

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Head of the University of KwaZulu-Natal's College of Health Sciences, Professor Busi Ncama, invites you to a Special Guest Lecture by our esteemed colleague, **Dr Kumeren Govender**, who recently obtained his DPhil (PhD equivalent) in Clinical Medicine from the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom. Dr Govender will be presenting on the topic:

"A NEW ERA IN CLINICAL DIAGNOSTICS: METAGENOMIC NANOPORE SEQUENCING DIRECTLY FROM BLOOD CULTURE"

DATE

Thursday,
16 January 2025

VENUE

K1 & K2, K-RITH Tower Building,
Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine,
Umbilo Road, Durban

TIME

10:00 – 11:00



VIP Guest Lecturer biosketch:

Dr Kumeren Govender, MBChB Cum laude (UKZN), MMed (UKZN), DPhil (Oxford), is a physician-scientist, entrepreneur, and expert in infectious diseases and biotechnology innovation. He served as the Chief Scientific Officer at the Ellison Institute of Technology, where he led initiatives in metagenomic diagnostics, pandemic preparedness, and global health surveillance through multinational collaborations within the Pathogen Programme. A Rhodes Scholar with a doctorate in Clinical Medicine from Oxford University, Dr Govender has pioneered research in sequencing-based diagnostics and antimicrobial resistance. As co-founder of Neurolytic Healthcare, a US company dedicated to pharmacogenomics and telehealth, he raised \$3.5M in venture funding and successfully led the company to acquisition. He is an advisor to OpenAI and is a current Fellow of the International Strategic Forum. Dr Govender is passionate about bridging clinical medicine, research, and innovation to drive healthcare transformation.



Facilitator biosketch:

Professor Veron Ramsuran is a distinguished researcher whose work bridges the fields of immunogenetics, genomics, and infectious disease, particularly focusing on HIV and tuberculosis (TB) in sub-Saharan Africa. His research delves into understanding genetic variations that influence disease outcomes, specifically how certain gene expressions affect immune cell responses and pathogen resistance. Among several other accolades, Ramsuran's research group has contributed significantly to understanding HLA (human leukocyte antigen) genes, which are essential in the immune system's ability to recognize and respond to pathogens. His work has shown how variations in these genes impact susceptibility to infections and the progression of diseases like HIV and TB. By studying these genetic markers, he has helped identify factors that may explain why some individuals can control HIV without medication, known as "elite controllers." Ramsuran's research approach integrates molecular biology, bioinformatics, and population genetics, allowing him to analyze large datasets and draw insights relevant to populations with high rates of HIV and TB infection. His work on genetic diversity across African populations, for example, has supported the development of targeted therapies that respect the genetic backgrounds of these populations, which is crucial in enhancing the effectiveness of treatments in diverse patient groups.



KINDLY RSVP HERE



by no later than Monday, 13 January 2025, for catering purposes.