

DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY

Professor Monica Smikle, BSc UWI, MSc Amst., PhD UWI,
Dip. Clin. Microb. Lond – Head of Department

WORK OF DEPARTMENT

During 2006/2007 Microbiology Department made good progress in the delivery of its various programmes. There was an 8% decrease in the numbers of clinical specimens processed by the

laboratory during 2006/2007 (54,946) compared to 2005/2006 (59,707). The department sought to improve on its income generating activities by expanding the scope of clinical laboratory services.



There was a decrease in per capita publication output for academic staff from 2.0 over the previous academic year to 0.4 in 2006/2007. However mean scores for students' assessment of teaching remained high for lecturers (mean score 4.5) and the undergraduate microbiology course (mean score 4.4). Graduate students Nicole Christian and Natalie Smith submitted their MSc (Medical Microbiology) theses for examination.

Dr John Lindo, senior lecturer took sabbatical leave and was replaced by Michelle Brown. Five members of the technical staff were granted passage paid leave.

Miss Terry-Ann Milford, senior medical technologist, resigned effective August 2006. Two members of the academic staff Miss Michelle Brown and Dr Ivan Vickers attended a PAHO/WHO sponsored virology training course at CAREC, Trinidad.

Professor Smikle, Mrs Carol Khan, chief medical technologist, and Mr Brian Rhule, senior medical technologist, received training and IATA certification sponsored by PAHO/WHO. The refurbishment of the Microbiology building remained a major outstanding target for the

department. However, during July 2007, the plans for refurbishment were presented to the department, by the Projects Office, along with assurances that work on the building would commence November 2007.

PAPERS PRESENTED

- ST Jackson, G Dowe, M Smikle “Human immunodeficiency virus- type 1 (HIV-1) infection and other viral causes of central nervous system infections in Jamaica.” International Conference on AIDS. Toronto, August, 2006
- AM Nicholson, L Rainford. “The epidemiology of nosocomial fungemia at the UHWI.” American Society for Microbiology 107th General Meeting. Toronto, May, 2007.
- E Finlayson, A Nicholson, L Rainford, PD Brown. “PCR-Restriction length polymorphism analysis of staphylococcal cassette chromosome mec elements in methicillin- resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* at the UHWI, Jamaica.”

PUBLICATIONS

WIMJ = West Indian Medical Journal

Referred Journal Articles

- * ST Jackson, MF Smikle, MG Antoine, GD Roberts. *Paecilomyces lilacinus* fungemia in a Jamaican neonate. *WIMJ*; 2006; 55: 361
- * N Christian, MF Smikle, K DeCeulaer, L Daniels, MJ Walravens, EN Barton. Antinuclear antibodies and HLA class II alleles in Jamaican patients with systemic lupus erythematosus. *WIMJ*; 2007; 56: 130-3
- * Waugh CA, Lindo JF, Forunda P, Angeles-Santana M, Lorenzo -Morales J, Robinson RD. Population distribution and zoonotic potential of gastrointestinal helminthes of wild

rats *Rattus rattus* and *R. norvegicus* from Jamaica. *Journal of Parasitology* 2006; 92: 1014-8

- * Lindo JF; Bryce JH, Ducasse MB, Hewitt C, Barrett DM, Lorenzo – Morales J, Ord R, Burke M, Chrodin PL, Sutherland CJ. *Plasmodium malariae* in Haitian refugees, Jamaica. *Emerging Infectious Diseases* 2007; 13: 931-3

PUBLIC SERVICE

Professor Monica Smikle

- Technical Assessor, National Accreditation Company
- Member, Core Working Group, Influenza (Pandemic) Preparedness

Dr Sandra Jackson

- Member, Surveillance subgroup, Influenza (Pandemic) Preparedness Plan Committee.

Dr Ivan Vickers

- Member, Surveillance sub-group, Influenza (Pandemic) Preparedness Plan Committee

CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS

Undergraduate

The undergraduate medical microbiology program was delivered to over 450 students in different year groups of the MBBS curriculum and BB Med Sci programme. The department participated in the delivery of undergraduate courses in medical microbiology to students in the B.Sc. Nursing and other extra-departmental programmes.

The Louis Grant Prize was awarded to Lori- Anne Fisher who attained the highest score in the microbiology aspect of the Pathology/Microbiology clerkship examination.

Postgraduate

Nine candidates were in graduate programmes in medical microbiology. These include the DM (1 candidate) PhD (2 candidates) and MPhil (1 candidate) MSc (5 candidates).

OBITUARY

Melbourne Anderson, Chief Animal House Attendant passed on February 16, 2007. He had served the department and the University for 30 years.