

Towards an HIV cure: UKZN scientist takes on new role

The International Aids Society (IAS) has appointed Professor Thumbi Ndung'u co-chair of its 'Towards an HIV Cure' advisory board.



Source: Supplied. Professor Thumbi Ndung'u is the new co-chair of the International Aids Society's 'Towards an HIV Cure' advisory board.

Ndung'u is scientific director and the Victor Daitz chair in HIV/TB research at UKZN's HIV pathogenesis programme. He is also the Africa Health Research Institute director for basic and translational science.

Ndung'u - who is also the South Africa Research chair in Systems Biology of HIV/Aids - joins professor Sharon Lewin, director of the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, as co-chair of 'Towards an HIV Cure'.

The IAS' 'Towards an HIV Cure' programme was launched in 2011 to focus on advancing the HIV-cure field in countries where resources for HIV-cure research are limited, and to facilitate interaction with HIV and other biomedical research areas. The Board is mandated to provide strategic advice to the IAS, and guide the 'Towards an HIV Cure' programme and the implementation of its activities.

Working towards vaccine intervention

Ndung'u is an HIV-cure research pioneer whose work has focused on understudied populations and viral strains in resource-limited, high-burden settings where knowledge of the role of antiviral immune responses, viral strains and associated genetic factors is likely to yield the greatest impact in terms of biomedical interventions like vaccines or immune-based cure strategies.

"I am delighted to co-chair the IAS Towards an HIV Cure advisory board,' said Ndung'u. 'The mission of the Towards an HIV Cure programme is to drive concerted efforts to accelerate global scientific research, advocacy and collaboration towards a cure for HIV. I will work to ensure diversity and inclusivity in research and for impact of the research in areas where it is most needed."

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