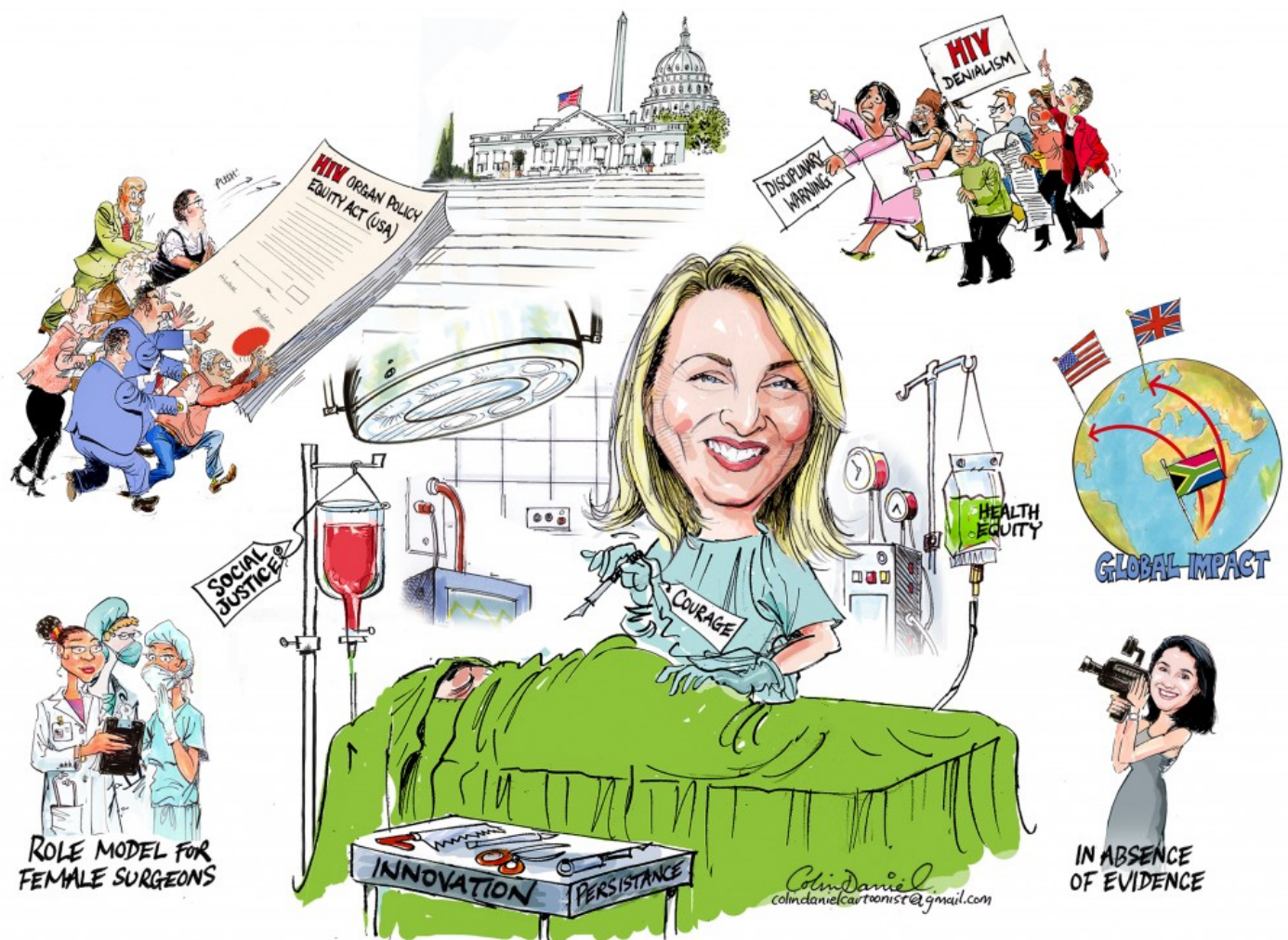


The Muller Effect: 10-year Anniversary of HIV-to-HIV Transplantation



Western Cape, Sep 23, 2018 (Issuewire.com) - 10 years ago today, a fearless surgeon performed the world's first transplant of an [HIV+ kidney into an HIV+ recipient](#) at Groote Schuur Hospital in South Africa. Where many in her place would step back, she stepped forward. When institutions built walls around her, she broke them down. When government officials threatened her career, she persevered.

"I started to realize I am so often refusing organs from a patient because they have HIV. Then I thought this doesn't make sense because we have patients with HIV who we can't give dialysis to. So this was a simple way of solving the problem." –Dr. Muller

At a time of [HIV denialism](#) in South Africa, where patients with end-stage renal disease and HIV had no option but to die, she pioneered an established procedure on a stigmatized population.

This past year I was privileged to serve as a Fulbright Scholar in South Africa under the mentorship of [Dr. Elmi Muller](#). Prior to my arrival, what I knew of the pioneering procedure was limited to the scarce reports by the media and a handful of publications in the literature. But when Elmi first told me her

journey, I knew that there was more to this story that people needed to hear.

Thus, I have started filming a documentary, [*In Absence of Evidence*](#), in order to raise awareness of this landmark procedure, highlight women in surgery, promote organ donation and most importantly, honor her laudable contribution.

“Sometimes decisions are made on intuition rather than on the basis of evidence-based medicine.” –Dr. Muller

Dr. Muller's perseverance in pushing this life saving innovative approach forward in the absence of evidence and in the face of resistance is nothing less than commendable. She has laid the foundation for scientific discovery, impacted [legislation](#) beyond the borders of her country, and has made a significant contribution towards health equity. With over 100 surgeries in 3 countries and over 100 research citations in her repertoire, the ‘Muller Effect’ has only just begun.

“There’s an Afrikaans saying, “N Profeet is nie altyd in sy eie land bekend nie”, which translates to “A prophet isn’t always known in his own country.” But it means people in your own space don’t always see you as a hero.” –Dr. Muller

Well, we see you as a hero.

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