

60percent – 29 September 2023

The path that ends AIDS by 2030 will boost progress towards achieving many other Sustainable Development Goals



UNAIDS | 20 September 2023

NEW YORK/GENEVA, 20 September 2023—UNAIDS, the Governments of Botswana and the United States of America, together with the European Commission have joined global partners to urge world leaders to get on the path that ends AIDS. This, they say, will also accelerate progress to reach many other of the Sustainable Development Goals. The call was made at a high-level event, Celebrating Global HIV Progress to End AIDS and Advance the Sustainable Development Goals, held during the 78th United Nations General Assembly in New York. Participants underscored the life-saving impact of the global HIV response as well as the need for continued support, funding and commitment, including for the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/pressreleaseandstatementarchive/2023/september/20230920_unga-hiv-progress

UNAIDS appoints the First Lady Neo Jane Masisi as a champion for adolescent girls and young women in Botswana



UNAIDS | 21 September 2023

NEW YORK/GENEVA, 21 September 2023—UNAIDS has designated the First Lady of Botswana, Neo Jane Masisi, as a UNAIDS champion for the empowerment and engagement of adolescent girls and young women in Botswana. UNAIDS Executive Director, Winnie Byanyima, confirmed the appointment during a meeting with Mrs Masisi during the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. “Her Excellency Mrs Masisi has a deep understanding of the structural barriers that are making adolescent girls and young women so vulnerable to HIV infection in Botswana and right across Africa,” said UNAIDS Executive Director, Winnie Byanyima. “Mrs Masisi is a fierce advocate for the rights of young women and girls and for the need to support them to stay in school, finish their education and receive the knowledge they need to help them thrive.”

https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/pressreleaseandstatementarchive/2023/september/20230921_first-lady-masisi-champion-botswana

Court Victory: Landmark Ruling Exposes Discrimination in Forced Sterilization of HIV-Positive Women



KELIN | 21 September 2023

In a momentous legal development today, on September 21, 2023, Honorable Justice Mrima delivered a landmark judgment. He ruled in a case initiated over nine years ago that the forced sterilization of four women living with HIV constituted a violation of their fundamental rights, including dignity, freedom from discrimination, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, and the right to establish a family. The Court's judgment firmly establishes that women living with HIV possess the inherent right to make informed choices regarding their reproductive decisions. Furthermore, it mandates that all medical facilities must uphold the paramount importance of obtaining informed consent from patients who seek medical treatment on their premises. He further awarded the petitioners damages to be borne jointly by the medical facilities that had been visited by the Petitioners. The damages will be jointly borne by Médecins Sans Frontières – France (MSF- France), Pumwani Maternity Hospital and Marie Stopes International.

<https://www.kelinkenya.org/court-victory-landmark-ruling-exposes-discrimination-in-forced-sterilization-of-hiv-positive-women/>

PrEP use in pregnancy doesn't raise the risk of adverse pregnancy or birth outcomes



Aidsmap | 22 September 2023

Oral PrEP consisting of tenofovir disoproxil (TDF) and emtricitabine taken during pregnancy does not increase the risk of adverse pregnancy or birth outcomes such as low birth weight, miscarriage or neonatal death, a South African study reports in the journal AIDS. The study used both self-report of PrEP use and blood tests to detect tenofovir, providing an objective assessment of PrEP use. Pregnant and breastfeeding women are at high risk of acquiring HIV, possibly due to biological changes during pregnancy. A systematic review published in 2014 found an HIV incidence of 3.8 per 100 person-years during pregnancy and 2.9 per 100 person-years postpartum across 19 cohort studies in sub-Saharan Africa, with especially high incidence in south-eastern Africa and South Africa.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/sep-2023/prep-use-pregnancy-doesnt-raise-risk-adverse-pregnancy-or-birth-outcomes>

The European AIDS Conference revisits Warsaw



Aidmap | 22 September 2023

Dr Esteban Martínez is president of the European AIDS Clinical Society (EACS) and a senior consultant in infectious diseases at Hospital Clínic in Barcelona, Spain. EACS organises the European AIDS Conference every two years. With the next conference taking place from 18 to 21 October, we spoke to Esteban about what to expect.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/sep-2023/european-aids-conference-revisits-warsaw>

SA needs more programmes to address foetal alcohol spectrum disorder, say experts



Daily Maverick | 22 September 2023

September is Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Month. South Africa has the highest prevalence of FASD in the world, and experts have called for more education, support and prevention programmes to address the problem.

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-09-22-foetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-sa-needs-to-do-more/>

Young people with sexual or gender diversity are at higher risk of stopping their HIV treatment because of stigma and harsh laws

THE CONVERSATION

The Conversation | 24 September 2023

Ending the AIDS pandemic – particularly in eastern and southern Africa – cannot be achieved unless more resources are channelled to meet the needs of key vulnerable populations. This is one of the themes that emerged during an AIDS conference in June in South Africa. Prejudice against particular groups – such as men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender communities – interferes with treatment regimes and people’s adherence to treatment. These groups are also at higher risk from HIV due to increased levels of stigma, discrimination, violence and criminalisation.

<https://theconversation.com/young-people-with-sexual-or-gender-diversity-are-at-higher-risk-of-stopping-their-hiv-treatment-because-of-stigma-and-harsh-laws-213085>

The best way to prevent HIV is often out of reach for women and marginalized people



Penn Today | 25 September 2023

The United States has a proven treatment to reduce HIV infection risk by up to 99%. The health system just needs to get better at offering it. In 2021, the country had more than 36,000 new HIV diagnoses, yet PrEP (HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis) is used by fewer than 1 in 4 people who would benefit from it. PrEP is preventive medicine—like statins to avoid heart disease—for HIV-negative people who risk infection through sex or drug use. Efforts to expand PrEP use include the U.S. Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) initiative to reduce new HIV infections by 90% by 2030.

<https://penntoday.upenn.edu/news/penn-ldi-best-way-prevent-hiv-often-out-reach-women-and-marginalized-people>

Uptake and Persistence on HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis Among Female Sex Workers and Men Having Sex with Men in Kigali, Rwanda: A Retrospective Cross-Sectional Study Design



Dovepress | 25 September 2023

Rugira E, Biracyaza E and Umubyeyi A

Although HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is known for its effectiveness in preventing HIV transmission; there is a global rise in HIV infection rates, particularly prominent in sub-Saharan Africa. This health concern is mostly evident among high-risk groups, namely Female Sex Workers (FSWs) and Men who have Sex with Men (MSMs), both of whom are more susceptible to sexually transmissible infections. This research examined the persistence, uptake, and associated predictors of PrEP utilization within the FSW and MSM populations.

<https://www.dovepress.com/uptake-and-persistence-on-hiv-pre-exposure-prophylaxis-among-female-se-peer-reviewed-fulltext-article-PPA>

This is what it's like to be ageing with HIV

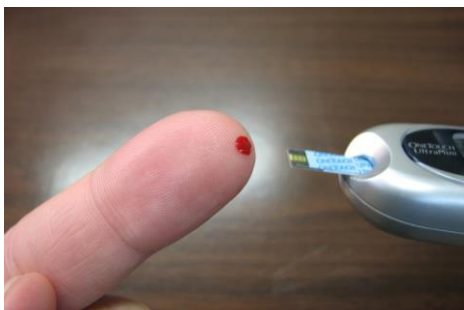


The Standard | 25 September 2023

Dorothy Onyango the CEO of Women Living with HIV in Kenya, now 66 years old, was diagnosed with HIV in 1990, at the time there was no medication and stigma was high. “Those 33 years ago you could not talk publicly about HIV. We used to meet secretly as women with HIV to talk about challenges we were facing, there was no medication then, and those that came along were expensive” The first case of HIV was reported in Kenya in 1984. For those who tested positive, their days were numbered

https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/health/health-science/article/2001482073/this-is-what-its-like-to-be-ageing-with-hiv?utm_source=Global%20Health%20NOW%20Main%20List&utm_campaign=1833101bdd-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_09_25&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8d0d062dbd-1833101bdd-3022949

Breast cancer drug Piqray linked to high blood sugar levels



UPI | 25 September 2023

For certain patients with advanced breast cancer, a drug called Piqray (alpelisib) may extend survival. But new research confirms the medication often causes seriously high blood sugar levels. "This is a

very effective drug that we should be using to treat breast cancer, but the problem is that it causes high blood sugar, which also can decrease the efficacy of the medication," explained study co-author Dr. Neil Iyengar. He is a medical oncologist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City.

https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2023/09/25/breast-cancer-drug-blood-sugar/2791695660884/

Older Women Have High Rate of Breast Cancer Overdiagnosis



AJMC | 26 September 2023

A high rate of overdiagnosis of breast cancer was seen in a retrospective cohort analysis that examined recent cancer screening results among women 70 years and older,¹ indicating the potential harm to women of frequent false positive results that could lead to unnecessary invasive procedures for a cancer not likely to be symptomatic in their lifetime. "No randomized trials have evaluated screening mammography in women 75 years and older, and only a few studies have included women over the age of 70 years, leaving uncertainty about benefits and harms of screening in older women," the study authors wrote in *Annals of Internal Medicine*. "In recent years, there has also been greater recognition that overdiagnosis constitutes an important harm from breast cancer screening."

<https://www.ajmc.com/view/older-women-have-high-rate-of-breast-cancer-overdiagnosis>

Long-acting injectable version of the most popular HIV drug combination is possible



Aidsmap | 26 September 2023

Researchers at the University of Washington in Seattle say they have cracked the challenge of creating a long-acting injectable form of the world's most commonly prescribed antiretroviral combination, tenofovir disoproxil fumarate, lamivudine and dolutegravir, often known as TLD. But the drawback is that the long-acting formulation only lasts for one month. Reporting their findings in the journal *AIDS*, Professor Rodney Ho and colleagues explain how they have been able to combine two different types of compounds – those that are soluble in water and those that aren't – in one formulation using a technique called drug-combination nanoparticle technology.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/sep-2023/long-acting-injectable-version-most-popular-hiv-drug-combination-possible>

Africa: World Contraception Day 2023 - A Call to Liberate Women's Bodies through Equitable Health Leadership



AllAfrica | 26 September 2023

Access to birth control, which empowers women with the agency to decide if, when, and how many children to bear, is a fundamental human right. While increased use of contraception among women in low- and lower-middle-income countries has successfully prevented over 141 million unintended pregnancies, curbed 29 million unsafe abortions, and averted nearly 150,000 maternal deaths, only 1 in 4 women in these developing nations can realize their desired fertility intentions. This means that an unacceptably large number of women are still having more children than they want - with dire consequences.

<https://allafrica.com/stories/202309260368.html>

Decoding Women's Health: Artificial Intelligence Revolutionizes PCOS Diagnosis



SciTech Daily | 26 September 2023

NIH study reviews 25 years of data and finds AI/ML can detect common hormone disorder. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) can effectively detect and diagnose Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), which is the most common hormone disorder among women, typically between ages 15 and 45, according to a new study by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Researchers systematically reviewed published scientific studies that used AI/ML to analyze data to diagnose and classify PCOS and found that AI/ML based programs were able to successfully detect PCOS.

<https://scitechdaily.com/decoding-womens-health-artificial-intelligence-revolutionizes-pcos-diagnosis/>

'Feminist approach' to cancer could save lives of 800,000 women a year



The Guardian | 26 September 2023

Health experts are calling for a “feminist approach” to cancer to eliminate inequalities, as research reveals 800,000 women worldwide are dying needlessly every year because they are denied optimal care. Cancer is one of the biggest killers of women and ranks in their top three causes of premature deaths in almost every country on every continent. But gender inequality and discrimination are reducing women’s opportunities to avoid cancer risks and impeding their ability to get a timely diagnosis and quality care, according to a report published in the Lancet.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/sep/26/feminist-approach-cancer-save-lives-800000-women>

Many in Eastern Cape still denied health services despite some improvements, report finds



Spotlight | 27 September 2023

A woman in her forties who is living with HIV says she was denied services at a public healthcare facility because she didn’t have a transfer letter, resulting in her treatment being interrupted. She says she also developed mental health problems. (Spotlight knows the identity of the woman, but is withholding it since she does not wish her HIV status to be made public.)

<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2023/09/27/many-in-eastern-cape-still-denied-health-services-despite-some-improvements-report-finds/>

The Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) – calling all public health champions!



PHASA

PHASA is a voluntary organisation of individuals passionate about population health improvements and the reduction of health inequities, and whose work focuses on the prevention of disease, the promotion of health, and the improved functioning of the country's health care system. Are you passionate about improving the health and wellbeing of communities? Do you want to expand your professional network and stay current in the field of public health? Do you want to be part of the movement to improve Public Health? Then join the Public Health Association of South Africa today to make a difference and enhance your career!

As a member, you will:

- Gain access to cutting-edge research, resources, and best practices
- Connect with public health professionals from around the world
- Participate in educational events and conferences
- Contribute to shaping the future of public health
- Have access to mentors in the field
- Be at the forefront of advocacy initiatives.

To become a member, simply visit our [website](#) and complete the membership application. Don't miss this opportunity to advance your career and improve public health.

<https://phasa.org.za/index.php/get-involved/membership>

Subscribe to the Health Systems Trust Bulletin



The Health Systems Trust (HST) produces a weekly bulletin on Fridays focusing on key public health news, peer-reviewed journal articles and other important primary healthcare resources.

<https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Subscription.aspx>