



**College of Health**

**Lunchtime Seminar Series**

**Wednesday, 10 June @ 12noon**

**5C12**

**This Week's Guest Speakers Are:**

**12-12:30pm**

**Jereon Douwes, *Centre for Public Health Research***

**12:30-1pm**

**Samuel Keer, *Centre for Public Health Research***

**Jereon Douwes: *Microbial diversity and asthma***

This presentation will provide a broad overview of the work the Centre for Public Health Research is conducting with a particular focus on recent studies on the causes and mechanisms of asthma. In particular, it will discuss the role of microbial diversity in asthma and the potentially protective effects of drinking raw milk.

**Samuel Keer: *Neurotoxic Effects of Occupational Solvent Exposures***

Organic solvents are used extensively in a wide variety of industrial settings. Despite considerable improvements in workplace hygiene, a number of work environments and occupational tasks still exist in which excessive exposure to solvents can occur. The relationship between occupational exposures to organic solvents and neurotoxic effects is reasonably well documented, particularly amongst spray painters. The association between low-level, chronic exposure to solvents and health effects is still however somewhat unclear and no research has previously been undertaken in the New Zealand setting. The workplace and behaviour-related factors that result in exposure are also not well understood.

The presentation gives an overview of the "*Neurotoxic Effects of Occupational Solvent Exposures*" study being undertaken at CPHR, progress to date and results from the questionnaire and exposure monitoring phases.