

DR SANJIV RUGHOOPUTH - BRIEF CV

Dr Sanjiv Rughooputh is a chartered scientist specialising in clinical microbiology, molecular biology and genetics. He also has extensive experience in the field of pathology. He started work at the Central Health Laboratory, Candos, in 1987 and subsequently left for the UK in 1994, where he read for an MSc in Clinical Microbiology, and a PhD on 'The role of sexually transmitted organisms in the pathogenesis of cervical cancer'.

Dr Rughooputh has worked in various National Health Service (NHS) and private hospitals in the UK, and as Clinical Microbiologist in the Department of Microbiology at the Royal Free Hospital (University of London), where he obtained his MRCPPath. In 2004, he joined the University of Westminster where he currently lectures in clinical microbiology, molecular biology and human genetics at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He also runs short courses in bioinformatics and phage display, and provides customised courses for different organisations.

As part of a molecular biology and proteomics research group, Dr Rughooputh leads projects on cervical cancer, sexually transmitted infections, as well as nosocomial infections (infections acquired during a hospital stay). He is a Knowledge Exchange Fellow of WestFocus Life Sciences (one of the Knowledge and Business Development Networks formed through the collaborative partnership of seven universities in London), and has established research links with a number of institutions, both in the UK and abroad. He has been an invited speaker at international conferences, and has published numerous scientific papers. Dr S Rughooputh is the Chief Scientific Officer of HealthCare Assessment Direct, an R&D company that provides molecular diagnostic solutions.

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MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL

HALF-DAY SEMINAR

Cervical Cancer and Human Papillomavirus

(Presented by: Dr Sanjiv Rughooputh)

PROGRAMME

Venue: Mauritius Research Council

Date: 21st September 2006

Time: 09:15 hrs

***Cervical Cancer and Human Papillomavirus:
Is there a Connection in Mauritian Cervical Cancer Sufferers?***

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Every year, cervical cancer claims around 300,000 lives. Around half a million new cases are diagnosed worldwide. A recent study by the Cancer Registry of Mauritius has showed that cancer in general accounted for 8 – 9% mortality in Mauritius, with an annual cancer-related death rate of 6 per every 1000 inhabitants. The incidence of cervical cancer and ovarian cancer combined was 27% (21% cervical and 6% ovarian).

Development of cervical cancer can be due to a number of factors, such as lifestyle, number of sexual partners, age of first sexual contact, genetic predisposition and exposure to high grade human papillomavirus (HPV). It is believed that HPV DNA integrates into the host DNA causing abnormal cell growth, with cells becoming carcinogenic and spreading throughout the body.

We recently conducted a study on a cohort of 65 patients in Mauritius diagnosed with cervical cancer. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) was used to detect the presence of high grade HPV. Only nineteen percent of cervical histology sections were found to be positive for the presence of high grade HPV (exclusively HPV 18), unlike other worldwide studies where on average 85% of cervical cancer cases are HPV positive. 66% (35) of the diagnosed cases of cervical cancer were observed in patients above 50 years, with 50% (5) affected with HPV. However, it is worth noting that only 15% of the Mauritian population is over 50 years of age. These results are perplexing and would tend to suggest that HPV may not be the main cause of cervical cancer in Mauritius.

To verify these results, a second study is underway involving a larger cohort. This study will consider diagnosed patients over the past 2 – 3 years and will also follow new patients over a similar period. A range of sample types such as urine, blood, cervical smears and histology samples, where appropriate, will be collected with the patients' consent. These samples will be tested for the presence of HPV, possible mutations and for special markers that may be used in the context of future cervical cancer screening.

Furthermore, it is envisaged to set up a molecular and genetic testing facility that may be applied across various disciplines 'Pan Pathology', and which can provide the essential tools to aid the early detection of other diseases (e.g. chikungunya, HIV, sickle cell anaemia, chlamydia, rare blood groups, as well as rare genetic disorders).

PROGRAMME

09:15 – 09:30	Registration of participants
09:30 – 09:35	Welcome Address <i>Dr A Suddhoo, Executive Director, Mauritius Research Council</i>
09:35 – 09:45	Address <i>Prof S Jugessur, Chairman Mauritius Research Council</i>
09:45 – 10:45	<i>Cervical Cancer and Human Papillomavirus</i> <i>Dr Sanjiv Rughooputh</i>
10:45 – 11:00	Discussions
11:00 – 11:10	Vote of Thanks <i>Dr N Gopaul, Coordinator Mauritius Research Council</i>
11:10	TEA BREAK