



The launch of a regional Surgical Skills Centre

A new surgical skills centre has been established at the University of Nairobi to offer training in the region. The Nairobi Surgical Skills Centre (NSSC), a joint initiative between the University of Nairobi, Johnson & Johnson and Philips Healthcare Technologies, was officially launched in November, 2012, at the University of Nairobi, in a colourful

ceremony presided over by the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi.

Located at UON's Chiromo Campus in the Department of Anatomy, the state-of-the-art facility will impart practical surgical experience among health care professionals in Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Centre will address the acute shortage of specialist

skills amongst medical practitioners in the Sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, recent studies indicate that these countries have less than one surgeon per 100,000 people, which is below the WHO recommendation of one surgeon per 5000 people.

NSSC will provide a wide range of skills in open and laparoscopic

surgery, general surgery, gynecology, orthopedics, general practice, theatre nursing and other disciplines at basic, intermediate and advanced levels. The course will be led by a faculty made up of renowned local and international experts.

Speaking during the Launch ceremony, Ag Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi, said that the Centre is a welcome addition to enhancing medical practice in Africa and is also a perfect example of Industry/Public cooperation. Prof. Mbithi pledged the full support of the University to ensure that the Centre's operations are not derailed.

The Chairman of NSSC, Prof. J. O. Mulimba, thanked the University of Nairobi, Johnson & Johnson and Philips Healthcare Technologies

The Centre will address the acute shortage of specialist skills amongst medical practitioners in the Sub-Saharan Africa.

for ensuring the successful establishment of the Centre, while Mr. Steve Brockie, General Manager, Johnson & Johnson, Sub-Saharan Africa said that the Centre is part of the company's commitment to support professional education in Sub-Saharan Africa and that it will help advance the skills of health care professionals in the region. Besides providing the physical facility, the partnership will see the University acquire and prepare cadavers and source local faculty. Johnson & Johnson will provide equipment to facilitate training, ensure availability of cadavers and provide external staff.

Also present during the launch ceremony were: Mr. Mukesh Mehta, Group Managing Director, Phillips Pharma Group of Companies, Prof. Bernard Aduda, Principal, College of Biological and Physical Sciences, Prof. J.O. Mulimba, NSSC Board Chairman, and Dr. Chris Samkange, President, College of Surgeons in East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA). Also present were representatives from the Ministry of Medical Services and Kenyatta National Hospital.

UoN alumnus named 'Hero of Chemistry'

Dr. George Njoroge, a scientific researcher based in Indiana, United States, was recently inducted into the coveted scientific 'Hall of Fame', when he was named the 2012 Hero of Chemistry, by the American Chemical Society (ACS), the world's largest scientific society.

The honors come in the wake of the discovery and development of the Hepatitis C drug Victrelis by Njoroge and a team of scientists working at the global pharmaceutical firm, Merck Research Laboratories. The drug, which is the first oral Hepatitis C virus protease approved by the FDA, has been approved in 43 countries, and is in the market in 23 of these countries.

Njoroge, an alumnus of the University of Nairobi, graduated with a first class honors in Organic Chemistry, and pursued further studies graduating with a PhD in Organic Chemistry from Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio in 1985. In 1988, Njoroge joined the Schering-Plough Corporation (SPRI), as a researcher and focused on the design and synthesis of orally bio-available small molecules for treatment of viral diseases and cancer.

A prolific scholar, Njoroge has published extensively in professional journals on synthetic organic chemistry and drug design. To his credit he has authored and co-authored more than 120 scientific publications and been granted 78 US patents. Further, Njoroge is a recipient of numerous awards including the meritorious Emerald

Award for Professional Achievement in Industry and the Thomas Alva Edison Patent Award for emerging therapies.

Varsity Focus congratulates Dr. Njoroge and his team on this achievement.

