

# HST Bulletin



## CATEGORIES

[Academic and Peer Reviewed Articles](#)

[Recent Public Health News](#)

[Training and Resources](#)

[Publications and Reports](#)

[Conferences and Events](#)

[Job Opportunities](#)

## ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

### **Comorbidity of mental ill-health in tuberculosis patients under treatment in a rural province of South Africa: a cross-sectional survey**

*British Medical Journal | November 2022 edition*

*Yanga Thungana, Robert Wilkinson and Zukiswa Zingela*

Despite the availability of effective anti-tuberculosis (anti-TB) drugs, TB remains one of the top 10 causes of death worldwide, and it is among the leading causes of death from a single infectious agent. South Africa is among the top eight countries that account for two-thirds of the global TB infections. Additionally, in people infected with TB, there are high rates of mental disorders such as depression and anxiety disorders. Depression is one of the most common comorbid psychiatric disorders in people with TB and is estimated to be three times higher than in patients without TB. Conversely, people with psychiatric disorders may be at an increased risk of developing TB as well.

### **Reliability and validity of the post COVID-19 condition stigma questionnaire: A prospective cohort study**

*The Lancet | 25 November 2022*

*Ronald Damant, Liam Rourke, Ying Cui, Grace Lam, Maeve Smith, et al.*

Essential to the scientific understanding of stigma is our capacity to observe and measure it. Stigma, as defined by Goffman, is an attribute – physical mark, condition, character trait, or status – that is deeply discrediting. Stigmatization is the process, embedded within social relationships, that enables the devaluation of people in possession of these attributes through labelling and stereotypes. Discrimination can be thought of as behaviours that endorse stereotypes and disadvantage those so labelled.

### **Offline: The distance between us**

*The Lancet | 26 November 2022*

*Richard Horton*

1000 people gathered in the magnificent Light auditorium at Friends House on a bleak winter evening in London. They were there to hear Dr Aseem Malhotra, a cardiologist, answer the question, “Has Big Pharma Hijacked Evidence-Based Medicine?” Most of those assembled wanted to know Malhotra's views

about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines. Critics might argue that his pronouncements on vaccines should be dismissed. But to understand why vaccine hesitancy has become such an important public health challenge, one must study his arguments and claims, even if one finds them misplaced.

## **Socioeconomic inequalities in cancer mortality between and within countries in Europe: A population-based study**

*The Lancet* | 27 November 2022

*Salvatore Vaccarella, Damien Georges, Freddie Bray, Ophira Ginsburg, Hadrien Charvat, et al.*

For many decades, national and international bodies have committed extensive resources into measuring of the burden of cancer at the population level. While there remain significant gaps in the knowledge of cancer incidence, prevalence, survival, and mortality, it is now possible to draw a general picture of the cancer problem at the national level for many countries. Over time, another challenge has overwhelmingly emerged: by measuring only the average values at national or regional levels, a critical component of the cancer dynamics has gone largely unchecked, namely the diversity in the scale, profile and trends of cancer according to socioeconomic position.

## **Tuberculosis in individuals who recovered from COVID-19: A systematic review of case reports**

*Plos One* | 28 November 2022

*Ayinalem Alemu, Zebenay Bitew, Getachew Seid, Getu Diriba, Emebet Gashu, et al.*

COVID-19 caused a huge public health impact across the globe. In addition to its direct impact, COVID-19 exerted many disruptions in the prevention and control of other diseases including tuberculosis (TB). It is reported that during the COVID-19 epidemic there was a decrease in the global TB detection rate and an increase in TB deaths. Different studies revealed a decrease in TB notification rate due to COVID-19 lockdown. A study conducted in Malawi revealed a 35.9% decrease in TB detection rate immediately after the start of the COVID-19 epidemic. In another study conducted in Sierra Leone it was observed that there was an overall 12.7% decrease in presumptive TB cases during the first three quarters of 2020 compared to 2019. Likewise, in Kenya, there was a 31.8% decrease in people with presumptive pulmonary TB.

## **Mental health service utilization in a low resource setting: A qualitative study on perspectives of health professionals in Northwest Ethiopia**

*Plos One* | 28 November 2022

*Tesfa Mekonen, Gary Chan, Tilahun Belete, Melak Menberu, Lily Davidson, et al.*

According to the 2019 global burden of disease estimate, more than 970 million people live with mental illness which indicates a 48.1% increase since 1990. Of all people with mental illness, 66.7% reside in low and middle SDI (Sustainable Development Index) countries. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, mental illness has posed a great concern with a 25% worldwide increase in the prevalence of depression and anxiety. In Ethiopia, a 3-fold increase in the prevalence of depression was reported compared to the pre-pandemic estimate. Despite the disproportionate burden of mental illness, mental health resources are scarce in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), which creates a massive treatment gap.

## **Human behaviour directs household-level exposure to malaria vectors in Bandarban, Bangladesh**

*Malaria Articles* | 29 November 2022

*Matthew Aubourg, Hasan Mohammad Al-Amin, Anoop Sunkara, Sanjna Chetan, et al.*

Bangladesh has reduced malaria incidence and mortality by over 75% between 2010 and 2020. Widespread long-lasting insecticidal net (LLIN) distribution and use is one of the measures responsible for this success. Recalcitrant malaria hotspots within the Chittagong Hill Tracts districts suggest important drivers of malaria risk may remain uncharacterized. Towards understanding how household-level human behaviour impacts exposure to mosquitoes, parallel human landing catches and human behavioural observations were conducted in four households for 6 months (May–October) over the rainy season in the Bandarban District. Analysis quantifies spatiotemporal human behaviour-adjusted exposure to Anopheles with and without LLINs. This small-scale operational study demonstrates that human spatial and temporal presence along with LLIN use drives exposure to Anopheles.

## **The Pharmacy Community Apgar Questionnaire: a modified Delphi technique to develop a rural pharmacist recruitment and retention tool**

*Remote and Rural Health | 29 November 2022*

*Daniel Terry, Blake Peck, Danny Hills, Jaclyn Bishop, Mark Kirschbaum, et al.*

An adequate healthcare workforce remains essential for the health of rural communities. Strategies to address rural health workforce challenges have often centred on the medical and nursing workforce; however, addressing the rural pharmacist workforce also remains critical as they are often the first point of contact for health advice. Initiatives have increased pharmacist supply; however, key issues such as poor attraction, recruitment, and retention to rural areas remain. The aim of this study was to support the recruitment and retention of pharmacists in rural areas of Australia through the development of the Pharmacy Community Apgar Questionnaire (PharmCAQ).

### **Use of mobile phone data in HIV epidemic control**

*The Lancet HIV | December 2022*

*Eugenio Valdano, Justin T Okano, Vittoria Colizza, Honore K Mitonga, Sally Blower*

UNAIDS' Global AIDS update states that efforts to increase HIV prevention are effective when “resources are strategically targeted where they can have the maximum impact”.<sup>1</sup> Such targeting is implemented by prioritising geographical areas where people are at the highest risk of HIV, and it is most frequently implemented at the administrative level; however, it does not consider mobility, although individuals cross administrative boundaries. Mobile phone data can be used to identify circular travel patterns and to reveal hidden spatial structures in populations: to detect meta-communities. A metacommunity is a subset of communities that are more tightly linked to each other (due to individuals travelling among them) than to other communities; metacommunities are loosely linked (through travel) to other meta-communities. We propose that a metacommunity be considered as a single social-sexual community (ie, a group of individuals who have the majority of their social and sexual contacts within the group), and that a linked network of social-sexual communities can be used to design geographical targeting strategies for controlling HIV. We have applied these ideas to Namibia.

### **Cost-effectiveness of hepatitis C virus test-and-treat and risk reduction strategies among men who have sex with men living with HIV in France**

*Journal of the International AIDS Society | 30 November 2022*

*Mathieu Castry, Anthony Cousien, Karen Champenois, Virginie Supervie, Annie Verlier, et al.*

Studies suggest that hepatitis C virus (HCV) micro-elimination is feasible among men who have sex with men (MSM) living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), through treatment-as-prevention and interventions aimed at reducing risk behaviours. However, their economic impact is poorly understood. The aim of this study was to assess the cost-effectiveness of HCV screening and risk reduction strategies in France.

### **Transactional sex among adolescent girls and young women enrolled in a cash plus intervention in rural Tanzania: a mixed-methods study**

*Journal of the International AIDS Society | December 2022*

*Meghna Ranganathan, Sarah Quinones, Tia Palermo, Ulrike Gilbert, Lusajo Kajula, et al.*

Transactional sex or material exchange for sex is associated with HIV infection among adolescent girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa. The motivations for engaging in transactional sex vary from the fulfilment of basic needs, to enhancing social status or for romantic reasons with the expectation that men should provide. Transactional sex is also associated with HIV risk behaviours, such as multiple sexual partners and other determinants of HIV risk, including partner violence and abuse, alcohol consumption and inconsistent condom use.

### **Comparison of two mycobacterial strains in performance of the whole blood mycobacterial growth inhibition assay in Indian children**

*Science direct | December 2022*

*Aishwarya Venkantaraman, Sivakumar Shanmugam, Sarath Balaji, Karthick Mani*

A major challenge in tuberculosis is identifying correlates of a protective immune response. The Mycobacterial Growth Inhibition Assay (MGIA) is a functional assay providing an integrated measure of the host immune response to mycobacteria. However, its feasibility is limited by reliance on biosafety level 3 facilities, and its performance has not been widely evaluated in TB-endemic settings. Here, we compared two mycobacterial strains (*M. tuberculosis* H37Rv versus attenuated *M. bovis* BCG) in the performance of whole-blood MGIA in 30 TB-exposed children (median age 2 years) in Chennai, India. The

time-to-positivity in both assays was similar (5.7 days vs 6 days) and the mycobacterial growth of *M. tuberculosis* H37Rv and *M. bovis* BCG were correlated ( $r = 0.64$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). In Bland-Altman analysis, the bias was  $-0.54$  days (95% limit of agreement  $-2.08$ ,  $0.99$ ). Collectively, our results indicate that *M. tuberculosis* H37Rv can be substituted with the less virulent *M. bovis* BCG strain to improve feasibility of the MGIA assay, particularly in low-income settings.

## **Factors associated with HIV self-testing among female university students in Uganda: a cross-sectional study**

*BMC* | 1 December 2022

*Ivan Segawa, Sabrina Bakeera-Kitaka, Kenneth Ssebambulidde, Timothy Muwonge, Lorraine Oriokot, et al.*

Adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) at institutions of higher learning are at high risk of HIV, and conventional HIV testing services may not reach them sufficiently. HIV self-testing (HIVST) scalability can be informed by identifying AGYW who have used or are interested in using HIVST. We aimed to determine factors associated with use and willingness to use HIVST among female university students.

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

---

## **RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS**

### **You can finally buy Covid-19 home tests in South Africa - here's what you need to know**

*Business Insider* | 23 November 2022

Cheap at-home antigen tests are now available in South Africa - more than two years after the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) first approved them for use by healthcare professionals only. SAHPRA has awarded a license to resell the tests for at-home use to Johannesburg-based company TipTop Trade, who were the first in the country to obtain approval for a Covid-19 antibody test in July 2020. The company initially imported a range of products and equipment but has since rebranded to TipTop Medical.

### **OPINION: New research and implementing lessons from COVID-19 are key to SA's future TB intervention plans**

*Spotlight* | 25 November 2022

Our health systems endured a heavy – often invisible – cost during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the country was focused on the battle against this pandemic, long-fought gains against other infectious diseases were being rolled back. And none more so than with tuberculosis. The Lancet notes that South Africa has one of the highest tuberculosis (TB) burdens in the world, with 304 000 people developing TB in 2021, bringing the country's incidence rate to 513 per 100 000, according to the World Health Organization's Global TB Report released recently. In South Africa, the TB epidemic is largely driven by the high HIV prevalence rate, with the disease estimated to kill more people living with HIV (33 000) than those who were HIV negative (23 000) in 2021.

### **South Africa's AIDS ravages "an army of orphans"**

*Africa News* | 25 November 2022

The first to die of AIDS was his father, followed by his mother a year later. Like many South Africans in the mid-2000s, Ndamiso Gamede lost his parents in quick succession. Treatment has since stabilised the crisis, but the effects of this "lost generation" are still being felt. Now a rapper, the 28-year-old, who had to raise his younger brothers from the age of 13, shows pictures of his parents hanging on a dimly lit wall in the garage where he lives in the impoverished township of Vosloorus, about 30 km from Johannesburg.

### **eThekweni Municipality hard at work to curb spread of HIV/Aids**

*Berea Mail* | 25 November 2022

The eThekweni Municipality has intensified its programmes to work with structures to curb the spread of HIV/Aids and other related diseases. The eThekweni area is reported to have the highest rate of HIV/Aids and TB. This was revealed on November 23 at a mayoral engagement held with people living openly with HIV and Aids. The engagement was held at the Garden Court, Marine Parade in Durban Central.

## **UNAIDS urges world to unite to end gender-based violence against women and girls**

*UNAIDS | 25 November 2022*

On the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, UNAIDS is calling on the world to unite to end gender-based violence in all its forms and to challenge the gender inequities driving the HIV pandemic. “Violence against women and girls is our individual and collective shame—a gross violation of human rights happening on an epic scale,” said UNAIDS Executive Director, Winnie Byanyima. “This pandemic of violence continues to drive thousands of new HIV infections every week and is making the end of AIDS much harder to achieve. It is a systemic issue that must be addressed at every level of society.”

## **16 Days of Activism: All eyes on women economic empowerment**

*Health-E News | 25 November 2022*

Women's participation in the economy took centre stage at the launch of this year's 16 days of activism for no violence against women and children, which kicked off at the Nasrec Expo Centre in Johannesburg earlier this afternoon. Led by the Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, this year's campaign highlights the importance of building women's resilience by addressing barriers to socioeconomic opportunities and empowerment.

## **Invasive Mosquito Spreading Malaria in Africa**

*Vax before Travel | 27 November 2022*

A species of malaria-carrying mosquito is spreading in Africa, where it could pose a "unique" threat to millions of city-dweller, reported AFP/RFI. The disease can cause fever, chills, and flu-like illness. If it is not treated, it can cause severe complications. This is important since Africa is where about 95% of the world's malaria deaths occur. Modeling research in 2020 found that if *Anopheles stephensi* mosquitoes spread widely in Africa, it would put more than 126 million people in 44 cities at risk of malaria.

## **Africa: RSV FAQ - What Is RSV? Who Is At Risk? When Should I Seek Emergency Care for My Child?**

*allAfrica | 27 November 2022*

What is RSV?

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is one of many viruses that causes infection of the ear, nose, throat and lungs. It infects people of all ages and can be found worldwide.

Who is at risk of RSV?

RSV is an important cause of lung infections in children under two years of age, and is the leading reason for hospital stays in children under one year of age (infants) in developed countries. Premature infants, adults above 65 years of age and those with chronic heart and lung conditions are at higher risk for severe disease and hospitalization.

## **HOMii lifestyle event skilfully targets men's health and men's mental health issues**

*Health Systems Trust | 28 November 2022*

It goes without saying that women and children's health are a priority if we want to secure a bright future for all, especially in South Africa where cervical cancer, HIV and various non-communicable diseases remain a fundamental public health threat. Equally so, a dangerous gap exists where men's health and men's mental wellness are issues ignored or overlooked, compromising health efforts overall. Not addressing men's health issues has often been labelled as the cause, for instance, for movements such as the global 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children Campaign. The Health Systems Trust was again invited to participate as a guest speaker at a critical event hosted by urban apartment dwelling enabler HOMii, honing in on the health and mental health issues faced by young men in support of National Men's Health Awareness Month.

## **Opinion: Keep an eye on quality as we rush to test people for HIV**

*Spotlight | 28 November 2022*

As we approach World AIDS Day on 1 December, healthcare providers will be offering HIV screening and testing as part of a comprehensive health service. The theme for this year's World AIDS Day is: “Equalise and Integrate to End AIDS”. One aspect in which more equality is arguably needed is between the quality of HIV testing services and aiming to test as many people as possible.

## **Covid blood-thinner drug treatment dangerous and does not work – study**

*The Guardian | 28 November 2022*

A blood-thinning drug given as a potential life-saver to many patients recovering from severe Covid does not work and can cause major bleeding, research shows. The findings have led to calls for doctors to stop advising people to take Apixaban, because it does not stop them from dying or ending up back in hospital and also can have serious side-effects. The anticoagulant is given to patients when they are discharged after a spell in hospital being treated for moderate or severe Covid. It is widely used by hospitals across the NHS. However, the UK government-funded Heal-Covid trial has found that it does not work.

## **WHO recommends new name for monkeypox disease**

*WHO | 28 November 2022*

Following a series of consultations with global experts, WHO will begin using a new preferred term “mpox” as a synonym for monkeypox. Both names will be used simultaneously for one year while “monkeypox” is phased out. When the outbreak of monkeypox expanded earlier this year, racist and stigmatizing language online, in other settings and in some communities was observed and reported to WHO. In several meetings, public and private, a number of individuals and countries raised concerns and asked WHO to propose a way forward to change the name.

## **Next Covid-19 strain may be more dangerous, lab study shows**

*Moneyweb | 28 November 2022*

A South African laboratory study using Covid-19 samples from an immunosuppressed individual over six months showed that the virus evolved to become more pathogenic, indicating that a new variant could cause worse illness than the current predominant omicron strain. The research, conducted by the same laboratory that was to first test the omicron strain against vaccines last year, used samples from a person infected with HIV. The virus initially caused the same level of cell fusion and death as the omicron BA.1 strain, but as it evolved those levels rose to become similar to the first version of the coronavirus identified in Wuhan in China.

## **Tanzania: Over 200,000 People With HIV Do Not Take Arvs**

*allAfrica | 28 November 2022*

Over 200,000 people out of 1.72 million living with HIV in the country do not use ARVs treatment, Manager for National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) Dr Anath Rwebembera has said. She made the revelation during the AIDS exhibition Day organised in Lindi Region ahead of World AIDS Day to be commemorated this Thursday. She said such people were at risk of getting serious illnesses as well as causing viral HIV transmission to other people. "If each and every person with HIV uses medication, he or she helps in preventing transmission of HIV to others as she/he stays healthy," she said.

## **HIV prevention and treatment progress for children, adolescents, and pregnant women nearly flat over past few years**

*Reliefweb | 28 November 2022*

Around 110,000 children and adolescents (0-19 years) died from AIDs-related causes during 2021, according to the latest UNICEF global snapshot on children and HIV and AIDS. Meanwhile, another 310,000 were newly infected, bringing the total number of young people living with HIV to 2.7 million. Ahead of World AIDS Day, UNICEF warns that progress in HIV prevention and treatment for children, adolescents, and pregnant women has nearly flatlined over the past three years, with many regions still not at pre-COVID-19 service coverage. This comes on top of an existing and growing gap in treatment between children and adults.

## **HIV prevention: new injection could boost the fight, but some hurdles remain**

*The Conversation | 28 November 2022*

While the world has focused on the COVID pandemic for nearly three years, less and less attention is being paid to HIV. However, HIV is still a global problem. In 2021, according to the United Nations, 38.4 million people were living with HIV, over 650,000 died from AIDS-related illnesses, and 1.5 million became newly infected. Nearly 70% of infections occur in key groups: sex workers and their clients, men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, and transgender people and their sexual partners. Adolescent girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa are another important group, with nearly 5,000 getting HIV every week.

## **How SARS-CoV-2 immune responses vary by population due to environmental and genetic factors**

*News Medical Life Science | 28 November 2022*

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)-infected individuals display a wide range of clinical variations, from asymptomatic infection to lethal disease. In a recent study published on the bioRxiv\* preprint server, and international team of researchers investigated the genetic, immunological, and evolutionary factors that determine the vast variability observed in clinical manifestations of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

## **PEP: Everything you need to know**

*The South African | 28 November 2022*

Extensive research is going into the prevention of HIV, PrEP and PEP are two HIV prevention mechanisms that scientists have come up with in the fight against HIV/AIDS. PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) is a short course of HIV medicines that can only be taken within 72 hours of having had a possible exposure to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). You will need to take the course of a 3-drug antiretroviral regime for 28 days after exposure and you need to have tested HIV-negative before the medication can be administered.

## **Where Have All the Flowers Gone? – remembering those we loved and lost to the Aids pandemic**

*The Daily Maverick | 28 November 2022*

World Aids Day is marked annually on 1 December. Herman Lategan looks back on some of the friends he lost during the Eighties and early Nineties, the initial stages of the pandemic. It's not only his story, but a wider one about a time of fear, courage, love and loss.

One

It was a warm evening on 2 October 1985. I was relaxing with some friends in a side-street restaurant in Cape Town, called Backstage. It was fashionable with the theatre crowds, thus the name.

## **40 Million Kids Missed Measles Vaccinations in 2021, Report Says**

*WebMD | 28 November 2022*

Measles vaccinations have dropped sharply since the COVID pandemic, with about 25 million children missing their first dose of measles vaccine in 2021 and 14.7 million missing their second dose, the World Health Organization and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a joint report. There were about 9 million measles cases that year and 128,000 deaths, with 22 nations reporting large outbreaks. Because of interruptions in vaccinations, "measles is an imminent threat in every region of the world," the report said.

## **New COVID Subvariants Take Over the U.S.**

*Everyday Health | 28 November 2022*

The coronavirus continues to mutate rapidly. In the latter half of August, the BA.5 subvariant made up more than 85 percent of COVID-19 infections in the U.S. Now, just three months later, BA.5 accounts for just under one-quarter of cases while BQ.1 and BQ.1.1 are responsible for nearly half of infections in the country, according to latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Because the BQ variants are new, more research is needed to determine exactly how harmful they may be. Evidence so far suggests they spread easily but cause milder illness than the original and delta strains of the virus. As the BQ variants have grown, so have the latest COVID-19 numbers. Analysis from The New York Times shows that the daily average of cases has increased by 4 percent over two weeks leading up to November 21. The number of people in intensive care units has risen by 6 percent over the same time period.

## **Scientists report new target to combat coronary artery disease**

*News Medical Life Science | 29 November 2022*

Soon after cholesterol and fat start depositing on the lining of the blood vessels that supply your heart, the smooth muscle cells that give the blood vessels strength and flexibility start to get bigger and multiply. While scientists studying the phenomenon suspect these vascular smooth muscle cells are trying to help, this atypical behavior for these strong cells instead contributes to coronary artery disease, the most

common type of heart disease in the United States.

## **HIV/Aids struggle continues, says Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation's chief**

*People's Post | 29 November 2022*

“We missed the 2020 targets for treatment, prevention of vertical transmission and prevention generally – and we have been set back by Covid-19 and now also have the uncertain impact of the Ukrainian war so not only do we need to up our game to get on with the 2025 and 2030 targets but we have also got some catch-up to do”. This is how a leading HIV/Aids researcher and Chief Operating Officer of the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation, Linda- Gail Bekker, summed up South Africa's ongoing struggle against the scourge.

## **Gender inequalities hampering global efforts to end AIDS**

*United Nations | 29 November 2022*

The study shows how gender inequalities and harmful gender norms are blocking the end of the AIDS pandemic, with rising new infections and continuing deaths in many parts of the planet. Inequalities will prevent the world from meeting agreed global targets on AIDS, but a “feminist route map” can get countries back on track, the UN agency leading the fight against the disease said in a report published on Tuesday. Last year, 650 000 people died from AIDS and 1.5 million acquired HIV, the virus that causes the disease. “The world will not be able defeat AIDS while reinforcing patriarchy,” said Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS, who called for addressing the intersecting inequalities that women face. “The only effective route map to ending AIDS, achieving the sustainable development goals and ensuring health, rights and shared prosperity, is a feminist route map,” she said. “Women's rights organizations and movements are already on the frontlines doing this bold work. Leaders need to support them and learn from them.”

## **The study shows how gender inequalities and harmful gender norms are blocking the end of the AIDS pandemic, with rising new infections and continuing deaths in many parts of the planet.**

### **'Progress in HIV care for kids, pregnant women nearly flat over past 3 yrs'**

*Social News XYZ | 29 November 2022*

Ahead of World Aids Day on December 1, the Unicef warned that progress in HIV prevention and treatment for children, adolescents, and pregnant women has nearly flatlined over the past three years, with many regions still not at pre-Covid service coverage. Around 110,000 children and adolescents (0-19 years) died from AIDS-related causes during 2021 while another 310,000 were newly infected, bringing the total number of young people living with HIV to 2.7 million, according to the latest Unicef global snapshot on children and HIV/AIDS, which was released on Monday.

## **Almost 40 years with HIV – from 'dead man walking' to HIV awareness champion**

*Spotlight | 29 November 2022*

On December 12, Ntimbwe Munongo Mpamba will celebrate his fortieth birthday with chocolate cake in Northgate, Johannesburg. Usually, his diet consists of more “bitter” than sweet foods – plenty of kale, spinach, cayenne pepper, ginger, and garlic, he tells Spotlight.

## **Inequalities standing in the way of global AIDS targets**

*Health-e News | 29 November 2022*

Inequalities obstruct the end of the Aids epidemic after a new UNAIDS report revealed that adults and children are being denied treatment. Over half of these kids are living on lifesaving medicines. The report titled 'Dangerous Inequalities' reveals that based on current trends, the world will not meet agreed global targets on Aids, and millions of lives are at stake. It also shows that only urgent action can get the world's Aids response on track.

## **Good, bad & ugly: How SA's fight against GBV & femicide is going**

*Bhekisisa | 29 November 2022*

Between April 2020 and September 2022, 988 women were killed in domestic violence incidents in South Africa, police data shows. In about the same period, the government achieved just over a fifth of the targets in its action plan to curb gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), according to a report released at the second Presidential Summit on the matter held in Midrand in early November. Why?



## **Mandatory HIV testing and medical examination designed to exclude 'abnormal' migrants to Canada**

*Aidsmap | 30 November 2022*

A new landmark study finds that Canada's process of mandatory HIV screening of migrants is out of step with the OECD and ignores the government's own policy on medical admissibility to Canada. Screening Out, a first-of-its-kind study prepared as a book by Professor Laura Bisaillon, University of Toronto, reveals major problems and gaps in Canada's immigration policy, practice, and process, including exposing the private health information of thousands of applicants to misuse and prejudice. Under Canada's official policy, HIV is not used to discriminate or impede a person's immigration. Yet, migrant applicants are required to undergo mandatory HIV screening by government appointed doctors. Test results are shared with bureaucrats who use HIV status to determine if and on what basis an applicant is 'normal' enough to settle here.

## **Meet the first South African women to get the anti-HIV jab**

*BusinessLIVE | 1 December 2022*

South Africa had 200,000 new HIV infections in 2021, according to UNAids. A new injection called CAB-LA could be a game-changer

## **If the price is right: The anti-HIV jab could be in SA clinics by August 2023**

*News24 | 1 December 2022*

South Africa's medicines regulator, Sahpra, will announce a decision on the approval of the new HIV prevention jab, CAB-LA, "within days". The shot is taken every two months and virtually wipes out someone's chances of contracting HIV through sex. The health department says, if Sahpra approves the shot, it could start rolling out the jab on a large scale within nine months — but that depends on the price that the drugmaker will sell it at. We travelled to Crossroads near Cape Town to speak to young women in a CAB-LA trial who have been using the injection for the past six months.

## **South Africa: Injections Against HIV Could Be Manufactured Locally and Cheaply, Says Aspen Pharmacare**

*allAfrica | 1 December 2022*

*Cabotegravir is still unaffordable after two years.* In 2020, pharmaceutical company ViiV Healthcare announced that a bimonthly injection of its new drug, cabotegravir, prevents HIV infection. More than two years later, the drug is still unaffordable in countries where HIV is highly prevalent.

Local medicines manufacturer Aspen Pharmacare says that licences should be given to African producers so that cabotegravir can be made more affordable and accessible.

## **Inequalities and harmful gender norms need to end in order to stop new HIV infections – report**

*News24 | 1 December 2022*

Global leaders have pledged to end new Aids infections by 2030, but a recent report by the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) says inequalities and harmful gender norms are standing in the way. The '**Dangerous Inequalities**' report released in commemoration of Aids Day, which is observed worldwide on 1 December, says infection rates in young women aged between 15 and 24 were worrying. "The world will not be able to defeat Aids while reinforcing patriarchy. We need to address the intersecting inequalities women face. In areas of high HIV burden, women subjected to intimate partner violence face up to a 50% higher chance of acquiring HIV," said UNAIDS executive director Winnie Byanyima.

## **TAC concerned about HIV infection rate among young people in high school**

*IOL | 1 December 2022*

As South Africa observes World Aids Day today the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) said it was concerned about the high number of young people, including those in high school, who were getting infected with HIV/Aids.

# TRAINING AND RESOURCES

## 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.

## Subscribe to the Health Systems Trust 60percent

HST produces a weekly online publication, 60percent, which keeps subscribers abreast with the latest news and developments pertaining to HIV-related maternal, adolescent, child and youth health. The name 60percent signifies that southern Africa is responding to a feminised HIV/AIDS epidemic, with at least 60% of those living with HIV being women. Subscribe to 60percent by simply visiting HST's website (<https://www.hst.org.za>), scroll to the bottom of the page, hit the SUBSCRIBE button, and follow the prompts. Let's keep you posted!

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

---

# PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

## South African Health Review 2021

*Health Systems Trust | 2021*

When it comes to service delivery and access in both the public and private health sectors, COVID-19 has put everything to the test. It has demonstrated how central public health security is to health and livelihoods, and how pandemic health emergencies expose the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of health systems, costing lives and causing immeasurable damage to economies. Few could have imagined the impact of COVID-19 when this pandemic reached our shores in March 2020.

This edition considers the government's and broader health sector's response to COVID-19, explores the current challenges facing the health system at this unprecedented time, and reflects on lessons learnt for future for public health emergencies. The chapters offer information on, inter alia, the challenges of balancing lives with livelihoods, and the impact of COVID-19 on different cadres of healthcare workers, especially Community Health Workers who found themselves at the forefront of our COVID-19 response. Other areas covered include the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations like children, persons with disabilities, farmworkers, migrants, and the poorest in our society.

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

---

# CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

## HIV surveillance webinar series - Person-centred HIV prevention monitoring

Date: 5 December 2022

Time: 14:00-15:30 CET

This webinar focusses on how the collection of individual-level data across HIV prevention programmes is an opportunity to monitor how well programmes are meeting the prevention needs of individuals and inform the prioritization of prevention interventions at the individual and programme levels.

## Bhekisisa Webinar: New pills, new rules: What's next for ARVs?

Date: 7 December 2022

Time: 11:00 – 12:15

We have simpler, better HIV treatment, also for children. Now, SA needs new guidelines for how we use ARVs. What will the updated rules look like? Join our panel of world-class experts to find out.

## Open call for short films: 4th edition Health for All Film Festival

31 October 2022 – 31 January 2023

The Health for All Film Festival aims to recruit a new generation of film and video innovators to champion

global health issues, launching its 4th edition, the festival is opening an invitation to independent filmmakers, production companies, NGOs, communities, students, and film schools from around the world to submit their original short films about health.

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

---

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

There are currently no vacancies.

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

---



---

*Copyright © 2019 HEALTH SYSTEMS TRUST, All rights reserved.*

**Our mailing address is:**

[hst@hst.org.za](mailto:hst@hst.org.za)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)