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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Breakthrough technology for in-hospital glucose monitoring

The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology | 1 April 2022

David Kerr, David Klonoff

75 years ago, the English physician and writer, Richard Asher, highlighted the physical and mental health risks associated with an admission to hospital. 1 For people living with diabetes, they have both an increased risk of being admitted to hospital, and, once admitted, are likely to spend longer in hospital compared with people without diabetes. 2 The reasons for the increased length of stay are multifactorial, including serious and common medication errors, especially related to the prescription and use of insulin.

Simplifying and optimising the management of uncomplicated acute malnutrition in children aged 6–59 months in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (OptiMA-DRC): a non-inferiority, randomised controlled trial

The Lancet | 1 April 2022

Cécile Cazes, Kevin Phelan, Victoire Hubert, Harouna Boubacar, Liévin Izie Bozama, Gilbert Tshibangu Sakubu, et al

Global access to acute malnutrition treatment is low. Different programmes using different nutritional products manage cases of severe acute malnutrition and moderate acute malnutrition separately. We aimed to assess whether integrating severe acute malnutrition and moderate acute malnutrition treatment into one programme, using a single nutritional product and reducing the dose as the child improves, could achieve similar or higher individual efficacy, increase coverage, and minimise costs compared with the current programmes.

Clinical similarities and differences between two large HIV cohorts in the United States and Africa

Plos One | 4 April 2022

Anne Monroe, Christina Polyak, Amanda Castel, Allahna Esber, Morgan Byrne

There is a generalized HIV epidemic in many African countries, with an HIV prevalence of 6.8% in East and Southern Africa and 2.8% in Nigeria. Additionally, there are concentrated subepidemics in key populations in Africa, including men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women. The U.S.

does not have a generalized HIV epidemic, however there are areas of the U.S. with high HIV prevalence, including Washington DC, which has an overall HIV prevalence of 1.9%. Because HIV disproportionately affects members of racial and ethnic minorities, the HIV prevalence in Washington DC is much higher when considering only Black or Latino males, at 4.4% and 2.1%, respectively.

Association of HIV infection and antiretroviral therapy with the occurrence of an unfavorable TB treatment outcome in a rural district hospital in Eastern Cape, South Africa: A retrospective cohort study

Plos One | 5 April 2022

Brittney van de Water, Isabel Fulcher, Suretha Cilliers, Nadishani Meyer, Michael Wilson

Tuberculosis (TB) is the leading cause of infectious disease death worldwide, and in South Africa (WHO, 2019) [1]. Nearly one in every four deaths among people living with HIV is attributable to TB [1]. South Africa has an HIV prevalence rate of 20.4% among adults, 8.7% among youth 15 to 24 years, and 2.7% among children < 2 years and has more cases of HIV than any other country, with 7.7 million known HIV infections in 2018 [2, 3]. In a recent country-wide prevalence survey, it is estimated that the prevalence of bacteriologically confirmed pulmonary TB in South Africa is 852 (95% 679–1,026) per 100,000 population among individuals 15 years and older [4]. Therefore, South Africa has a dual burden of both HIV and TB, with nearly 60% of individuals diagnosed with TB disease being co-infected with HIV [3]. Yet, despite the incredibly high prevalence of HIV in South Africa, TB (and TB/HIV) continues to kill more South Africans annually than HIV alone

Outcomes of periviable neonates born and admitted to a resource-limited hospital, Cape Town, South Africa

South African Medical Journal | 6 April 2022

N Dormohamed, L van Wyk

Background. Periviability, defined as a gestational age of 20 0/7 to 25 6/7 weeks, is considered the limit of foetal maturity where a reasonable chance of survival exists. The outcome of these neonates in sub-Saharan Africa is poorly described.

Objective. To describe the mortality and morbidities of periviable neonates admitted to a resource-limited public hospital in South Africa (SA).

Methods. This was a retrospective, descriptive study performed at Tygerberg Hospital, Cape Town, SA, between January 2017 and December 2018. Records of all periviable neonates (gestational age \leq 27 weeks or birthweight \leq 750 g) born at or admitted to Tygerberg Hospital within 24 hours of birth were included.

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

COVID Fifth Wave Likely to Hit SA in May but Dependent on new variant – Karim

EWN | 3 April 2022

Infectious diseases epidemiologist, Professor Salim Abdool Karim, said that South Africans could expect a fifth wave of COVID-19 infections in early May but this would be dependent on the emergence of a new variant. Citizens have been warned to remain vigilant, especially as cabinet announced the lifting of the national state of disaster, which was aimed at curbing the spread of the deadly disease. Karim said that the case surge in China was not of immediate concern as it was being driven by the Omicron variant, which had already peaked in South Africa. Professor Karim is reminding South Africans that we are still living in a pandemic and if past trends continue, it is likely that we'll see a new wave of infections in winter.

WATCH | New COVID-19 variant discovered in UK

eNCA | 4 April 2022

A new coronavirus variant has been discovered in the UK and it is spreading. (BA.2) The World Health Organization says it is a sub-variant of omicron called BA.2 and it is the most transmissible variant of the virus to date. Other variants are still around and still mutating. Offspring of different viruses combining is being watched by WHO. Higher Health CEO, Ramneek Ahluwalia.

Climate Mitigation Report Says 43% Reduction Needed in Carbon Emissions by 2030

Health Policy | Watch 4 April 2022

Global greenhouse emissions need to peak before 2025, at the latest, and decline by 43% by 2030 if the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C is to be achieved, warned the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Sixth Assessment report on Climate Change Mitigation (AR 6) launched on Monday. More aggressive investments to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy, along with zero emissions buildings; more compact, walkable cities; and massive reforestation projects are key to achieving the needed changes, the report states. This along with a stronger emphasis on sector-based emission targets and carbon taxes, the experts stated, etching a way forward for how such changes could actually be accomplished. But without immediate and deep reductions, limiting global warming will be beyond reach, states the report, authored by some 278 scientists from 65 countries.

Billions of people still breathe unhealthy air: new WHO data

World Health Organization | 4 April 2022

Almost the entire global population (99%) breathes air that exceeds WHO air quality limits, and threatens their health. A record number of over 6000 cities in 117 countries are now monitoring air quality, but the people living in them are still breathing unhealthy levels of fine particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide, with people in low and middle-income countries suffering the highest exposures. The findings have prompted the World Health Organization to highlight the importance of curbing fossil fuel use and taking other tangible steps to reduce air pollution levels.

WATCH | New COVID-19 variant discovered in UK

ENCA | 4 April 2022

A new coronavirus variant has been discovered in the UK, and it's spreading. The World Health Organization says it is a sub-variant of omicron, called BA.2. More transmissible than BA.1.

Watch the complete video: <https://www.enca.com/videos/watch-new-covid-19-variant-discovered-uk>

Opinion: Reframing the right to healthcare in terms of insurance cover is a bad idea

Spotlight | 5 April 2022

The primary aim of any health system must be to improve people's health. Universal access to healthcare is recognised globally as a public good. It embodies universal social values such as solidarity, fairness, social justice, and shared responsibility. It is entrenched as a fundamental human right in the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Furthermore, Section 27 in our Bill of Rights guarantees access to healthcare as a human right. There has recently been a subtle and little-noticed shift in the discourse around universal health care towards framing it as Universal Health Coverage, including in the language of documents from the United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Biden announces long covid strategy as experts push for more

The Washington Post | 5 April 2022

President Biden on Tuesday directed government agencies to take additional steps to research and treat long covid, a condition that remains often mysterious even as it has sickened millions of Americans. Under a memorandum issued by Biden, the Department of Health and Human Services will coordinate a government-wide action plan to address long covid, which is estimated to afflict anywhere from 7.7 million to 23 million Americans, according to a recent federal watchdog report.

End of State of Disaster does not mean end of COVID-19

Health-E News | 5 April 2022

Ending the National State of Disaster does not mean the COVID-19 pandemic has ended, warned Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma on Tuesday afternoon. Dlamini-Zuma said it just means South Africa has reached a stage where the pandemic can no longer be classified as a disaster and can be managed without invoking the Disaster Management Act. President Cyril Ramaphosa announced the end of the state of disaster on Monday after 750 days of national lockdown. "We need to introduce traditional measures which are post-disaster management and rehabilitation measures to continue managing the spread of the virus for 30 days. These include the continued wearing of masks indoors and in public gatherings. It is not necessary outdoors."

Health partners race to secure life-saving HIV medicines and services for people

affected by the war in Ukraine

UNAIDS | 6 April 2022

The war in Ukraine has resulted in a catastrophic humanitarian crisis with rapidly growing numbers of deaths and casualties, the destruction of entire cities and towns and unconscionable attacks on health facilities and other civilian targets. This is putting Ukrainians living with HIV in grave danger. “It is becoming increasingly difficult for people to access the health care they need, including services for HIV,” said Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “UNAIDS estimates that 260 000 people were living with HIV in Ukraine before the war broke out, 152 000 of whom were taking daily medication for HIV. There is no cure for HIV. Without access to antiretroviral medicines people living with HIV will die.” The World Health Organization estimates that there have been 82 separate attacks on hospitals, ambulances and doctors in Ukraine since the war began, killing 72 and injuring at least 43 people. Nearly 50% of Ukraine’s pharmacies are presumed to be closed and many health workers are either displaced or unable to work. UNAIDS with its cosponsors WHO and UNICEF together with USAID, PEPFAR, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria are working to ensure a 12-month supply of the medicines for people living with HIV in Ukraine. A delivery of 209 000, 90-day supplies of antiretroviral medicines has arrived in Lviv, Ukraine ready to be distributed to people in need. However, distribution within Ukraine is set to be a challenge, particularly in conflict areas. UNAIDS urges respect for and protection of humanitarian corridors to allow for the distribution of humanitarian aid and safe passage for civilians to safety.

Young people's monitoring of progress towards 2025 targets begins second phase

UNAIDS | 6 April 2022

The 2021 United Nations Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Ending Inequalities and Getting on Track to End AIDS by 2030 reaffirmed the importance of leadership by young people in the HIV response. The Global Network of Young People Living with HIV (Y+ Global) and the PACT are two innovative networks led by young people that have consistently proved the innovation and resourcefulness of young people in the HIV response. With support from UNAIDS, they are currently rolling out the #UPROOT Scorecard 2.0, a monitoring tool led by young people, in seven countries: Burundi, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, Uganda, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

WHO urges accelerated action to protect human health and combat the climate crisis at a time of heightened conflict and fragility

World Health Organization | 6 April 2022

On this World Health Day (April 7, 2022), WHO is issuing an urgent call for accelerated action by leaders and all people to preserve and protect health and mitigate the climate crisis as part of an “Our planet, our health” campaign marking the organization’s founding day, which falls at a time of heightened conflict and fragility. In issuing its call-to-action, WHO notes that 99 per cent of people breathe unhealthy air mainly resulting from burning of fossil fuels. A heating world is seeing mosquitos spread diseases further and faster than ever before. Extreme weather events, biodiversity loss, land degradation and water scarcity are displacing people and affecting their health. Pollution and plastics are found at the bottom of our deepest oceans, the highest mountains, and have made their way into our food chain and blood stream. Systems that produce highly processed, unhealthy foods and beverages are driving a wave of obesity, increasing cancer and heart disease while generating up to one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions. This health and social crisis is compromising people’s ability to take control over their health and lives.

Lessons from the global South on how to counter harmful information

The Conversation | 6 April 2022

The large-scale contamination of the public sphere by rumours, hate speech, dangerous conspiracy theories and orchestrated deception campaigns is causing widespread concern around the world. These ills are collectively referred to as “information disorder”. The disorder results from a range of factors. They include a rapidly changing media ecology and an increasingly fractious, populist and polarised political environment. The surge in misleading and false information about the Covid-19 pandemic has increased these concerns.

Obesity, stunting on the rise among SA's children

Health-E News | 6 April 2022

Many South African households are unable to feed their children nutritious food which has seen a rise in the number of kids living with obesity or stunted growth. Angelika Grimbeek, Nutrition Programme

Manager at HEALA, said malnutrition and the availability of ultra-processed foods (UPFs) are behind the increasing rates. “There is inequality and poverty that do not allow children to access adequate amounts of nutritious food. Shockingly, 30% of South African children live in households living below the food poverty line,” said Grimbeek.

Here are the new Covid rules for workers and businesses in South Africa – including mandatory vaccinations

Business Tech | 6 April 2022

President Cyril Ramaphosa's decision to lift the national state disaster means almost all of the country's lockdown rules have been repealed with immediate effect. However, there is still a complex landscape of rules and regulations for employers to navigate, say employment law experts at Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr. The firm said that the most notable transitional provisions in the employment context are as follows...

New framework for action for male engagement in the HIV response in eastern and southern Africa launched

UNAIDS | 7 April 2022

Men and boys are less likely to test for HIV, to initiate antiretroviral therapy and to remain engaged in care, and are therefore dying of AIDS-related illnesses and many other diseases at disproportionately higher rates than their female counterparts. This has become increasingly clear over the past decade. Globally, antiretroviral therapy coverage of men lags that of women. In many countries in eastern and southern Africa, the region with the highest HIV burden, more than half of men aged 24–35 years living with HIV are unaware of their status and therefore not on treatment. This imperils their own health and increases the risk of HIV transmission. The diagnosis of undiagnosed men is essential for promoting men's health and breaking the cycle of HIV transmission. Primary health-care services in eastern and southern Africa place a great deal of focus on women of reproductive age, and reproductive, maternal and child health services offer ideal entry points for HIV services—similar entry points for men are not commonplace. The architecture of health service delivery needs to be reviewed. Are health institutions organized in ways that promote access to services for men and boys? Do HIV-related health systems, policies and strategies include men, especially men at higher risk of HIV? However, health-system barriers go beyond the service delivery level, and a broader supportive enabling environment needs to be created, including laws, policies and health strategies.

Opinion: Time to take clean indoor air as seriously as we take clean water

Spotlight | 7 April 2022

Two hundred years ago, drinking water from a water pump could have been lethal. The water might have appeared clean but could be contaminated with sewage, causing a serious and often deadly diarrhoeal disease owing to cholera. Luckily, societal norms and regulations around water and sanitation have shifted. We now expect the water from our taps to be clean and safe. Although we now have safer drinking water, we have a challenge ahead to do the same for the indoor air that we breathe and share. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on tuberculosis (TB) care in South Africa and globally, with TB-related deaths increasing for the first time in a decade. However, since COVID-19 and TB are both airborne infections, the attention surrounding mitigation measures could provide a glimmer of hope for the TB response.

This World Health Day, WHO is calling on you to keep fellow humans and the planet healthy

Health Systems Trust | 7 April 2022

On a scale of 1 to 10, how fit would you rate yourself? How much access to good food, water, nutrition and health services are at your fingertips? Do you understand that others go without? And is the air that you breathe and the environment in which you live suitable for your health and overall well-being? These are some of the critical questions raised by the theme of this year's World Health Day, 7 April 2022: "Our planet, our health".

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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!

HSTi offers accredited and non-accredited short courses and full programmes

The Health Systems Training Institute (HSTi) is the training arm of the Health Systems Trust (HST), a leading force in the South African public health sector. HST was established in 1992, on the brink of democracy in South Africa, and has since played a significant role in strengthening the national primary health system through health research, informatics, clinical support, capacity-building and training.

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PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Geneva Charter for Well-Being

The world faces complex and interrelated crises, but they impact countries in different ways. Recent pandemics have exposed the fractures in society and highlighted the ecological, political, commercial, digital and social determinants of health and health inequities, within and between social groups and nations. Climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, rapid urbanization, geopolitical conflict and militarization, demographic change, population displacement, poverty, and widespread inequity create risks of future crises even more severe than those experienced today. Responses require investments that integrate planetary, societal, community and individual health and well-being, as well as changes in social structures to support people to take control of their lives and health. Fundamental redirection of societal values and action consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are required.

Amnesty International Report 2020/21: The state of the world's human rights

The Amnesty International Report 2020/21 documents the human rights situation in 149 countries in 2020, as well as providing global and regional analysis. It presents Amnesty International's concerns and calls for action to governments and others. During 2020, the world was rocked by COVID-19. The pandemic and measures taken to tackle it impacted everyone, but also threw into stark relief, and sometimes aggravated, existing inequalities and patterns of abuse.

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

International Strategic Dialogue on Noncommunicable Diseases and the Sustainable Development Goals

Date: 12 April 2022

Time: 09:00 AM in Greenwich Mean Time

Cancer, heart diseases, diabetes and lung disease, commonly known in the global health community as noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), together with mental health conditions, are one of the most significant challenges in global health today. Every year, there are more deaths from NCDs than any other disease group. Insufficient global action on NCDs, combined with the COVID-19 pandemic, are creating the very real possibility that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets 3.4 and 3.8 will not be met. Just 14 countries are on track to achieve SDG target 3.4, to reduce by one-third the premature mortality of

NCDs through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being by 2030. Hosted by the Government of Ghana, Government of Norway and the World Health Organization, the International Strategic Dialogue on NCDs and the SDGs will take the next decisive step towards comprehensive action on NCDs and achieving SDG 3.4.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

There are currently no vacancies available. Please keep our eyes on HST's careers portal (<https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Careers.aspx>) for all new job opportunities that may arise.

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