

## INAUGURAL LECTURE: PROFESSOR VINESS PILLAY



Professor Viness Pillay, Department of Pharmacy and Pharmacology, delivered his inaugural lecture on 12 November 2009. The subject of the lecture was: *Breaking the barriers in neuro-nanotherapeutics: the unnerving thought of 'Matter over Mind'*.

In national and personal terms, the impact of Neurodegenerative Disorders (NDs) cannot be ignored and may prove to be catastrophic. These relapsing disorders often necessitate hospitalisation and some sort of long-term care which incur the

bulk of direct costs to society. Sufferers, even before symptoms are overt, frequently find it impossible to achieve expected levels of functioning, and quickly encounter problems with employment and social stability. Although scientists are learning more everyday, the etiology of many NDs still remains a puzzle, and therefore there are currently no cures. Exploration of novel fundamental research in order to break the frontiers of targeted central nervous system (CNS) drug delivery and simultaneously enhance drug delivery to the brain through the use of precision targeted CNS nanopharmaceutical drug delivery carriers is as an ingenious solution to improving the current challenges faced in the treatment of various NDs.

Therefore a key feature of this Inaugural Lecture was to provide a concise incursion into newer therapeutic strategies developed by Professor Viness Pillay and his team that employs Neuro-Nanopharmaceuticals from a formulation and implementation viewpoint in order to deepen our understanding of the treatment and chronic management of debilitating NDs. There is an unlimited potential for growth in knowledge based societies in neurotherapeutic drug delivery research with global benefits. This lecture also highlighted the need for merging the fundamentals of Polymeric Science and Nanotechnology with Clinical Neuroscience to design and synthesize metamorphic scaffold-like implantable devices that would penetrate the Blood-Brain Barrier and feed drugs into brain tissue over a prolonged period of time for the effective treatment of NDs.

Photograph: Professor Beverley Kramer, Assistant Dean, Research and Postgraduate Research; Professor Yunus Ballim, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); Professor Viness Pillay; Professor Helen Laburn, Dean