

**Otago Medical School Alumnus Association
2014 History of Medicine Series
Room G30, Hunter Centre, Great King Street, Dunedin
Thursday 24th April 2014 at 5.15pm**

Professor Terence Doyle will present

'Body Language: The Origins and Use of Medical Terminology'



The hospital discharge summary read 'The histology of the mediastinal juxta-auricular lesion, previously considered to be either a hamartoma or teratoma, is most consistent with metastatic melanoma.' Deciphering this for the lay person it might read 'the microscopic appearance of the lump in the middle of the chest next to the ear shaped bit on the left of the heart, previously thought to be made up of tissue which is usually found there but in an unusual arrangement or else of tissue foreign to that location, is most consistent with a clump of black stained cells which have come from somewhere else.'

In medicine, the vocabulary is derived mainly from Greek and Latin words with additions from Norman French and Old English. Many are compound, with one or more roots augmented by prefixes and suffixes. Some are named after mythological figures and others, like The Circle of Willis, after their discoverers. Over time the language and ideas of medicine have been incorporated into literature. This talk looks at the history of how medical words have been formed and used from the Greeks, through Shakespeare to the modern era.

This is a public lecture. All interested are welcome

