

HST Bulletin\_24 February 2023

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## 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

### Trajectories of re-engagement: factors and mechanisms enabling patient return to HIV care in Zambia

*Journal of the International AIDS Society* | 24 February 2023

*Laura K. Beres, Chanda Mwamba, Carolyn Bolton-Moore, Caitlin E. Kennedy, Sandra Simbeza, et al.*

While disengagement from HIV care threatens the health of persons living with HIV (PLWH) and incidence-reduction targets, re-engagement is a critical step towards positive outcomes. Studies that establish a deeper understanding of successful return to clinical care among previously disengaged PLWH and the factors supporting re-engagement are essential to facilitate long-term care continuity.

### Mode of HIV acquisition among adolescents living with HIV in resource-limited settings: A data-driven approach from South Africa

*Plos One* | 24 February 2023

*Eda He, Janke Tolmay, Siyanai Zhou, Wylene Saal and Elona Toska*

Adolescents living with HIV (ALHIV) face unique treatment and care challenges which may differ by how they acquired HIV, whether vertically (in-utero, perinatal or postnatal exposure during breastfeeding) or sexually (sexual exposure). Distinguishing and documenting the mode of HIV acquisition (MOHA) is crucial to further research on the different needs and outcomes for ALHIV and to tailor HIV services to their needs. Age-based cut-offs have been used to attribute MOHA but have not been validated. We analysed data from a three-wave cohort of n = 1107 ALHIV part of a longitudinal study in South Africa. Age-based MOHA was allocated using age at ART initiation, validated against a logic-tree model based on literature-hypothesised factors: self-reported HIV, sexual, and family history. After testing six ART initiation age cut-offs (10 to 15 years old), we determined the optimal MOHA cut-off age by calculating the sensitivity and specificity for each cut-off, measured against the final logic-tree allocation.

### Living with Endometriosis: A Narrative Analysis of the Experiences of Kenyan Women

*MDPI* | 26 February 2023

*Sadie Bergen, Doris Murimi, Caitlin Gruer, Gibson Munene, Atunga Nyachieo, et al.*

Despite the high global prevalence of endometriosis, little is known about the experiences of women living with the disease in low- and middle-income contexts, including in Kenya and other countries across sub-Saharan Africa. This study captures the perspectives and recommendations of Kenyan women living with endometriosis through written narratives about the impact of the disease on their daily lives and their journeys through diagnosis and treatment. Thirty-seven women between the ages of 22 and 48 were recruited from an endometriosis support group in Nairobi and Kiambu, Kenya (February–March of 2022) in partnership with the Endo Sisters East Africa Foundation. Narrative data (written anonymous stories submitted through Qualtrics) were analyzed using a deductive thematic analysis methodology.

### **COVID-19 severity and in-hospital mortality in an area with high HIV prevalence**

*Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine* | 27 February 2023

*Michael T Boswell, Tshagofatso Maimela, Dan Hameiri-Bowen, George Riley, Albertus Malan et al.*

*HIV infection causes immune dysregulation affecting T-cell and monocyte function, which may alter coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pathophysiology. We investigated the associations among clinical phenotypes, laboratory biomarkers, and hospitalisation outcomes in a cohort of people hospitalised with COVID-19 in a high HIV prevalence area.*

### **Structural brain changes in patients with post-COVID fatigue: a prospective observational study**

*eClinical Medicine* | 27 February 2023

*Josephine Heine, Katia Schwichtenberg, Tim J. Hartung, Sophia Rekers, Claudia Chien, Fabian Boesl, et al.*

Post-COVID syndrome is a severe long-term complication of COVID-19. Although fatigue and cognitive complaints are the most prominent symptoms, it is unclear whether they have structural correlates in the brain. We therefore explored the clinical characteristics of post-COVID fatigue, describe associated structural imaging changes, and determine what influences fatigue severity.

### **Addressing misclassification bias in vaccine effectiveness studies with an application to Covid-19**

*BMC Medical Research Methodology* | 27 February 2023

*Paolo Eusebi, Niko Speyroeck, Sonja Hartnack, Jacob Stærk-Østergaard, Matthew Denwood et al.*

Safe and effective vaccines are crucial for the control of Covid-19 and to protect individuals at higher risk of severe disease. The test-negative design is a popular option for evaluating the effectiveness of Covid-19 vaccines. However, the findings could be biased by several factors, including imperfect sensitivity and/or specificity of the test used for diagnosing the SARS-Cov-2 infection. We propose a simple Bayesian modeling approach for estimating vaccine effectiveness that is robust even when the diagnostic test is imperfect. We use simulation studies to demonstrate the robustness of our method to misclassification bias and illustrate the utility of our approach using real-world examples.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake, Acceptance, and Reasons for Vaccine Hesitancy: A Cross-Sectional Study Among Pregnant Women in Trinidad, West Indies**

*Dove Medical Press* | 28 February 2023

*Shane Khan, Karen Sohan, Zada CM Mohammed, Vishal Bachan et al.*

Pregnant women are at greater risk for severe COVID-19 disease and are a priority group for vaccination. Trinidad and Tobago (TTO) introduced COVID-19 vaccination for pregnancy in August 2021, however uptake is presumed to be low. The objective was to determine the COVID-19 vaccine acceptance and uptake rates among pregnant women in TTO and reasons for vaccine hesitancy.

### **HIV incidence and mortality in transgender women in the eastern and southern USA: a multisite cohort study**

*The Lancet HIV* | 28 February 2023

*Andrea L Wirtz, Elizabeth Humes, Keri N Althoff, Tonia C Poteat, Asa Radix, et al.*

Epidemiological monitoring of HIV among transgender women is minimal despite prioritisation of this group in the US National HIV/AIDS Strategy (2022–2025). We aimed to estimate HIV incidence in a multisite cohort of transgender women in the eastern and southern USA. Participant deaths were identified during follow-up; thus, we felt it was an ethical imperative to report mortality alongside HIV incidence.

## **Sleep quality and associated factors among adult people living with HIV on follow-up at Dessie Town Governmental Health Facilities Antiretroviral Therapy Clinics, Northeast, Ethiopia, 2020, a multicenter cross-sectional study**

*BMC Psychiatry* | 2 March 2023

*Fisha Alebel GebreEyesus, Fatuma Seid Degu, Yeneabat Birhanu Yohanes & Abere Woretaw Azagew*

Poor sleep quality is an important health problem in people living with HIV. The exact cause of sleep disturbance is not well known, but it may relate to HIV itself, antiretroviral drug side effects, and other HIV-related disorders. As a result, the purpose of this study was to assess sleep quality and associated factors among adult HIV patients on follow-up at Dessie Town governmental health facilities' antiretroviral therapy clinics in Northeast Ethiopia in 2020.

## **Predictors of an Active Lifestyle in Middle-Aged and Older Adults with HIV in the United States Deep South**

*Dove Medical Press* | 2 March 2023

*Li W, Fazell PL, Wang G, Maqbool M, Del Bene VA, et al.*

An active lifestyle is important for health maintenance and disease prevention. This study was to examine what factors predict an active lifestyle in HIV+ and HIV- adults from the United States Deep South. The sample included 279 participants (174 HIV+ and 105 HIV-) who completed a comprehensive assessment. An active lifestyle composite was created using variables of employment status, level of social support, level of physical activity, and diet. Correlations and regression analyses were conducted between the active lifestyle composite and possible predictors for all (HIV+ and HIV-), HIV+, and HIV- participants, respectively. Lower levels of depression, higher socioeconomic status (SES), and younger age were significant predictors of a more active lifestyle for the full sample, HIV+, and HIV- participants, respectively. SES and depression represent important factors influencing engagement in an active lifestyle in PLWH. Such factors should be considered when developing and implementing lifestyle interventions.

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

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## **RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS**

### **Anxiety and Depression Associated With Different Types of Myocardial Infarction in PLWH**

*The BodyPro* | 24 February 2023

"It is critical to understand the role of mental health diagnoses and treatment in affecting cardiovascular health among people with HIV, including access to substance use disorder treatment and comorbidity management," said Emily P. Hyle, M.D., M.Sc., an associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and infectious diseases physician at Massachusetts General Hospital, in her presentation at the 2023 Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI 2023).

### **OPINION: Budget 2023 – opportunity missed to refocus public health spending?**

*Spotlight* | 24 February 2023

The right to access healthcare services is guaranteed to everyone under Section 27 of the South African Constitution. On a population health level, South Africa has made good progress over the last 20 years. Some of the achievements include increase in overall life expectancy, decrease in the in-facility maternal mortality rates, decrease in under-5 mortality, and increased coverage in essential health services, including infectious diseases and reproductive health services. Still, substantial challenges remain – most notably in the management of non-communicable diseases.

### **Concerns about Human Transmission of Avian Flu Following Death of Cambodian Girl**

*Health Policy Watch* | 24 February 2023

World Health Organization (WHO) officials have sounded alarm bells following the death of an 11-year-old girl in Cambodia from the deadly H5N1 strain of avian influenza, the first such death in the country in nearly 10 years. At least 12 people in Cambodia have now been tested for infection with H5N1 following

the girl's death, WHO officials said at a press briefing on Friday.

### **Promising new PrEP method undergoes first safety study for anal sex**

*Aidsmap | 24 February 2023*

An insert (suppository) designed for PEP or PrEP and containing the antiretrovirals elvitegravir and tenofovir alafenamide (TAF) was safe to use and produced drug levels in rectal tissues that stayed well above protective levels for over a day, and in the case of tenofovir, for over three days. The first human safety study of rectal use of the insert was presented at this week's 30th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI 2023) by Dr Sharon Riddler of the University of Pittsburgh. Data from vaginal use of the insert presented in 2021 at the HIVR4P conference found similar results. The insert is designed to be gently inserted in the vagina or rectum, where it dissolves within a few hours. It looks like an oral tablet and is quite small – about 1.5cm long and less than 1cm wide. The insert contains 60 milligrams (mg) of elvitegravir and 20mg of TAF.

### **Q&A: An optimistic view of a 'failed' HIV vaccine trial**

*Healio | 24 February 2023*

SEATTLE — In January, Janssen discontinued the phase 3 MOSAICO trial because the HIV vaccine regimen it was testing did not prevent infection — the latest in a string of failed HIV vaccine trials. But was the trial actually a failure? Lawrence Corey, MD, co-principal investigator of the HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HTVN) and former president of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center in Seattle, told Healio during the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections that there are lessons that were learned during the trial that will help inform the next steps of HIV vaccine research.

### **Women continue to carry burden of using contraceptives**

*Health-e News | 24 February 2023*

In South Africa, contraceptives are legally available to anyone over 12. But Dr Kim Jonas, a specialist scientist at the Health Systems unit of the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC), says historical cultures and gender norms have long made women solely responsible for family planning.

### **Governments hold first detailed discussions on proposed amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005)**

*WHO | 25 February 2023*

Governments agreed on a way forward for updating the WHO International Health Regulations 2005 (IHR), holding the first round of intensive discussions on more than 300 amendments proposed by countries to this globally agreed instrument. The IHR set out agreed approaches and obligations for countries to prepare for, and respond to, disease outbreaks and other acute public health risks. The proposed amendments come in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Largest Study To Date Suggests Vaccine Lowers Post-COVID Heart Attack And Stroke Risk**

*Health Digest | 24 February 2023*

Although COVID-19 can be harmful to anyone, the SARS-CoV-2 virus is extremely dangerous to older individuals and those with underlying health conditions, including cardiovascular disease. According to the National Institute on Aging, individuals over the age of 65 are more vulnerable to having a heart attack or stroke. Fatty deposits can accumulate in the walls of the arteries as we age, obstructing blood flow to the rest of the body and increasing the risk of heart disease and heart attacks. During a stroke, brain cells are deprived of oxygen and cell death occurs due to a change in blood flow to the brain. Ischemic strokes occur when blood is unable to travel throughout the brain because of a blood clot (per National Institute on Aging). Blood can also leak into and around the brain because of a ruptured blood vessel during a hemorrhagic stroke.

### **Tanzania: Milestone in Malaria Control**

*allAfrica | 26 February 2023*

IFAKARA Health Institute (IHI) researchers in Kilombero District, Morogoro Region have started using drones to identify mosquito breeding sites which are hard to reach and kill them by spraying insecticides. IHI Researcher Najath Kahamba revealed that on Saturday during a meeting which was attended by more than 350 participants and 51 district leaders from four councils of Ulanga, Ifakara Town, Mlimba and



Malinyi. The meeting was organised by IHI through its researchers, under Environmental Health and Ecology Science (EHES) Department in collaboration with St Francis Hospital in Ifakara through the heart and lung clinic.

### **Drug-resistant strain of Shigella bacteria prompts warning from CDC**

*Abc News | 27 February 2023*

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued a health advisory Friday about an increase in an antibiotic-resistant strain of the Shigella bacteria. Shigella is highly infectious and causes around 450,000 infections in the U.S. every year, according to the CDC. Shigella is transmitted in several ways, including changing the diaper of a sick infant, by getting the bacteria on your hands and then touching your mouth, through sexual contact or by contaminated food and water, the CDC said in its advisory.

### **What next after shortened TB treatment fails in key trial?**

*Spotlight | 27 February 2023*

The current treatment for drug-susceptible tuberculosis (TB) used in South Africa last for six months, effectively cures TB and is dirt cheap. Two studies in recent years have shown that TB can be cured in four or in some cases even two months, but price and other complications make these treatments tricky to implement. At a conference in Seattle last week, a major trial of an alternative four-month treatment reported disappointing findings. Elri Voigt unpacks the latest findings and asks what the prospects now are for shortening TB treatment.

### **How Myanmar achieved the 2020 milestone of reducing TB disease burden**

*WHO | 27 February 2023*

Every year more than 10 million people fall ill from tuberculosis (TB), a bacterial infection that mainly affects the lungs. Despite being preventable and curable, TB disease claims 1.5 million lives globally every year. Most of those who fall ill with TB live in low and middle-income countries. The World Health Organization's South-East Asia Region, home to 26% of the world's population, has 43% of the global TB burden. Eliminating tuberculosis was declared a Regional Flagship Priority Programme in 2017 by Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia Region.

### **HIV infections acquired while on injectable PrEP may take a very long time to be spotted**

*Aidsmap | 27 February 2023*

In people who acquire HIV despite taking injectable cabotegravir as PrEP, the course of infection is quite distinct to that seen in people who aren't taking PrEP, Professor Susan Eshleman of Johns Hopkins University told the 30th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Seattle last week. People may not feel unwell, viral load is often unusually low and the infection may not be picked up by diagnostic tests for several months, meaning there is a real risk of developing resistance to integrase inhibitors.

### **The risk of air pollution exposure during pregnancy**

*Health-e News | 27 February 2023*

Pregnant women living in areas that are air pollution hotspots are at increased risk of giving birth to children with a cleft lip and palate (CLP). In a recent study, the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) examined cases of patients with CLP from 2006 to 2020. Drawing from two databases, a total of 2 515 cases were studied in relation to air pollution assessed at the mother's residence. The research identifies an association between the increasing trend in cleft lip births and a mother's exposure during early pregnancy to particulate matter (PM) air pollution, particularly PM2.5.

### **Bloody politics: Meet the politician who plans to end period poverty**

*Bhekisisa | 27 February 2023*

A Kenyan politician has become the subject of a vicious online hate campaign after she protested against period poverty by sitting through a senate meeting in clothing stained with fake menstrual blood. Senator Gloria Orwoba was asked to leave halfway through the session after her fellow parliamentarians requested the speaker eject her for supposedly violating the house's "dress code". Orwoba, the nominated senate leader, is campaigning for free sanitary towel provision and is planning to introduce a Bill in the coming months.

## Nearly 5 million measles doses given so far, says health minister

*IOL | 27 February 2023*

Health Minister Dr Joe Phaahla says 4.7 million measles doses have been administered since the outbreak of the disease. He said this number consisted of 278 127 doses given to babies 6-11 months; 1.7 million to infants aged 12-59 months, and 2.7 million to children aged 5-15.

## Leveraging civil society contributions to polio transition and integration

*Polio Global Eradication Initiative | 27 February 2023*

According to the United Nations, a civil society organization (CSO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national, or international level. CSOs have a vital role to play in the control of infectious diseases. Some CSOs play an advocacy role to sustain commitments of governments, communities, and donors, some support implementation of program activities, and some do both.

## 'SA's measles outbreak is of great concern' - Infectious disease specialist

*702 | 27 February 2023*

John Perlman speaks to Dr James Nuttall, President of the Southern African Society for Paediatric Infectious Diseases. Nuttall says this outbreak is of great concern as it has spread from the north of the country across five provinces. While this outbreak is primarily affecting children between the ages of 5 and 9, children over ten, teenagers, and adults whose immunity has waned are also susceptible to infection.

## Merck to Appeal EU Regulator's Decision to Reject COVID-19 Drug

*Health Policy Watch | 27 February 2023*

Merck will appeal the recommendation by the Europe Union's (EU) Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) that the European Medicines Agency (EMA) rejects its COVID-19 antiviral, Lagevrio (molnupiravir). The decision comes after months of deliberation by European regulators, who began looking at Lagevrio, in November 2021. The CHMP said there was a lack of evidence to support its efficacy in patients. There have also been previous concerns that the benefits of Merck's drug do not outweigh its cost. In its response to European regulators, Merck highlighted that more than 25 countries have authorized the use of the antiviral, including the US and the United Kingdom, which was the first country to authorize the drug in November 2021, the same month the CHMP started its review process.

## Mozambique targets 720 000 people in cholera vaccination drive

*WHO Africa | 27 February 2023*

Maputo – Mozambique today kicked off a cholera vaccination campaign targeting around 720 000 people in eight districts as the country steps up control measures against an outbreak in which 5260 cases and 37 deaths have been recorded to date since September 2022. People aged one year and older will be vaccinated in the five-day campaign, which started just 10 days after the country took delivery of vaccine doses. Alongside the vaccination campaign, health authorities are also reinforcing disease surveillance, prevention and control measures, treatment as well as raising public awareness to curb the spread of the disease and end the outbreak. “The vaccination campaign will be crucial in stemming the spread of cholera and help save lives,” said Dr Severin von Xylander, World Health Organization (WHO) Representative in Mozambique. “We are also working with the health authorities to bolster key outbreak response measures and have deployed staff in the three most affected provinces to support the provincial health authorities to detect, prevent and halt cholera this outbreak.”

## Africa CDC in collaboration with Institut Pasteur de Dakar (IPD) organized a training on Molecular Diagnosis of Marburg Virus

*Africa CDC | 27 February 2023*

On 27 February 2023, the Africa CDC, in collaboration with Institut Pasteur de Dakar (IPD), launched a 3-day training on molecular diagnosis of Marburg Virus Disease (MVD). The training workshop targeted 10 participants from 5 African Union (AU) Member States: Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Gabon, and the Republic of Congo.

## Doxycycline, meningococcal vaccine reduce STI incidence among MSM on PrEP

*MIMS Pharmacy | 28 February 2023*

Use of doxycycline as postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) results in a significant decrease in the incidence of Chlamydia trachomatis (CT) and syphilis and demonstrates a significant impact on the incidence of Neisseria gonorrhoeae (GC), reports a study presented at the 30th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI). Meningococcal B vaccine also helps lower the incidence of GC. “Increased rates of sexually transmitted infections (STI) are reported among men who have sex with men (MSM), in particular those using pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)

### **Repealing laws targeting people living with HIV/AIDS saves lives**

*UN News | 28 February 2023*

“The only reason people are still dying of AIDS is the inequalities in society, and all these come together to make them more at risk,” Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS, said. “Criminalizing laws chase people away from life-saving treatment and need to be removed.” Commemorated on 1 March, Zero Discrimination Day aims at emphasizing how people can become informed about and promote inclusion, compassion, peace, and a movement for change. The 2023 theme - Save Lives: Decriminalize - points to the positive impact on health and life outcomes when discriminatory and punitive laws are removed.

### **Gauteng health dept dismisses 'malicious' rumours of unsafe tap water**

*News24 | 28 February 2023*

The Gauteng Department of Health has assured residents the province's water is safe to drink. It said messages circulating on social media discouraging residents from drinking tap water were false. There have been five confirmed cholera cases in South Africa, including one death.

### **Experimental islatravir implants protect monkeys against HIV-like virus**

*AIDSMAP | 1 March 2023*

Small implants containing islatravir that are inserted under the skin could one day be a long-acting option for PrEP (medication to prevent HIV), according to study results presented last week at the 30th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI 2023) in Seattle. One group of researchers tested a refillable implant that could last for several years, while another team evaluated a biodegradable implant. Both implants protected female macaque monkeys against vaginal infection with SHIV – a hybrid simian-human virus similar to HIV – and the refillable implant also protected male monkeys against rectal infection.

### **Cholera outbreak declared in Gauteng as sixth case identified**

*Daily Maverick | 1 March 2023*

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases has declared a cholera outbreak in Gauteng after six cases and one death were reported in the province. Two cases are especially worrying because their history shows they were infected locally.

### **Implementing Long-acting Injectable PrEP with an Eye Toward Equity: Yale's Dr. LaRon Nelson at CROI 2023**

*HIV.gov | 2 March 2023*

During the 2023 Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI), HIV.gov spoke with LaRon Nelson, PhD, RN, FNP, FNAP, FAAN, of Yale University about his presentation on the hope long-acting injectable HIV PrEP offer if they are implemented with an eye toward equity. Dr. Nelson's presentation, “Inevitable Inequalities: Why We Keep Making the Same Mistakes and How We Can Stop It,” was delivered as part of the symposium, “Delivering on the Success of Injectable PrEP.” He emphasized the importance of addressing social and structural impediments that result in disparities in access to and use of oral and injectable therapies for HIV prevention and, ultimately, HIV incidence. “One of the things we've seen is that the disparities, at least racial disparities, but gender disparities as well, have actually increased since the introduction of oral PrEP,” Dr. Nelson said. “If those social and structural factors are not changed, then the introduction of a new innovation such as injectable PrEP will just widen those disparities or threaten to widen those disparities.”

### **Study examines parental concerns of their sexual and gender minority adolescents using PrEP**

*News Medical | 2 March 2023*

Since its approval in 2012, HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, has shown promise in reducing HIV infection rates by preventing infection in high-risk HIV-negative people. However, research shows that only around three percent of sexual and gender minority (SGM) adolescents who are eligible for PrEP have used it. In a new study, Christopher Owens, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Health Behavior at the Texas A&M University School of Public Health, explores factors that may be associated with parents' acceptance of their SGM adolescent using PrEP. The study, published in the journal *AIDS Education and Prevention*, surveyed parents or guardians of SGM adolescents living in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas. Owens and colleagues from the School of Public Health, the Texas A&M University School of Nursing and Purdue University, recruited participants through Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays chapters, SGM community groups, and Facebook groups for parents in the study area.

### **Cabinet approves plan for HIV, TB and STIs**

*SA News | 2 March 2023*

Cabinet has approved the publication of the National Strategic Plan (NSP) for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Tuberculosis (TB) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) 2023-2028. Addressing a post-Cabinet media briefing held in Pretoria on Thursday, Minister in the Presidency, Mondli Gungubele, said the NSP proposes to deal with HIV, STIs and TB through a holistic approach that includes preventative and therapeutic measures. "This is the fifth NSP for HIV, TB and STIs and it outlines the progress South Africa has made to deal with the three diseases thus far. The five-year plan provides a strategic framework for a multi-sectoral approach that is people-centred to eliminate HIV, TB and STIs as public health threats by 2030," Gungubele said. The drafting of the NSP was coordinated by the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC), which brings together government, civil society, and other social partners to build consensus and drive a well-coordinated, unified response to the three epidemics over a five-year period.

[Return to Top](#)

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## **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!

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

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## **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.

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

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## CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

### **Resilient Health Systems for Africa: Re-envisioning the Future Now**

*March 5th - 8th 2023 | Kigali Convention Centre, Rwanda*

For seven years Amref Health Africa, together with like-minded partners have been hosting the Africa Health Agenda International Conference (AHAIC), a biennial high impact convening that brings together diverse stakeholders from around the world to discuss challenges and opportunities for improving health in Africa.

### **Webinar: Pharmacy Law AND E-learning: Ethics in Pharmacy Law**

*7 March 2023 | LexisNexis South Africa*

A webinar hosted by LexisNexis and presented by Andy Gray and Dr Mariet Eksteen (PSSA). Our 2 panellists will address the topics of ethics and disciplinary processes, the linkages between pharmacy law and medical law, as well as the Schedule 5 & 6 Risks, based on a selected case study. This set is inclusive of a copy of the *Pharmacy Law in SA* book authored by Andy Gray and 2 others and a single user licence to our eLearning course: Legal Ethics for Pharmacists.

### **WHO Postpartum Haemorrhage Summit**

*World Health Organization*

*7 – 10 March 2023 Dubai, United Arab Emirates*

Severe bleeding after childbirth - postpartum haemorrhage (PPH) - is the leading cause of maternal mortality world-wide. Each year, about 14 million women experience PPH resulting in about 70,000 maternal deaths globally. Even when women survive, they often need urgent surgical interventions to control the bleeding and may be left with lifelong reproductive disability.

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

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## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

There are currently no vacancies available at the moment.

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

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