

June 2013



## Building a sense of common purpose for Faculty research

In an interview, Deputy Dean of Research, Prof Tania Douglas, speaks about her new role and priorities (p3)

Tania Douglas was appointed as Deputy Dean of Research in June 2013. She completed degrees in electrical/electronic and biomedical engineering at the University of Cape Town, Vanderbilt University and the University of Strathclyde, and conducted postdoctoral research in image-processing at the Japan Broadcasting Corporation in Tokyo. She has been a Junior Associate of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, an Honorary Senior Research Fellow of University College London, a Humboldt Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Neurological Research in Cologne, and is a Fellow of the South African Academy of Engineering. She recently completed an executive MBA at UCT. She is the Director of the MRC/UCT Medical Imaging Research Unit and a Professor of Biomedical Engineering in the Department of Human Biology; in these capacities, she has been concerned with education and research that promote the contextually appropriate use of technology to address public health challenges.



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## DEAN'S CORNER

Much has happened in the two months since our last newsletter. We are all relieved that Professor Cyril Karabus has returned home safely, freed of all charges against him. He was recently given a hearty welcome by his colleagues in the Department of Child and Adolescent Health. I would like to use this opportunity to commend Prof Heather Zar and colleagues in the Faculty for mobilising support for Prof Karabus and his family throughout their ordeal.

We recently said thank you and farewell to former Deputy Dean of Research, Prof Karen Barnes, who has returned to her departmental activities and malaria research. We also warmly welcomed the new Deputy Dean of Research, Prof Tania Douglas, who gives a bit more insight into her new job, (page 3). She will be assisted by Prof Gregory Hussey, who has recently been appointed as Senior Research Advisor to the Faculty.

One of our priorities is increasing our student numbers, as part of the national drive to increase the number of doctors in our country. This includes planning for new buildings and off-campus sites, looking at more cost-effective ways of teaching and expanding our clinical teaching platform. An exciting development in this area is our video-conferencing facility and the recent live-streaming of an in-theatre procedure at Groote Schuur Hospital to doctors at our training centre at Red Cross Children's War Memorial Hospital (page 10).

These initiatives tie in very well with our focus on expanding our mixed mode and distance learning programme to increase access to high quality training for health professionals, particularly those off-campus and elsewhere in Africa.

These are but some of the exciting new developments that the Faculty is responding to so that we continue to be relevant in this dynamic environment. In engaging on the sometimes complex issues confronting us, we believe the perspectives of as many Faculty colleagues will enrich how we respond. Please participate in our monthly Dean's Forum sessions, which are an opportunity for all staff to voice their views.

Our incoming Dean, Prof Wim de Villiers, will be joining us on 1 August. We look forward to introducing him to our Faculty community, and request your patience as we orientate him on all our teaching, research and service activities.

This will be the last newsletter during my tenure as Interim Dean, and I wish to thank you for your ongoing support and keeping the Faculty flag flying high. Enjoy the read, and don't forget to keep sending us news, and giving us feedback on our newsletter.

SUE KIDSON



### THE FACULTY HAS A VERY STRONG RESEARCH PROFILE

- A strong publications record both within UCT and in comparison with health sciences faculties in other South African universities
- 2011:
  - accredited journal output units for 2011 were 67% more than 2006 and 20% more than in 2010.
  - Figure accounts for 40% of the University's total
- 2012:
  - more than 1,500 postgraduate FHS students
  - 99 registered postdoctoral fellows, over a third of UCT's total of 282
- Have 10 of UCT's 33 NRF A-rated scientists

# Building a sense of common purpose for Faculty RESEARCH



Prof Tania Douglas and her research support team, from left, Dr Yolande Harley, Esmari Taylor, and Carlette Hlungwani

## Interview with Deputy Dean of Research

### ***FN: Congratulations on your new position as Deputy Dean of Research. Can you explain what the mandate of the job is?***

TD: The role is broadly to support and enhance the Faculty's research enterprise, in a way that ensures that our research is relevant to the local health care sector, yet remains internationally excellent.

### ***FN: What skills and experience do you bring to your new role?***

TD: I've been an academic at UCT for almost 13 years. I have built a research team, coordinated a postgraduate programme, taught undergraduates, supervised many postgraduates, forged collaborations with a range of partners, and served on various committees. In addition, my research in biomedical engineering has spanned a number of disciplines and has focused on various points in the research translation pipeline. This combination of experiences gives me a broad understanding of the academic enterprise and hopefully enables me to deal with the diversity that exists in the Faculty. I have also recently completed an executive MBA, which has helped me to cross the scholarship-management divide.

### ***FN: What excites you about this new job?***

TD: It provides an opportunity to understand the inner workings as well as the broader strategic considerations of a very complex Faculty and to play a systemic role in supporting the Faculty and the University.

### ***FN: What are your goals for FHS research, and what needs to happen to realise this?***

TD: Most certainly implementing the Faculty's research strategies, which include improving research infrastructure,

building capacity, enabling research translation into health impact and encouraging collaboration. My predecessors have put a lot of thought and sweat into developing the research strategy over a number of years, and it must now be executed. In the process I would like to see the Faculty's researchers develop a sense of common purpose that transcends the boundaries of their research projects and reaches beyond the Faculty to the broader University.

### ***FN: As you orientate yourself and settle into your new post, what are your immediate priorities?***

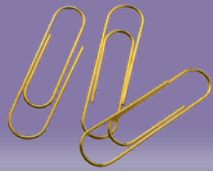
TD: My first priority is to choose a set of priorities to address from among the multitude of challenges facing the Faculty in the research domain.

### ***FN: You work with a small team to support you. Can you tell us a bit more about them?***

TD: Yes, there is a small but extremely busy team of three - Dr Yolande Harley, Research Strategy Project Manager; Carlette Hlungwani, Research Administration Manager; and Esmari Taylor, Research Administrator. They ensure that special projects and research support functions run smoothly. (It is important to point out that they do not write grant proposals on behalf of researchers - a common request!)

One of our current priorities is to support the establishment of a cross-cutting platform for research data management, which Faculty researchers have highlighted, and the University has recognised, as a critical need.





# notice board



WELCOME HOME,

PROFESSOR CYRIL KARABUS

Professor Cyril Karabus has returned to South Africa following months of emotional trauma as a result of the UAE's lengthy court case against him. He was recently treated to a welcome lunch by his old colleagues in the Department of Child and Adolescent Health.

Congratulations!

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SHAJILA SINGH

NEW HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

HEALTH AND REHABILITATION SCIENCES

SAVE THE DATE!

Tuesday, 2 July 2013, at 16h30

## DEAN'S OPEN FORUM

In order to enhance participation and debate in the Faculty on matters of general interest or controversy, all staff are invited to join our monthly Open Forum. At the forthcoming meeting, there will be a **DEBATE** on

### 'DIVISIONS IN THE FACULTY'

#### Discussants

Prof Colin Cook      Prof Lorna Martin      Dr Reno Morar  
Prof Rodney Ehrlich      A/Prof Nicola

#### Discussion points

- What are "divisions" and how did they come about?
- Do we need more "divisions", and if we do, how do we enable their birth?
- What problems do division heads have?
- Should faculty restrict the numbers of divisions, and if so, why?

#### VENUE

Postgraduate Seminar Room 2, Barnard Fuller Building

Enquiries: nazli.marais@uct.ac.za

SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday July 16, 2013

## Darwin Seminar

You are invited to attend a FREE lecture on

"WHAT'S RACE GOT TO DO WITH IT?  
INTERSECTIONS OF RACE AND GENOMICS FROM  
RESEARCH TO PRACTICE"

### Dr Alexandra Shields

Associate Professor of Medicine,  
Harvard Medical School  
Director, Harvard/MGH Center on Genomics, Vulnerable Populations,  
and Health Disparities

**Venue:** New Learning Centre, Health Sciences  
Campus,  
University of Cape Town, Medical Faculty,  
Anzio Road, Observatory  
**Time:** 5:30pm for 6pm  
**RSVP:** [mpho.mogotsi@uct.ac.za](mailto:mpho.mogotsi@uct.ac.za)  
021 460 6995



## New post will support and integrate cancer research in Faculty

"... critical for the advancement of the faculty's cancer research agenda," says newly appointed Director.

Associate Professor Jennifer Moodley was appointed in May 2013 as the first Director of Cancer Research in the Faculty on a 5-year contract funded by the Cancer Research Trust. She is expected to drive the creation of an integrated comprehensive cancer research programme in the Faculty, an initiative considered critical for advancing the cancer research agenda in the Faculty.

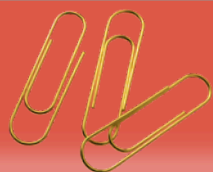
"My vision is that it will become an internationally recognised centre of excellence at the forefront of research endeavors to address the alarming cancer burden in South Africa, Africa and beyond," says Prof Moodley, a public health specialist with expertise in health systems research, epidemiology, policy development and women's health. Having focused particularly on the

prevention and control of cervical cancer, she currently serves on the Ministerial Committee on the Prevention and Control of Cancer and on the National Department of Health Cervical Cancer Task Team.

Prof Moodley says the cancer research focus within the Faculty will be on the most prevalent cancers of South Africa and Africa. It is a misconception, she says, that cancer is a disease of wealthy developed countries. In 2010 there were 8 million deaths from cancer worldwide, 55 % of these deaths occurring in developing countries. The global cancer burden is projected to increase dramatically. By 2030, 60-70% of the estimated 21.4 million global new cancer cases per year are predicted to occur in poorer developing countries that are least able to detect and treat cancer.

In the face of this humanitarian crisis, we have to look critically at what we know and don't know about cancer, what we are doing (and not doing) and what we can do better, she says.

Prof Moodley firmly believes that a bench to bedside and beyond approach will foster the development of innovative, relevant solutions and will make a significant contribution to reducing the death and suffering associated with cancer on the African continent and beyond. Her short term plans include conducting a situational analysis of cancer research at UCT, setting up a cancer advisory committee and developing a 5 year strategic plan. She is currently working with an interim cancer advisory team in the short term.



# notice board



Left to right: Prof Robert Wilkinson, Prof Helen McIlleron, Emmanuel Chigutsa (PhD graduate) and Dr Yolande Harley

## POST-DOCTORAL celebration - 5 June 2013

A celebratory cocktail function was held to acknowledge and congratulate 23 candidates graduating with doctoral degrees on the 6 June 2013. The function has become a popular bi-annual event, hosted by the Postgraduate office led by Adri Winkler. Graduands, their partners, supervisors and mentors attended.

Prof Peter Meissner (Chairman of the Doctoral & Master's Committee), paid tribute to their success and encouraged them to continue on their path of learning and to always remember their alma mater, as alumni of UCT.

Each candidate received a personalised, engraved gift as a memento of this milestone in their careers, said Lorraine MacDonald, who organised the event.

## LATEST RESEARCH FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES !!!

- ✓ UCT Postdoctoral Research Fellowships 2014
- ✓ DAAD-NRF In-Country Master's and Doctoral Scholarship Programme for 2014

See Research Funding link:  
<http://www.health.uct.ac.za/research/funding/>

## HIGH MORTALITY HIV-FUNGAL INFECTIONS – leading international researchers meeting a FIRST

A workshop to be held at the IIDMM from 3 to 5 July 2013 will bring together, for the first time, leading international researchers in the understudied field of fungal infections that cause disease and death in people living with HIV infections, and which has become a public health priority. Over 100 participants are expected, with some 30 leading experts that cover critical areas within these fields, including from Africa, Asia and Latin America where fungal diseases in AIDS-infected individuals pose significant health problems.

Enquiries: [satima.saban@uct.ac.za](mailto:satima.saban@uct.ac.za)



Some of the doctors in the Department of Child and Adolescent Health who passed the recent College of Medicine exams.

## 1st year student receives Outstanding Cambridge Learners Awards - Top in the World

Abdulkader Elyas, a first year MBChB student, who completed his Cambridge Advanced A' Level examinations in Nov 2012 in Botswana, has been awarded the Outstanding Cambridge Learners Awards - Top in the World by the University of Cambridge International Examinations, for the highest mark in the world for 'A' Level Biology. He will be travelling to his alma mater in Botswana, where he was schooling, to receive this award in June.





The project team, from left: Andile Nofemela, Retsilisitsoe Moholisa, Hlumani Ndlovu, Agano Kiravu, Aron Abera, Khethelo Xulu

## Africa month fundraiser for DIKAKAPA – EVERYDAY HEROES to inspire youth

In celebration of Africa month, a fundraiser was held at the MAC Club for an outreach project to inspire school youth to use education to achieve their dreams. The well-attended function saw students singing local music from their home countries, and many dressed in cultural attire.

The initiative of a group of mostly FHS students, the aim of the *Dikakapa - Everyday Heroes Initiative* is to foster a culture of success and excellence in education amongst the youth of South Africa, particularly those from under-resourced communities. It does so by conducting high school visits where the group interacts, motivates and encourages learners to make education their first priority.

"Since we come from similar backgrounds, we share our stories with the learners in the hope that they will be inspired by them, and demonstrate that their future trajectory is not necessarily determined by their present circumstances, and it is the choices that one makes today that have a huge impact on one's future," says Andile Nofemela, one of the group members.

The group is raising funds to produce a booklet of inspiring stories written by 26 young South Africans from all walks of life who have achieved considerable success within their careers. It is hoped the stories convey the importance of hard work, discipline, honesty and perseverance for achieving their dreams.

Anyone wishing to get involved in this project should contact the members at [deverydayheroes@gmail.com](mailto:deverydayheroes@gmail.com).

## Bike ride raises awareness... and dust



Because they would be raising funds for the Keiskamma Music Academy, along with the Kidzpositive ECD programme, the riders chose a route that, more or less, described the Treble clef in musical notation.

Paul Roux and Kirsten Donald of the Department of Child and Adolescent Health recently completed a 4<sup>th</sup> fundraising bike ride with friends to raise funds for disadvantaged children who need urgent assistance in order to achieve their optimal potential. The focus was on to create public awareness of the needs of HIV-infected children and adolescents and raise much needed funding for three Kidzpositive initiatives:

- **'Dust for Development'** for HIV-positive toddlers and pre-schoolers whose parents need support to provide optimal stimuli for early childhood development (ECD)
- **'Treble Tour'** to help talented young musicians gain the marks they deserve in their upcoming matriculation examinations in maths and science
- **'Ribbon Ride'** stems from the AIDS ribbon, which is red.

Their 340km cycle took them 4 days along a dusty route across the border of the Eastern Cape and Western Cape provinces, with little road traffic. The physical pain from the arduous challenge was worth it - they raised R40 000 for their efforts!

doctor of science congratulations honorary doctorate fellow kudos  
highest honours president's awards excellence kudos doctor of science  
honorary doctorate congratulations fellow highest honours president's  
awards excellence fellow excellence kudos congratulations awards

## INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION

### Two executive positions on Pan-African body

**Professors Bongani Mayosi** and **Karen Sliwa** have been appointed as the new president and treasurer of the Pan African Cardiac Society in Dakar, Senegal.

## SFARS AWARDS

### Top Soft-Funded Academic and Research Staff (SFARS) Awards

In recognition of the significant role played by soft-funded staff and with support from a Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Award and the UCT Faculty of Health Sciences, a funding call 'Top soft-funded academic and research staff awards' was sent out in the Faculty.

Fourty four applications were received and judged in two categories: Lecturer / Senior Lecturer (or Research Officer) and Associate Professor / Professor. An independent committee representing clinical science, basic science and public health, and including a member from outside the Faculty, reviewed the applications.

The award, intended to support the salary of the applicant for 2 years, was given to the following researchers:

#### ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR/PROFESSOR CATEGORY

**Linda-Gail Bekker** (Desmond Tutu HIV Centre)  
**Landon Myer** (School of Public Health and Family Medicine)  
**Willem Hanekom** (South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative)  
**Helen McIlleron** (Division of Clinical Pharmacology)  
**Crick Lund** (Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health)

#### LECTURER/SENIOR LECTURER CATEGORY

**Thomas Scriba** (South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative)  
**Chris Colvin** (School of Public Health and Family Medicine)

To view a research synopsis for each awardee, you can follow this link:

<http://www.health.uct.ac.za/research/news/>

## FELLOW

### Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

**Prof David Coetzee** was elected as a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom through distinction. The award recognises his significant contribution to public health.

## AWARDS

### RWS Cheetham Award in Psychiatry

**Associate Prof Astrid Berg**, a senior lecturer and consultant in the Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry at the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital was unanimously chosen as the winner of the R W S CHEETHAM AWARD IN PSYCHIATRY for 2012.

The award is made annually by the Senate of The Colleges of Medicine of South Africa (CMSA) for a published essay of sufficient merit on trans- or cross-cultural psychiatry. The book "Connecting with South Africa – Cultural Communication and Understanding" addresses the question of the application of psychoanalysis and analytic therapies and arises out of the author's many years of experience of working in South African cross-cultural settings with parents and their infants and young children. A/Prof Berg takes the lead in clinical work with infants and young children and their parents at the hospital.

## CMSA GRADUATIONS

Congratulations to colleagues on their fine achievements at the recent CMSA graduation ceremony



# Inaugural Award for LIVER PHYSICIAN

Inaugural Discovery Foundation MGH  
fellowship Award to bolster  
academic medicine



Dr Neliswa Gogela, a physician based in the Department of Medicine, has become the first recipient of a R2-million grant that will enable her to study liver transplants at the world-renowned Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in Boston.

Announcing the inaugural Discovery Foundation MGH Fellowship Award aimed at bolstering academic medicine, Discovery Health CEO Dr Jonathan Broomberg, said there was an urgent need to “boost our diminishing pool of medical academics and develop global experts in the academic healthcare field.”

The average age of medical specialists in South Africa is 55, said Broomberg, which indicated an urgent need to develop a new generation.

The 36-year-old Gogela specialises in hepatology (liver disease) and is working toward her PhD. There is a severe shortage of hepatologists trained in liver transplantation in South Africa, as the burden of liver disease and the complexity of available treatments have increased significantly.

Gogela will spend a year as MGH where she will participate in around 50 liver transplants rather than the five she gets exposure to in Cape Town.

“We have a shortage of donors in South Africa, so we have the patients but not the livers for transplant,” said Gogela, who said the grant was sent by her guardian angel.

Gogela grew up in poverty in the Eastern Cape, under the strict eye of her grandmother while at eMazazini High School in Peddie.

“She would watch the first students come out of school and

count how long it took me to get home then, if I took long, I would have to explain why. So all I could do was study, study study,” said Gogela.

“I wanted to become a doctor. But the standard of education was poor. By March of our matric year, our maths, science and biology teachers had washed their hands of us. So we had to teach ourselves.”

Self-taught Gogela did well enough to be admitted to Medunsa to study medicine, and it was as an intern at Frere Hospital in East London that she developed her “‘ascination’ with the liver.

“A young patient was admitted almost comatose with Hepatitis C, which affects the liver. I did not know what to do and someone suggested I phone UCT for help. They suggested a lot of things to do, and I spent the weekend looking after the patient.”

After a week, the young woman had made a remarkable recovery and Gogela was hooked on the liver.

Dr Bongani Mayosi, head of medicine at UCT, then called and offered her a place at the university, where she is currently working.

Welcoming Gogela's award, Deputy Health Minister Dr Gwen Ramakgopa said she was “an inspiration” who was able to defy the racial, gender and rural barriers.

Gogela, her pharmacist husband Thibedi Mafokwane and sons Matome (8) and Itumeleng (16 months) will spend a year at MGH before returning to Cape Town, where Gogela aims to ‘give back what I have learnt’.

“One of the greatest healthcare challenges our country faces is a severe shortage of suitably skilled specialists. A critical link to address this need is academic specialists,” explained Dr Vincent Maphai, Chairperson of the Discovery Foundation. “Without a sufficient number of thought leaders and experts to teach our future healthcare specialists and leaders, South Africa cannot continue its proud legacy of excellence in healthcare.”

Acknowledgement: Health-e

## Clinical training gets VIRTUAL



Prof Thomson and his team in theatre prior to live-streaming the endoscopy.  
From Left: Jerome Corns HOD Faculty IT, Edwina Johnson, Shiraz Gabriel, Professor Sandie R Thomson, Shamimah Diedericks, Pumlanzi Msi

Historic Basic Endoscopy course links two venues across town allowing doctors specialising in surgery and internal medicine to observe procedures in real-time without having to be physically present in theatre

Prof Sandie Thomson, Head of the Division of Gastroenterology, and Professor Alp Numanoglu, Head of the Division of Paediatric Surgery, recently co-hosted a historic Basic Endoscopy course at UCT's Surgical Skills Training Centre based in the ICH Building at Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital. For the first time, the course included a live link to the Groote Schuur Hospital Endoscopy Unit, during which Prof Thomson demonstrated upper endoscopies in theatre as part of the hands-on training course jointly developed by both divisions.

The live streaming of an endoscopy was a first for the university in an academic teaching environment. Two different types of video conferencing technologies were used. "Polycom and DVTS (digital video technology systems) video conferencing technologies were both tested to ensure that we can offer solutions that can deliver High Definition graphics with minimum bandwidth use - ideal for use in rural areas," said Faculty ICT manager, Jerome Corns.

"We are constantly assessing technological opportunities to not only improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our medical training, but also respond to changing conditions in our environment," explains

Professor Thomson. The live link between the two venues across town allowed doctors specialising in surgery and internal medicine to observe procedures in real-time without having to be physically present in theatre, expanding the teaching platform on a virtual level.

"This was followed by a practical session in our state of the art surgical skills training centre, where the trainee doctors were given the opportunity to practise the procedures on porcine tissue models using equipment specially brought into the country by Karl Storz Endoscopy from Germany," adds Prof Numanoglu, who is credited with establishing this unique skills training centre with the help of funds raised by the Children's Hospital Trust. The centre is used for training our doctors and nurses across the country and the rest of Africa.

The potential for virtual clinical training in other health training programmes is exciting, and raises the possibility for expanding our clinical teaching programme beyond our campus into the rural areas in future. Already, video-conferencing facilities have allowed our undergraduate students doing their clinical training in Vredenberg to participate in lectures on campus without needing to travel to Cape Town for this.

PRODUCED BY THE DEVELOPMENT, COMMUNICATIONS, ALUMNI AND MARKETING DEPARTMENT, FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Please send your news items and contributions to the editor, to [linda.rhoda@uct.ac.za](mailto:linda.rhoda@uct.ac.za)

Acknowledgements: information and articles: Prof Jennifer Moodley, Health-e, Jean Morrisey, Paul Roux, Research Office team, Jerome Corns; proof-reading: Joan Tuff

## FIRST *Building Children's Nursing for Africa* Conference a huge success



The month of April was a fruitful and informative one for many nurses who provide specialised health care to some of the sickest children in sub-Saharan Africa.

Together with the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital, the School of Child and Adolescent Health's **Child Nurse Practice Development Initiative** played proud co-host to the first *Building Children's Nursing for Africa* Conference in Cape Town, 17 – 19<sup>th</sup> April. Over 140 delegates attended from 7 African nations and from as far afield as Madagascar and the UK. Three International guest speakers from Brazil, Kenya and the USA shared their expertise as it related to core conference themes.

Some of the dynamic themes included sparking a fresh interest in **research** among nurse practitioners, tackling the challenge of **partnering and communicating** with mothers in effective ways to assist optimal care provision for their child(ren), revisiting the invaluable role of **strong nursing leadership, implementing educational approaches** to assist nurses in their specialised work with particularly sick children.

Conference proceedings were kicked off by Dr Sandra Smith, from the Center for Health Literacy Promotion in the USA, at a preconference workshop. Smith presented on her on-going work in functional health literacy, linking this with a particularly simple communication strategy to facilitate parent's increased participation in health care encounters. Based on the growing pool of research that points to parental health literacy as a strong determinant of children's health, Smith advocates for nurses' intentional work with mothers to help them access and use health information and services. Workshop delegates learned simple tools for assessing parent's health literacy, along with a strategic, investigative approach for engaging primary care-givers in on-going conversations to purposefully align health intervention goals with each family's health goals.

Minette Coetzee, who leads the Child Nurse Practice Development Initiative, says that the call to conduct

CONTINUED ON P 12

### PhD research can lead to change in nursing practise.

A recent meeting of the Forum of University Nursing Deans in South Africa (FUNDISA) at the University of Pretoria on 8-9 May 2013 decided to expand and implement Dr Una Kyriacos' early warning score tool across the country as the focus of a large national nursing research programme.

Dr Kyriacos, from the Division of Nursing, was invited to present her work as a result of the growing focus on patient safety and how nurses contribute to this work. Dr Kyriacos presented the outcomes of her PhD work with nurses and how we use and interpret vital signs.

Her deep concern about how we could recognise deterioration in patients and the knowledge that early recognition of these warning signs and action can prevent serious adverse events led to her study. In a complex clinical study she validated, implemented, evaluated and clinically tested a modified early warning scoring tool in a number of local settings.

Her important work has the potential to shift patient care and contribute to better patient outcomes throughout South Africa. This large research programme will include adult and child early warning scores and could have a significant impact on patient outcomes nationwide.



# Genetics knit blankets for Little Angels

The Division of Human Genetics undertook a charity initiative to knit blankets for Little Angels place of safety in Westlake, Cape Town. Conceptualised and driven by Heather Whitehorn and Horacia Naidoo, the initiative inspired colleagues in the Division to knit 21 blankets - each comprising of approx. 40 hand-knitted squares.

"We were kindly assisted financially by Inqaba Biotech, a scientific company who provided balls of wool, knitting needles and 30 purchased blankets," says Heather. A total of 51 blankets were handed over to a group of very excited "Little Angels" on 27 May 2013, which will be used to keep them warm through the winter.

"I know that practically all of the family in Human Genetics (and some outside of it) contributed to the Blanket Project. Delivering the blankets to the 'kids shelter' in Westlake this afternoon with about 12 members of our Division was a special occasion," says head of genetics, Professor Raj Ramesar.

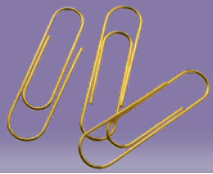
He said that being part of this project had touched many lives, in one way or another, and thanked Heather and Horacia for spearheading it.



CONTINUED FROM P 11

research that strengthens bedside nursing care was another exciting theme of the conference. "This was well aligned with the numerous papers that explored the emerging neuroscience and understanding of how infants and small children manage and heal in complex ways that are linked to their experience of stress and the presence of their mothers

and primary care givers. Conference delegates heard sound evidence encouraging them to avoid separating infants and small children from their mothers during health care encounters and periods of hospitalisation so as to secure better long-term health outcomes for their children."



# notice board



## HEALTH SCIENCES UNPLUGGED ...unplugged

The Faculty 'Unplugged' Series is proving to be popular. Two have been held so far in the MAC Club, showcasing the raw talent in our midst. The session is very informally structured - the audience is invited to share a poem, piece of music or some good vocal talent that always surprises. The atmosphere is relaxed and warm, and the audience clearly enjoys a lunch-hour well-spent.

Next 'Unplugged' concert 23/7

Faculty of Health Sciences' Unplugged Series  
Poetry Music Drama Dance

Tuesday 23 July 2013  
13:00 to 14:00  
Mac Club



If you are interested in participating please contact Naseema Sayed on  
021 406 6106 or [Naseema.Sayed@uct.ac.za](mailto:Naseema.Sayed@uct.ac.za)



## HSSC ends semester on high note

To mark the end of a tough semester, and in celebration of Africa month, the Health Sciences Students Council organised a concert for students in the plaza.

