

**Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 12 noon**

Zoom link below

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### **Title: Enabling Molecular Imaging in Africa**



#### **Abstract:**

Rapid disease and population transitions are occurring in Africa – life expectancy is increasing as well as the incidences of cancer, dementia, and other non-communicable diseases. Still, infectious diseases like malaria, tuberculosis and HIV remain the major disease burden in most sub-Saharan African countries. Global advances in molecular imaging techniques offers opportunities to better understand disease mechanisms, discover new treatments, and improve prevention strategies. Developing countries in Africa must catch-on to molecular imaging or be left behind. The approach of the international community to assist Africa has so far been to design low-cost alternatives that are of little value in a continent undergoing rapid transitions. Paradoxically, this approach ensures the continent will forever play catch-up to molecular imaging advances. The strategy needs to be one that enables the integration of innovative and truly global molecular technologies into healthcare and research in Africa while providing local capacity for unique and relevant discoveries. I will share my research, challenges, and experiences as a nuclear medicine physician in a developing African country and present 3 key approaches that Advanced nations can use to enable molecular imaging in Africa : 1) Research and training partnerships with African entities, 2) Innovative private sector investment models to fund molecular imaging infrastructure in selected African countries, and 3) Quality assurance and improvement processes.

**Akin Orunmuyi, MBBS** completed his residency training in Nuclear Medicine at Steve Biko Academic Hospital and the University of Pretoria, South Africa, under the supervision of Professor Mike Sathekge. He is a Fellow of the College of Nuclear Physicians of South Africa (2014) and a Master of Medicine (2015) in Nuclear Medicine.

Since 2015, he has worked at the University College Hospital (UCH) Ibadan, (Nigeria's first Nuclear Medicine Department) as an Honorary Consultant. He received further international training and professional experience in nuclear medicine and molecular biology from the Seoul National University Hospital, South Korea (2017) and City University of New York, United States of America (2016). He gets his energy from learning, solving problems and making a difference in the lives of others.