration of huge abdominal wall defect after resection of a desmoid tumour (fig.1). Desmoid tumour arises from the musculoaponeurotic structure anywhere in the body but mainly from the rectus abdominis muscle; it is locally aggressive with no propensity to metastasis.

The defect was successfully bridged with a biological implant (Strattice™) as a substitute to the abdominal wall to restore function. Strattice™ is a non cross-link reconstructive tissue matrix from porcine collagen that provides regenerative repair. 6 Weeks later, a split skin graft successfully covered the granulated implant. The short-term outcome is satisfactory.

Dr I Bombil  
Department of Surgery



Fig.1a Abdominal wall defect



Fig.1b implant



Fig.1c split skin graft



## THE DIVISION OF CLINICAL ASSOCIATES

As the end of the 2018 academic year approaches, the Division of Clinical Associates has several achievements to celebrate with the School of Clinical Medicine.

First a short background of our programme of study. The Division is responsible for the education and training of the clinical associate students in the undergraduate Bachelor of Clinical Medical Practice degree and recently started with the BCMP Honours in Emergency Medicine.

Clinical associates (ClinA) are healthcare professionals registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) since 2009 with a scope of practice to provide medical care and treatment as a member of the healthcare teams. ClinAs work with doctors, nurses, physios, pharmacists, all members of the team performs patient histories, physical exams, ordering and interpreting tests/laboratory studies as well as making a diagnosis and management plan. Clinical associates can write prescriptions, perform multiple procedures and assist in surgeries.

Clinical associate students are trained under the Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care within the School with a focus on early clinical training and practice. We emphasis primary health care with disease prevention and health promotion in the three-year curriculum.

We are very pleased to announce that the HPCSA Accreditation panel recently conducted a full review of the undergraduate programme and made a preliminary recommendation for full reaccreditation for 5 years. Such a recommendation speaks to the quality of teaching and learning provided by the Division teaching staff. This is further evident with a recent runner up status awarded to the BCMP Year 3 teaching team for their nomination to the VC Team Teaching Award.

The innovating teaching and focus on clinical training has led to the development of a partnership with Tufts

University Medical School Physician Assistant Program in Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

The Division set up a pilot program this year for a student exchange with two of our clinical associate Year 3 students studying in Boston for a clinical rotation with two Tufts physician assistant (PA) final year students completing a clinical rotation at Kopanong District Hospital. The exchange allowed for a greater understanding and appreciation of the two similar health professions and training programmes.

The Tufts PA students joined three of the clinical associate students and Wits Faculty Lecturers at the Rural Health Conference held 21–24 September 2018 in the Vaal. Our students also joined other clinical associate and medical students from UP and WSU, along with rural health practitioners and stakeholders to discuss and support delivery of rural health medicine and primary care practice. The Division of Clinical Associates is pleased to share with you these recent achievements and developments in the School of Clinical Medicine.

Scott Smalley, Head of Division of Clinical Associates



BCMP Year 3 teaching team— VC Team Teaching Award presentation to the Panel . L-R: Dr Collins Mbah, Aviwe Mgobozi, Stef Conradie, Valentine Bilankulu, Tumi Ndweni, Scott Smalley



Clinical Associate and physician assistant students at the Rural Health Conference, Sept 2018



International Exchange Student programme. L-R: Moses Habimana (Wits), Jennifer Nunes (Tufts), Shezree Tiel (Wits), Elizabeth Huebner (Tufts)

## PROF ROBERT MORRELL— MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

The Wits School of Clinical Medicine (SOCM) hosted Professor Robert Morrell for a two-day visit in October 2018. Located in the Vice Chancellor's Office at the University of Cape Town, Prof Morrell spearheads a programme to diversify the professoriate at that institution.

In 2017, the Wits SOCM established a mentorship programme to assist consultants, registrars and other postgraduate students through staff development of mid-level joint appointees.

Profs Sarala Naicker and Laurel Baldwin-Ragaven, together with departmental heads and the School Executive, have established a support system for mentors, which kicked off in 2018.

Prof Morrell's visit was part of this year's activities to address and find solutions for academic progression given the demands of heavy clinical and teaching responsibilities, which are unique to our School.

Prof Morrell's visit included a public lecture titled "Becoming an academic in South Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Pleasure or Agony?", an interactive panel discussion titled "Achieving career progression in challenging environments" and consultation sessions to address specific individual or departmental concerns about career-pathing.

An historian by training, Prof Morrell addressed limitations to advancement in the academy as well various interventions to enhance success that include: setting out personal and professional

goals; intensive mentoring and coaching of a selected cohort until they achieve their promotional targets (full or associate professor); writing support through retreats; and, continuous monitoring and developing shared experiences with others in a similar situation.

The UCT programme has achieved several promotions in the 4 years since inception, with staff advancing over time at UCT, or being appointed to better posts elsewhere.

SOCM benefitted from Prof Morrell's experiences and insights. His perspectives will be useful to bolster the SOCM mentorship programme, which will begin with an exciting session with external coaching facilitators in 2019.



L-R: Professors Daynia Ballot, Robert Morrell, Saraladevi Naicker and Laurel Baldwin-Ragaven



L-R: Prof Robert Morrell, Dr Palesa Motshapi-Chakane, Prof Billy Ramokgopa, Dr Thenjiwe Hlongwane-Gukuta, Prof Laurel Baldwin-Ragaven, Prof Daynia Ballot and Prof Saraladevi Naicker

If you would like to contribute to the support of students in the Faculty:

- **Account name:** University of the Witwatersrand, Faculty of Health Sciences
- **Bank:** FNB
- **Account no.:** 62150130426
- **Branch code:** 210-554
- **Account type:** Cheque Account
- **SWIFT code:** FIRNZ AJJ



[Safia Mahomed](#) is a PhD graduate from the [Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics](#) at Wits University. Her doctorate included creating a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) template for the transfer of human materials across South Africa's borders. It was pioneering and informed how the Department of Health went about adopting a national MTA, which was not in place before in South Africa. 3 October 2018 - Ufrieda Ho

Dancing to a corporate tune didn't turn out to be the kind of legal professional Safia Mahomed wanted to be.

She always felt law had to have deeper value, truer pursuits of social justice. So she called it a day as a practising attorney at the end of 2011 and returned to academic studies in 2012. After completing her Master's at Unisa, she pursued a doctorate in bioethics and health law. She started her PhD at the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Wits University in 2014.

This year Mahomed completed her PhD with a thesis focused on developing an ethical and legal framework for the regulation of biobanks [repositories of human material and associated data] in South Africa.

"With a national MTA in place, we are laying the foundation to build a more comprehensive ethical-regulatory framework for biobanks in the country," says Mahomed. Creating an easily accessible and useable template helps drive the adoption of standardisation and best practice.

MTAs may seem like the stuff of labs and research facilities, with little to do with the average person. But Mahomed's work highlights just how important legal protection is for vulnerable population groups who are usually the source of "biological materials".

Biological materials - like tissue and blood samples - are collected and stored in

biobanks at research facilities around the world. Samples are often transferred and shared between researchers, but limited standardised legal agreements have existed in South Africa governing the transfer of biological materials.

Participants often don't have clear legal protection over these samples. It makes them vulnerable when they place their complete trust in authority figures like researchers and doctors. Participants may not fully understand why their biological samples are being collected in the first place and stand to be exploited. When they sign on the dotted line they often waive their rights in how their samples will be used even decades later.

Researchers too can find themselves in the middle of disputes when samples are not returned or when the ownership of samples is contested. This is especially true when there is a research breakthrough, when there is scientific credit to be claimed, or if research leads to a product that has commercial gain.

"Back in 2014 when I was thinking of doing my PhD, I knew I didn't want to do it just for the sake of it and just to put a thesis on a shelf," she says of her work that has successfully changed the law.

Inspired by the conversations and debates in her home, where her mom is an academic and her dad a medical professional, she realised she wanted - through her PhD - to find ways to close the considerable gaps in the law regarding the field of human tissue transfer for health re-

search. The law's "silence", as she calls it, held too many potential risks.

Her framework consists of four key pillars: informed consent; defining clear custodianship of human materials (the national MTA states that custodianship remains with the providing institution and ownership remains with the research participant); guidance on benefit sharing; and provisions for regulations to extend to secondary uses of human materials. The framework also covers respect for socio-cultural belief systems and traditions.

Mahomed, who has served on the Biobanks Ethics Committee at Wits University since 2013, credits Ntibi Maepa from the Wits legal office for advice in developing an MTA as well as the input of Mahomed's supervisors Professors Kevin Behrens, Melodie Labuschaigne and Ian Sanne. The Committee adopted her MTA even before it became national policy - testing and proving its value and impact.

"I am happy we now have a national MTA in place that will create a balance between protections for research participants and the advancement of science," she says.

Seeing her research adopted and given life as actual legal policy has been "deeply rewarding and humbling", says Mahomed, who today, is a senior lecturer in the Department of Jurisprudence at Unisa's College of Law.

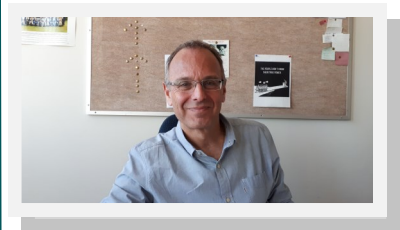
Giving up practising law and becoming a lecturer has also been her "right fit". Teaching allows her to guide another generation to think of law as problem solving through fairness, protection, relevance and accessibility.

Mahomed is also Chair of

Unisa's Biotechnology and Medical Law Flagship, a community engagement project focused on building education and awareness on ethical and legal issues regarding health.

"The law has to keep up with science," she says - it keeps her busy. But she does try to take a breather occasionally by getting stuck into her favourite Netflix series or has even allowed her extreme sports fanatic husband, Bilal Rangraje, to convince her to jump out of planes with him, sky-diving.

#### DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY



Congratulations to Prof Christopher Szabo who was awarded a DSc (15<sup>th</sup> October 2018) for a thesis entitled: *Eating disorders, risk and management: a South African and African perspective*. The DSc represents 47 publications, related to eating disorders, covering a period of over 20 years (1995-2016) - influenced by clinical work and focusing on the areas of risk and management. The publications have provided both a South African and African perspective that has contributed to clinician knowledge and practice. Professor Szabo was mentored by Emeritus Professor Peter Cleaton-Jones in the School of Clinical Medicine.

Prof Christopher Szabo was appointed as a Visiting Professor at the University of Belgrade, School of Medicine, Belgrade, Serbia. His inaugural lecture (3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018) was entitled *Leadership, Public Mental Health and clinical advocacy*.



## BIOETHICS/SCHOOL SYMPOSIUM: THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL IN THE HEALTHCARE CRISIS

The School, with the assistance of the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics convened a symposium on the 26th of October 2018 to deliberate on the role it could play in the ongoing healthcare crisis. It was well attended by members of the School and delegates from further afield.

Professor Martin Veller as Dean of the Faculty officially opened the symposium. He highlighted that the crisis in public health was also recognised as an area of major concern at the Presidential Health Summit held the previous week. Ethical leadership and governance coupled with accountability and consequence for mismanagement, inefficiency and corruption are critical. There is an urgent need to fix the current system.

There were 2 sessions comprising 4 presentations each, chaired by Professors Chris Lundgren and Thifhelimbilu Luvhengo respectively. Speakers included Dr Victoria Stephen, Head of the Emergency Department at Thelle Mogeorane Hospital; Ms Sasha Stevenson, Attorney and Head of Health at Section 27; Ms Karessa Govender, a Project officer at the Rural Health Advocacy Project; Ms Sibongile Tshabalala, National Chairperson of the Treatment Action Campaign; Advocate Ronel van Zyl, a Senior State Law Advisor at the South African Law Commission; Dr M Kwindu, Ombudsman from the HPCSA; Dr Gavin Steel, a Chief Director at the National DoH and Professor Daynia Ballot.

During the panel discussions, delegates indicated that the School had already started playing a major role in uniting district and central hospitals and should continue in this vein as it would keep doctors together going forward towards addressing the crisis.

There was agreement that the School had an advocacy role to play and the symposium was an example of

such an activity. The University needed to support the School in leading this process and also in protecting those professionals who advocated for their patients. As part of its advocacy role, the School also needed to offer support and advice to the DoH and work together with it in addressing the issues. Clinicians were urged to play their part at the bedside towards ensuring improvement of the situation. "Finger-pointing" was discouraged. There were also requests for more of these activities.

Professors Ames Dhai and Daynia Ballot



Dr Victoria Stephen; Ms Karessa Govender; Ms Sasha Stevenson and Ms Sibongile Tshabalala



L - R: Adv. Ronel van Zyl; Dr Munyadziwa Kwindu; Dr Gavin Steel; Prof Daynia Ballot

**WOULD YOU RATHER DIE OF LIVER DISEASE OR LIVE WITH HIV?**

This was the ethical dilemma faced by doctors at Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre to save a child's life.

In 2017, doctors from the Transplant Unit at the Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre performed what is believed to be the world's first intentional liver transplant from

a mother living with HIV to her critically ill HIV negative child, who had end-stage liver disease.

Now, more than a year later, the mother and child have fully recovered, however, doctors are unsure the HIV-status of the child.

In South Africa, a country with the largest anti-retroviral therapy (ART) programme in the world, people with HIV live long and healthy lives.

The success of this world-first operation thus presents a potential new pool of living donors that could save additional lives.

Leveraging "living positive" to save more lives .

In a paper published in prestigious, peer-reviewed journal AIDS on October 4, 2018, scientists in surgery, ethics, and HIV from the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (Wits) explain how a chronic shortage of organs compromise their efforts to save lives, and how the decision they made to perform a world-first operation could advance transplantation.

Jean Botha, principal investigator and transplant surgeon is Professor of Surgery in the Department of Surgery in the School of Clinical Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences at Wits University.

"Two aspects of this case are unique. Firstly, it involved intentional donation of an organ from a living HIV positive individual. Secondly, pre-exposure prophylaxis [medication to protect at-risk individuals from contracting the HI virus] in the child who received the organ may have prevented the transmission of HIV. However, we will only know this conclusively over time," says Botha, who is also Director of Transplantation at the Transplant Unit at the Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre.

Currently, the Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre is the only Transplant Programme doing living donor liver transplantation in southern Africa. It is also



the first privately administered teaching hospital in Johannesburg and, as a Wits hospital, advances specialist training and research.

Stringent adherence to ethical guidelines

In this case of transplanting a liver from an HIV positive donor to a non-infected recipient, the transplant team had to unpack the potential risks and benefits to both. The Human Research Ethics Committee (Medical) at Wits University approved the liver transplantation from the mother living with HIV to her HIV negative child. Their personal details remain confidential.

The child - on the waiting list for a deceased donor for 180 days (the average is 45 days) - was frequently admitted for life threatening complications of end-stage liver disease. Without transplant, the child would certainly have died. However, saving the child's life needed to be balanced against harm to the donor and the risk of almost certainly transmitting HIV if the mother was the donor.

Dr Harriet Etheredge is a medical bioethicist who holds an honorary position in the Department of Internal Medicine, School of Clinical Medicine at Wits, and oversees Ethics and Regulatory Issues at the Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre.

"Extensive efforts were made to identify either a deceased liver donor or an HIV negative living donor for the child before considering an HIV positive parent donor.

Transplanting HIV positive organs is not illegal in South Africa;

However, it is not considered best practice internationally because of the risk of HIV transmission to the recipient. To minimise risk to donors and recipients, this operation is offered only under exceptional circumstances. Full consent is required from the parents who must be able to care for a child infected with HIV," says Etheredge, whose PhD is in the field of medical ethics and organ transplantation.

In this transplantation case, the mother asked a number of times for the opportunity to save her child's life by donating a segment of her liver. For this mother, quantifying the risk was simpler for the transplant team. Dr Francesca Conrادية, HIV clinician, notes, "When considering an HIV positive parent, it is important that they have an undetectable viral load. This means that they know they are HIV positive and that they have been taking their antiretroviral medication properly for at least six months".

This made the risk of donation equivalent to that of an HIV negative living donor. However, living liver donation is never a risk-free procedure, and the team took care to ensure that the mother understood the full ambit of the risk she was undertaking.

"Our Independent Donor Advocate helps the parents understand the risks, makes representations to the transplant team on behalf of the donor if necessary, and provides emotional support throughout the process," says Etheredge.

Intentional transmission of HIV to save a life

The transplant team faced the dilemma of saving the child's life whilst at the same time knowing that the child might end up HIV positive because of this decision. However, because this intentional HIV positive living donor liver transplant is likely a world first, the actual chance of transmitting HIV was unknown.

The team decided to work on the basis that the child would contract HIV, and provide management according-



ly. But in the time since the transplant, there have been some surprises when it comes to the child's HIV status.

"In the weeks after the transplant, we thought that the child was HIV positive, because we detected HIV antibodies," says Botha.

The transplant team then accessed specialised testing by HIV experts at the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) who subsequently could not find any active HIV infection in the blood stream of the child, meaning there is a chance that the child is HIV negative.

Caroline Tiemessen is Research Professor in the School of Pathology at Wits and head of Cell Biology within the Centre for HIV and STIs.

"At the moment, we are developing new methods for testing the child, and we hope to be able to have a definitive answer to the question of seroconversion in future. For now the child will remain on ART until we have a more comprehensive picture," says Tiemessen who, in 2017, led the laboratory investigations in the case where of a South African child living with HIV had remained in remission without ART since 2008.

Seroconversion is the period of time during which a specific antibody develops and becomes detectable in the blood. After seroconversion has occurred, HIV can be detected in blood tests for the antibody.

Expanded organ donor pool to advance transplantation in Africa

More than a year since the intentional liver transplantation from a mother living with HIV to her HIV negative child, both donor and recipient have recovered and are well.

Dr June Fabian, a nephrologist and Research Director at Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre says, "We have formalised this procedure as a research pro-

gramme. As we offer this type of transplantation to more children, we hope to be able to draw more definitive conclusions."

Organ transplantation at the Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre is offered to any person irrespective of income or demographic according to "sickest first" criterion. This is possible through an existing partnership between the Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre and the Gauteng Department of Health.

"We hope that this groundbreaking operation will be the first of many like it and will contribute towards promoting justice and equity in liver transplantation in South Africa," says Fabian.

For the full article please visit:

<http://www.wits.ac.za/news/latest-news/research-news/2018/2018-10/worlds-first-intentional-hiv-liver-transplant.html>

## STEVE BIKO CENTRE FOR BIOETHICS



Safia Mahomed is pictured above with Profs Labuschaigne (right) and Behrens (left).

### Graduation from the Centre

In July, Safia Mahomed graduated with a PhD in Bioethics and Health Law from the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics. She was supervised by Professors Kev-

in Behrens, Melody Labuschaigne and Ian Sanne. The title of the thesis was: "An ethico-legal framework for the regulation of biobanks in South Africa".

### Staff Achievements

Dr Mary O'Grady attended the South Africa National TB Conference in Durban from 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> June.

Dr Mary O'Grady also attended the "International TB Symposium 2018: Bridging the TB and HIV Communities" held in Amsterdam on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July.

Dr Mary O'Grady attended the "International AIDS Conference 2018 held in Amsterdam from 23<sup>rd</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> July.

Lizeka Tandwa was accepted and attended four week residential Public Management and Governance programme in September. The programme is under the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Southern Africa Regional Leadership Center, implemented by the UNISA. She attend the full Programme from the 3<sup>rd</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> of September.

Dr Christopher Wareham was invited to give a presentation in Belfast at a Conference on Chronic Illness on the 6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> of September.

As a member of the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO, Professor Dhai attend a meeting for UNESCO held in Paris on the 8<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> September.

Professor Ames Dhai has been appointed as an Honorary Professor in College of Human & Health Sciences at Swansea University for a period of 3years.

Professor Ames Dhai was invited to present at the World Medical Association (WMA) Ethics Conference in Iceland on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October.

Professor Ames Dhai attended the Council of International Organization of Medical Scientists (CIOMS) as part of a Working Group on "Practical Guidance to Clinical Product Development Research in Resource - Limited Settings" in Estonia on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October.

Professor Kevin Behrens was invited and attended a conference in Stellenbosch hosted by the International Association for



Ethics Education. The conference was entitled “Long Walk to Ethics Education” and it was on the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> of October.

Dr Safia Mahomed was invited and accepted an Honorary Senior Lecture appointment at the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics.

Ms Bonnie Venter was invited to speak at Helen Joseph Hospital (Psychology Department) on HIV, Ethics and the Law on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September.

Ms Bonnie Venter is the acting Founder and Director of Legal Affairs for a new NPO, Tell (Transplant Education for Living Legacies). Tell was founded to encourage potential donors to inform their families of their wishes to donate their organs and to educate South Africans (both the public and healthcare professionals) on organ and tissue donation. They officially launched on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October.

As a Member of the Board of the South Africa Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA), Professor Ames Dhai has attended Board and Committee meetings of SAHPRA.

Professor Ames Dhai and Ms Samkelo Nsibandé were invited to form part of the Social and Human Sciences Committee housed in the Department of Basic Education.

### Faculty Lecturer “Human Rights as Sovereignty: Debunking the Myth of Progressive Realization in Relation to the Right to Health” by Mr Kayum Ahmed

The right to health is intrinsically connected to the right to life and human dignity since these rights are essentially about life and death. However, while the rights to life and human dignity are listed as non-derogable rights in the South African Constitution, the right to health is limited by available state resources and subject to progressive realization.



L - R: Professor Ames Dhai and Mr Kayum Ahmed

### Annual Steve Biko Bioethics Lecture

The Annual Steve Biko Bioethics Lecture was held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September at the School of Public Health Resource Centre and it was entitled: “Health Care in Crisis”.

Our guest speakers were Professor Glenda Gray, President of the South African Medical Research (SAMRC) and Professor Billy Ramokgopa, Clinical Head – Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital / Head of Division of Orthopedic Surgery.

Professor Glenda Gray spoke about “The Canary in the Mine” and Professor Billy Ramokgopa spoke about “Rescuing the Canary in the Mine”.

This talk was well attended by people in industry, academics as well as guests from The South African National Commission for UNESCO.



L- R: Professor Billy Ramokgopa, Professor Saraladevi Naicker and Professor Glenda Gray

## SCHOOL OF CLINICAL MEDICINE TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE 2018

The School of Clinical Medicine Transformation Committee (SOCM TC) has just completed a year after its constitution in July 2017. Membership of the committee was drawn from all categories of staff in the school including pre- and post-graduate students. Members have been assigned specific focus areas to champion in line with the 8 priority areas of the University. For monitoring purpose, reporting of progress on quarterly basis through Faculty of Health Sciences Transformation Committee to Transformation Steering Committee is thematic.

The 4 sequential themes are;

- 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting: Teaching, Learning and the Curriculum.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting: Research and Post-graduate Affairs.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting: Student Life, Experience and Institutional Culture.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting: Staff Equity, Experience and Institutional Culture

The School of Clinical Medicine is the largest school in the Faculty of Health Sciences of University of the Witwatersrand. It is understandable therefore that the school would have challenges around transformation as it is happening in communities across the country. The Transformation Committee prioritized advocacy for compliance with rules and being proactive. Members of SOCM TC have been allocated specific areas to champion and to be contact persons.

The list below is of leaders of champions for the focus areas;

- Professor Ames Dhai: Join Staff.  
 Dr. Richard Cooke: Pre-graduate Students.  
 Professor Gita Naidu/Dr. Hopewell Ntsinjana: Post-graduate Students.  
 Mr. Ramajwe Tseki/MSc: Professional and Administration Staff.  
 Dr. Thifheli Luvhengo/MSc: Academic Staff.

Professor Daynia Ballot our Head of School and her team have demonstrated strong commitment to drive genuine and all-inclusive transformation in the school. Judging from where we started, significant progress has been made in a number of areas. It is because of work done by many as a collective in the background that 2018 has up to now been a relatively smooth year, academically. Support given to pre-

graduate students and relationship between staff and students in the school has improved significantly. Steps continue to be made to ensure our students are exposed to a similar training and assessment across various training platforms. Programs for early identification of students at risk have also been started.

Majority of postgraduate students of SOCM are completing the MMeds and PhDs timely.

There has also been a significant improvement in the diversity of individuals involved in research including PhD studies.

Members of SOCM TC participate actively in all activities of Staffing and Promotion, Recruitment and Selection and Naming Committees. Our advocacy role is recognized and appreciated by the school. A lot has been done to ensure promotion and selection criteria are applied uniformly. Clear career path and training programs for Professional, Administration and Technical Staff are being developed. Very soon workforce analysis across all departments, divisions, entities and units will be started. It will be followed by implementation of personal development plan for each and every employee.

As SOCM TC we are confident that our school will be the first one to assist every staff member to be promotable within a 4-5 year cycle. The School has successfully launched a mentorship program. The relationship between the School and hospitals, and therefore Gauteng Department of Health has improved significantly.

Significant challenges remain in areas such as accommodation for students from disadvantaged background and capacity of Office of Students Support to deal with an ever increasing number of students who have psychological and/or psychiatric problems.

Other challenges include delay in clearly defined career path for professional staff, staff members who are still very sceptical regarding existence of transformation in the School and

Faculty, persistent anger, a significant number of members of joint staff are not research active (will therefore likely not be promotable), preference of homogeneity by students and staff; and that the SOCM TC is not visible.

The glass is however filling up and we are moving forward to be the best and most caring school in the Faculty, Wits and RSA.

In 2019 SOCM TC will prioritize visibility, diversity workshops, implementation of transformation committees in all our departments, divisions and entities; and advocacy for personal development programs. We call on everyone to be an agent for equal treatment and prosperity for all in our School, Faculty and Wits.

Prof Thifheli Luvhengo

**NRF RATING AWARDED TO DR CHRISTOPHER WAREHAM – STEVE BIKO CENTRE FOR BIOETHICS**

Christopher Wareham was awarded a Y1 rating on the basis that he is within 5 years of the award of his PhD, he is recognised as having the potential to establish himself as a researcher of considerable international standing, and/or has the potential to become a future leader in his field, on the basis of the quality and impact of his recent research outputs.

Christopher received his doctorate from the European School of Molecular Medicine and the University of Milan. He joined the Steve Biko Centre for Bioethics in 2014, where he is currently Head of the MSc Research Methods Unit and Head of Undergraduate Studies in Bioethics. He also sits on the Research Ethics Committee (Non-medical) of the

University of the Witwatersrand.

Christopher has published internationally in bioethics and medical ethics. His core area of research is the Ethics of Ageing, a subfield that is increasingly central given rapid demographic changes occurring throughout the world. His work has previously been awarded a European School of Molecular Medicine Doctoral Fellowship, and a National Research Fund Innovation Scholarship.



Dr Christopher Wareham

**PAEDIATRIC RESEARCH DAY**

The Paediatric Research Day was held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital. Dr Tanusha Ramdin, a Senior Consultant Neonatologist at Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital, attended on behalf of the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health.

A variety of topics (including short- and long-term outcomes of HIE, diarrheal disease, HIV infection, Listeriosis, and pneumococcal vaccines) were covered through presentations and posters (electronic). The research conducted and presented was of excellent quality, and comparable to some of the best Paediatric research available around the world. The presentations were of a very

high standard, and all those who participated acquitted themselves exceptionally. Neonatal research, in particular, was predominant in the second session of the Research Day. Prizes were awarded for the best research presented. Dr Tendai Mabhandi was awarded second place in the *Best Registrar Research* category for his study entitled “Growth of ELBW infants in a middle income country,” while Dr Euphrasia Makgatho scooped first place in the same category for “Trends in diarrheal disease hospitalisation in a Paediatric short stay ward 2002 – 2016.” Dr Karl Technau was awarded *Best Consultant Research* for his work entitled “Mental health and socio-economic screening programmes in an adolescent HIV clinic – outcomes in relation to health indicators.”



L-R: Dr Euphrasia Makgatho, Dr Kebashni Thandrayen, Prof Sithembi-so Velaphi

Research day was a huge success overall, and a credit to all our doctors and researchers. Special thanks to Dr Kebashni Thandrayen for organising and coordinating the programme and the day. We look forward to attending the next one, and more superlative research.

**EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Registration Now Open



**GAUTENG NEONATAL CLINICIAN'S FORUM SYMPOSIUM FOR DOCTORS AND NURSES**

**SATURDAY, 26 JAN 2019**

TIME:  
08h00 - 17h30

COST:  
R250 per person

VENUE:  
7 York Road  
Medical School, Parktown

RSVP:  
rita.kruger@wits.ac.za  
Tel: 011 717 2038




**SUBMISSION OF CONTENT:**

The newsletter will be published bimonthly and we welcome all content, staff (academic & professional) achievements, profiles, and student events and achievements. Photos are always welcome. Should you wish to submit any content for publication, kindly send it to:

**Rita.Kruger@wits.ac.za** (Please note that due to space restrictions content may be edited)

