

FRANCIS KARANU, PH.D.

Cell Therapy Research Scientist, Likarda, LLC

FRANCIS'S SPEAKING TOPICS INCLUDE:

Pluripotent stem cell biology: cell derivation, culture and differentiation

Endodermal, islet and beta cell differentiation: methodologies and protocols

Islet biology and transplantation approaches to diabetes

Human hematopoietic stem cell biology

Adult stem cell research: cell isolation, flow cytometric analysis

Research projects and collaborations: management and oversight

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DR. FRANCIS KARANU IS A VETERINARIAN, RESEARCHER, VOLUNTEER AND PRESENTER

With a Ph.D. in immunology and cell biology, Francis is a senior cell therapy researcher for Likarda, a world-class biotech research laboratory that works with science entrepreneurs, bio consortium members, and contract research organizations. Francis is part of a team that is developing a cell-based solution for dogs with diabetes, which will be an injectable islet transplant that will eliminate the need for daily insulin injections for diabetic dogs.

Francis began his career as a veterinarian, but quickly turned to his passion, biomedical research. Prior to joining Likarda, he was with Johnson & Johnson and worked extensively in a stem cell and regenerative medicine venture developing beta-like, insulin producing cells from pluripotent stem cells for the treatment of diabetes in humans, including isolation and characterization procedures. Francis's methods for purifying cells derived from pluripotent stem cells were granted patent US20110212067. He has been author or co-author of many peer reviewed publications and patents.

Francis studied veterinary medicine at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, and completed his graduate training at Washington State University before beginning postdoctoral work at Robarts Research Institute / University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario where he worked on isolation and expansion strategies of human hematopoietic stem cells from cord blood and bone marrow.

Along with extensive experience in biotechnology/industry and academic research environments, Francis is very involved in diabetes care and management issues in underserved areas including Sub-Saharan Africa. He is active in Mariira Catholic Dispensary in Murang'a, Kenya where he volunteers his time and resources to provide medical supplies and equipment to support the organization's mission. As an advisor on the Kenya Defeat Diabetes Association, he helps guide the grassroots group in tackling diabetes and high blood pressure through community education and support.