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In our front page feature, UNAIDS announces a new scientific expert panel on HIV at a recent UNAIDS—CAPRISA consultation to discuss the “Mississippi baby” and its implications.

We share Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim’s closing speech at the Pasteur Institute discussing the key steps towards an AIDS-free generation on page two.

The second article in our series on CAPRISA’s extensive training programme appears on page three.



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## UNAIDS establishes Scientific Expert Panel

**Professor Salim Abdool Karim is appointed to chair new panel, which will advise UNAIDS on new scientific discoveries and evidence and convene a series of scientific consultations to inform the global response to HIV**

**D**uring a two-day Symposium held in Durban

in early June 2013, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Dr Michel Sidibé, announced the establishment of a new international scientific

expert panel on HIV and the appointment of Professor Salim Abdool Karim to act as chair on the panel.

In response to the announcement, Professor Abdool Karim said: “Science has the power to illuminate the future path to defeating AIDS. I am humbled by this appointment and look forward to this new challenge.”

The new panel will provide strategic advice to UNAIDS on the relevance of new research findings, how policies can be adjusted and expedited into implementation programmes, with a view to preventing new HIV infections and improving the lives of people living with HIV.



Dr Michel Sidibé (left) and Professor Salim Abdool Karim at the announcement of the UNAIDS Scientific Expert Panel

Attended by government officials, scientists, funding organisations, public health professionals, non-government organisations and civil society, the Symposium was convened to discuss the theme “*Scientific advances from ‘Mississippi baby’: Implications for public health programmes on mother-to-child transmission of HIV*”.

The main objective of the meeting was to discuss ways to improve early diagnosis of HIV in new-born children and the implications of starting them on antiretroviral therapy early.

This followed the breakthrough finding earlier this year of a baby who had been



## AIDS-free generation — key steps

Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim’s closing remarks at the Pasteur Institute’s *30 Years of HIV Science* in Paris discussed the research and technological achievements in HIV-prevention that since the discovery of the virus in 1983.

The range of available options have certainly changed the HIV-prevention landscape. However, an effective vaccine is still elusive, despite some promising advances. Our hope for a cure continues to be ignited by findings made public about *The Berlin Patient* and *The Mississippi Baby*.

The three key obstacles to an AIDS-free generation still remain, namely: 1) The failure of health systems to convert efficacious treatment and prevention intervention into effectiveness; 2) The growing number of HIV infections in key populations (young women in Africa, MSM and IDUs); and 3) The barriers to patients presented by stigma and discrimination.

The key learnings over the years have shown that the fight against HIV/AIDS is a complex one which offers no quick fixes.

Given the diversity of the epidemic, populations and transmissions modes, interventions need to be planned appropriately. Whilst research and innovation to develop new technologies are key to addressing the needs of the infected (treatment and cure) and the uninfected (vaccines, microbicides, PrEP), the partnerships that facilitate this work are also critical.

In conclusion, she prioritised health systems strengthening, efficacious prevention in key populations, timeous ART provision, and high ARV adherence as part of the efforts to address HIV/AIDS.

Continued research and development should focus on new diagnostics, safe and effective vaccines, prevention approaches for young women, long-acting/slow release ARVs, and a cure.



Quarraisha Abdool Karim at the Pasteur Institute

## CAPRISA Happenings

### Fellowship for Muki Shey

CAPRISA post-doctoral research fellow, Muki Shey has received the CIU Trust Travelling Fellowship in Immunology awarded by the University of Oxford and the MRC.

The award will enable Dr Shey to spend time in the UK to carry out his research.

### Visits to CAPRISA

Dr Robert Coombs of the AIDS Clinical Trials Group delivered a CAPRISA guest lecture entitled *New challenges in HIV laboratory diagnosis*.



Colleagues from AVAC, Desmond Tutu Foundation, Gates Foundation and NACOSA visited CAPRISA’s eThekweni Clinical Research Site in June.



Back row left to right: Louis & Siobhan Malone (Gates Foundation), Nnando Yola (Desmond Tutu Foundation)  
Front row: Manju Chatani (AVAC), Lulu Nair (CAPRISA), Kay Marshall (AVAC), Judith Annakie-Eriksen (CAPRISA), Khanyisa Dunjwa (NACOSA)

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“functionally cured” of HIV.

Dr Hannah Gay, who treated the baby, also participated in the Symposium to present details of the case history with the other attendees.

The members of the UNAIDS Scientific Expert Panel will be announced in coming weeks.



Front row left to right: Quarraisha Abdool Karim, Chewe Luo, Yogan Pillay, Deborah Persaud, Michel Sidibé, Salim Abdool Karim, Hannah Gay, Nathan Shaffer, Shaffiq Essajee. Back row left to right: Pravi Moodley, Mbulawa Mugabe, Chalone Savant, Zenawit Melesse, Karusa Kiragu, Nigel Garrett, Peter Godfrey-Faussett, Catherine Sozi, Hoosen (Jerry) Coovadia, Michael Eliya-Phiri, Dorothy Mbori-Ngacha, Timothy Cressey, Vuyokazi Gonyela, Mahesh Mahalingam, Lise Ellyin



## SA AIDS Gallery



Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe (left) is pictured with Professor Salim Abdool Karim after the closing plenary at SAAIDS held in Durban in July 2013



A media briefing jointly presented by Mail & Guardian/Bhekisa Health Journalism, CAPRISA and AVAC discusses the introduction of new non-surgical medical male circumcision devices in South Africa. From left: Judith Annakie-Eriksen (CAPRISA), Mr Gaph Phatedi (CHAPS), Dr Thobile Mben-gashe (Department of Health), Dr Nlotleng Mabena (CHAPS)



CAPRISA community liaison officer, Londiwe Luthuli, demonstrates to conference delegates, the use of the tenofovir gel applicator with the aid of a pelvic model

## Parliament briefing

CAPRISA and FACTS representatives attended the South African Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Science and Technology meeting on 5 June 2013 to present an update on the FACTS 001 (tenofovir gel study), CAPRISA 008 (tenofovir gel implementation gel study) and CAPRISA 009 (treatment options after seroconversion on tenofovir study).

The Committee indicated their support of the tenofovir gel studies and applauded CAPRISA and the FACTS team for their work.

- Leila Mansoor

## CAPRISA Training Programme

The CAPRISA Training Programme is central to the organisation's long-term goal to build the next generation of scientific leadership. To achieve this goal, training in regulatory requirements, research methods, epidemiology, clinical trial conduct, and—most importantly—focussed specialised training is undertaken.

### CAPRISA Training Sub-committee

The committee members are:

- Professor Quarraisha Abdool Karim (chair), Prevention and Epidemiology and Microbicide Research
- Ms Marian Swart (co-chair), Administration, Finance, Compliance and Human Resources
- Ms Cheryl Baxter, Regulatory Training
- Ms Anneke Grobler, Information Technology, Statistics and Data Management
- Dr Carl Montague, Vulindlela CRS
- Dr Jo-Anne Passmore, Dr Derseree Archary and Ms Natasha Samsunder, mucosal immunology, diagnostic laboratory, and CAPRISA sample repository
- Dr Nesri Padayatchi, the support cores
- Dr Ayesha Kharsany, Prevention and Epidemiology and Microbicide research
- Dr Nigel Garrett, Vaccine and Pathogene-

sis research and the eThekweni Clinical Research Site

- Dr Kogieleum Naidoo, HIV and TB Treatment research and the eThekweni Clinical Research Site

### CAPRISA Staff Development

As part of professional development CAPRISA staff are encouraged to register for higher degrees and courses relevant to their job description. A substantial component of the training is through mentorship of mid-level and junior investigators who are assigned to either senior investigators or co-leaders to support their development as scientists and to assist in their academic career paths.

The training sub-committee is responsible for developing and designing the courses, content and assessment of these and whether they address the operational and functional requirements of individual staff and CAPRISA. In-house, external courses and workshops relevant to research studies are conducted to ensure that all staff are fully compliant. Workshops and training on procedural requirements such as Conflict of Interest, Responsible Conduct of Research, Research Meth-

odology and training for operational requirements such as Good Clinical Practice and Good Clinical and Laboratory Practice training are routinely undertaken at least twice a year. Protocol specific training for site staff are conducted prior to study initiation and annually or as and when required.

Clinical Research sites conduct a weekly, fortnightly or monthly journal club to remain updated with current information in the field. The full group Scientific Academic Forum held monthly is an opportunity for staff to be updated on the latest technologies, innovations or discussions of topical ground breaking published research. These meetings are key in ensuring that staff remain up to date with the literature in their field of research.

Specialised workshops are held regularly. These workshops are generally multidisciplinary with contributions from local and international academic and research organisations with the primary goal of enhancing capacity and highlight developments in specialised areas such as Mucosal Immunology, Statistics, Regulatory Requirements for Clinical Trials and Advanced Epidemiology.

- Marian Swart & Ayesha Kharsany



## Scientific papers published in 2013



24\* **Cohen GM, Werner L, Gengiah S, Naidoo K.** Role of Education in HIV Clinical Outcomes in a Tuberculosis Endemic Setting. *Journal of the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care* 00(0) 1-7. E pub ahead of print: DOI: 10.1177/2325957413488185

25 **Abdool Karim Q, Cheryl Baxter C, Abdool Karim S.** Topical Microbicides—What's New? *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome* 2013;63:S144–S149 (doi: 10.1097/QAI.0b013e3182986f80)

26 **Mlisana K, Sobieszczyk M, Werner L, Feinstein A, van Loggerenberg F, Naicker N, Williamson C, Garrett N.** Challenges of Diagnosing Acute HIV-1 Subtype C Infection in African Women: Performance of a Clinical Algorithm and the Need for Point-of-Care Nucleic-Acid Based Testing. *PLoS One* 2013; 8(4): e62928. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0062928

27 Zelnick JR, Gibbs A, Loveday M, **Padayatchi N, O'Donnell MR.** Health-care workers' perspectives on workplace safety, infection control, and drug-resistant tuberculosis in a high-burden HIV setting. *Journal of Public Health Policy* 2013; doi:10.1057/jphp.2013.20

28 **Abdool Karim SS.** HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis in injecting drug users. *Lancet* 2013 381(9883):2060-2

29 **Abdool Karim SS, Baxter C.** Microbicides for Prevention of HIV Infection: Clinical Efficacy Trials. *Curr Top Microbiol Immunol.* 2013 May 22.DOI: 10.1007/82\_2013\_330

\*continuation from previous newsletter

## Scientific Reviews

Abstracts submitted for review		Manuscripts submitted for review		Ancillary studies submitted for review	
Total#	Cumulative <sup>^</sup>	Total#	Cumulative <sup>^</sup>	Total#	Cumulative <sup>^</sup>
0	298	1	166	1	50

# for month, <sup>^</sup> since committee initiation

## Conference & Workshop Reminders

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

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](http://www.caprisa.org)

Conference	Dates	Deadlines		Website
		Abstracts	Registration	
<b>7th IAS Conference</b> — Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	30 Jun-3 Jul 2013	7 May 2013	Closed	<a href="http://www.ias2013.org/">www.ias2013.org/</a>
<b>AIDS Vaccine 2013</b> — Barcelona, Spain	7-10 Oct 2013	11 Aug 2013	22 Sep 2013	<a href="http://www.vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2013/">www.vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2013/</a>
<b>New HIV Vaccine &amp; Microbicide Advocacy Society: Biomedical HIV Prevention Forum</b> — Abuja, Nigeria	18-20 Nov 2013	TBA	TBA	<a href="http://www.info@nhvmas-ng.org">www.info@nhvmas-ng.org</a>
<b>AIDS Vaccine 2013</b> — Barcelona, Spain	7-10 Oct 2013	11 Aug 2013	22 Sep 2013	<a href="http://www.vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2013/">www.vaccineenterprise.org/conference/2013/</a>
<b>17th International Conference on HIV &amp; STIs in Africa</b> — Cape Town, South Africa	7-11 December 2013	5 July 2013	22 Nov 2013	<a href="http://www.icasa2013southafrica.org/">www.icasa2013southafrica.org/</a>
<b>HIV Research for Prevention 2014: AIDS Vaccine, Microbicide &amp; ARV-based Prevention Science</b> — Cape Town, South Africa	28-31 Oct 2013	TBA	TBA	<a href="http://www.hivr4p.org">www.hivr4p.org</a>