

**Doctor of Audiology
Visiting Scholar Lecture Series**

Richard Smith, MD



Specialty: Pediatric Otolaryngology
Professor and Vice Chair: University of Iowa
Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery

*Genetic Testing for Deafness:
Where we are, where we're going and why we should get there*

**Thursday, November 12, 2009
5:15 PM**

Frances Searle, Room 1-441, Evanston Campus

Richard Smith is the Sterba Hearing Research Professor and Vice Chair of the Department of Otolaryngology at the University of Iowa. He also is Director of the Molecular Otolaryngology Research Laboratories (MORL) and Professor of Otolaryngology, Pediatrics and Internal Medicine in the Division of Nephrology. His primary clinical interest is in the care of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. He sees and operates on patients two days each week; the remaining time is spent in the Molecular Otolaryngology Research Laboratories, which he established and directs.

The over-riding objective of the MORL is to improve health care for deaf persons. To meet this goal, the MORL has a Clinical Diagnostics Division and a Basic Research Division. The former was CLIA certified in 1999 and accredited by JCAHO in 2001, making it the oldest diagnostic laboratory to offer mutation screening for deafness in the United States. The impact of this service has been enormous, effectively changing the medical workup of the deaf patient by making genetic testing the single most cost-effective test in their evaluation.

In the Basic Research Division, graduate and post-doctoral students have made numerous discoveries that have significantly contributed to our understanding of the biology of hearing and deafness, including work using RNAi to rescue hearing loss in a mouse model of deafness. With collaborators in Belgium, the MORL also maintains the Hereditary Hearing Loss Homepage, the primary web resource for scientists working on human deafness. In recognition of his research accomplishments in deafness, Dr. Smith was elected to the National Academies, Institute of Medicine and to the Association of American Physicians.