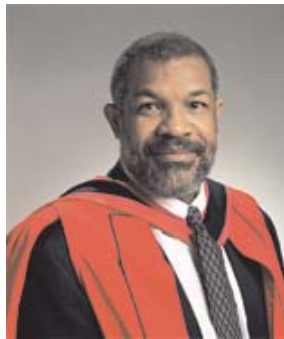


## TROPICAL MEDICINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (TMRI)

Professor Terrence Forrester, MB BS, DM, PhD, FRCP – Director

### WORK OF THE INSTITUTE

#### Getting Research into Policy, Programmes & Practice



The Institute continues to be represented at national and regional levels in forums that have the potential to promote the uptake of research findings. In Jamaica and Barbados, the Institute has forged close working relationships with the Chief Medical Officers. In both of these countries, the Institute has responded to Ministry of Health identified information gaps. In Barbados, epidemiology projects have been established in order to address

HIV/AIDS and more recently, chronic non-communicable diseases through national registries. Likewise, in Jamaica, the Epidemiology Research Unit has established projects to provide information on Chronic Diseases and wider lifestyle health risks, and evaluated nutritional interventions in schools at the request of the Ministry of Education. The Sickle Cell Unit provides a cord blood screening service for the Kingston Metropolitan Area on behalf of the Ministry of Health. A formal partnership with the Ministry of Health was established this year to facilitate the design and testing of interventions to prevent and better manage chronic diseases.

The TMRI continues to contribute to the work of the Caribbean Commission on Health and Development. The Institute was given the responsibility to prepare the advisory paper on non-communicable diseases, such as hypertension, diabetes and mental disease. This commission, chaired and led by Sir George Alleyne, informed National Cabinets as well as Heads of Governments of CARICOM Heads of Government during the period under review. A Caribbean response has

been defined led at the highest levels by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

### **Expanding Training Programmes**

#### **MBBS**

The TMRI has collaborated with the Department of Community Health and Psychiatry to design and deliver courses for Epidemiology and Statistics to 500 students reading for the MBBS. The Institute also delivers courses on Nutrition in the MBBS undergraduate curriculum.

#### **MSc Epidemiology**

The ERU completed the design of the MSc Epidemiology which was delivered for the first time in the academic year 2006/2007.

#### **MPhil/PhD**

The Institute currently has 7 students enrolled.

#### **Clinical Fellowship**

There are five Clinical Fellowships, 4 tenable in the Sickle Cell Unit and the other in the TMRU – the two Units which have direct responsibility for patient care. Fellows have an opportunity to work directly with patients with sickle cell disease, malnutrition or patients requiring parenteral nutritional support, and to develop a research project within that clinical context. Fellows are ideally post-DM, and reside in the Programme for 2 years leading to the MD degree.

#### **Post Doctoral Fellowships**

Three fellowships were created October 1, 2000 and funds to operate the programme were fully realised in 2007. This is the first structured post doctoral fellowship programme in the UWI and has as one of its prime objectives, the efficient transformation of PhD graduates into independent researchers. All posts are currently filled.

#### **Outreach and Public Service**

The TMRI provides in-hospital care for children with severe malnutrition at the TMRU ward. Through the TMRU, the Institute also provides a Clinical Nutrition service to the University Hospital,

offering nutritional support to the critically ill, including enteral and parenteral nutrition. Through the Sickle Cell Unit, the Institute provides ambulatory care for approximately 1200 sickle cell patients per month. In addition to the clinical care offered on site, TMRI also provides an outreach programme for social work and social welfare. It is hoped to collaborate with additional private sector partners and NGOs to improve the level of services provided to out-patients.

Institute staff serves on several boards in the private and public sectors, including the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica, OMNI Insurance, National Health Fund, National Advisory Committee on Health, National Council on Drug Abuse and St Joseph Hospital.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

*WIMJ = West Indian Medical Journal*

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- \* Marshall KG, Howell S, Badaloo AV, Reid M, Farrall M, Forrester T, McKenzie CA. "Polymorphisms in genes involved in folate metabolism as risk factor for oedematous severe childhood malnutrition: a hypothesis generation study". *Ann Trop Paediatr* 2006; 26(2): 107-114.

- \* Hanchard NA, Hambleton I, Harding M, McKenzie CA. "Predicted declines in sickle allele frequency in Jamaica using empirical data". *Am J Hematol* 2006; 81(11): 817-823.
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