

Assistant Professor Danielle ANDERSON

Programme in Emerging Infectious Diseases, Duke-NUS
Medical School

Date & time: 8 July 2020; 8pm – 9pm

Topic: Stories from the Trenches



Synopsis

In December 2019, a novel coronavirus emerged from Hubei province in China. The virus demonstrated efficient human-to-human transmission within mainland China and subsequently spread across many countries, and ultimately reached pandemic status. The virus was identified as 2019-nCoV, then designated SARS-CoV-2, while the associated disease is referred to as COVID-19. In Singapore, the first case of SARS-CoV-2 was reported on January 23, 2020, in a 66-year old man that had visited Wuhan. By February 7, the number of cases had increased to 29 including individuals without travel history to China, prompting Singaporean authorities to implement control measures aimed at reducing community spread of the virus.

In this lecture, I will provide a review of the Singapore outbreak response from a virologist's perspective and highlight the challenges we faced and lessons learned about pandemic preparedness.

Short biography

Dr Danielle Anderson is the Scientific Director of the Duke-NUS Medical School ABSL3 laboratory. In January 2020, Asst Prof Anderson and her team isolated SARS-CoV-2 from a clinical sample from one of the first COVID-19 patients in Singapore. From this, she helped to develop a test kit for COVID-19, which has vitally assisted the Singapore authorities with their contact tracing efforts.

Dr Anderson's research interests include understanding the virus/host relationship of a diverse group of medically important RNA viruses that includes Measles, Mumps, Nipah, Zika, SARS and MERS viruses. In addition, she utilises novel diagnostic platforms for the identification of not only new, clinically relevant emerging infectious diseases. Dr Anderson has extensive experience working in biocontainment and performs research at Biosafety Level (BSL) 2, BSL3 and BSL4.