

HST Bulletin_9 September 2022

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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Equity in HIV mental health research: a call to action

*Molecular Psychiatry | 2 September 2022**Arisha Rakshasa-Loots*

The brain remains a key reservoir of latent HIV infection, and people living with HIV (PLWH) face a high risk for cognitive impairment and psychiatric disorders. Although the burden of HIV infection and comorbidities is greatest in the Global South, a large proportion of HIV mental health research is carried out in the Global North. Large, well-funded observational cohort studies exploring HIV-associated psychopathology generally involve participant groups from WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialised, rich and democratic) settings. The socioeconomic status and institutional access afforded to these participant groups on average does not reflect those of the majority of beneficiaries of HIV mental health research. This misalignment may lead to limitations in generalising findings and developing effective interventions to improve the mental health of PLWH. Here, I offer recommendations to actively cultivate authentic diversity and inclusion in the field, with four focus points: (1) for funding bodies, to actively invest in neuroscientists in the Global South for investigations of HIV-related psychopathology; (2) for scientific publishers, to fund professional support services for researchers in the Global South; (3) for academic institutions, to facilitate meaningful, equitable collaborations with researchers in the Global South and incentivise studies with diverse participant groups; and (4) for individual neuroscientists, to actively cite and converse with colleagues in the Global South, tackle personal biases in those conversations, and avoid overgeneralising findings from primarily WEIRD participant groups.

Tuberculosis in the Female Genital Tract

*Cureus | 5 September 2022**Himanshi Kesharwani, Shazia Mohammed and Pranav Pathak*

Genitourinary tuberculosis (GUTB) is caused by *Mycobacteria tuberculosis* bacilli and is typically secondary to tuberculosis (TB) of the lungs. The spread largely occurs through the haematogenous route. *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex infections frequently cause the symptoms by reactivation of previously dormant tuberculous bacilli. Particularly in underdeveloped nations, female genital TB (FGTB) continues to be a key contributor to tubal blockage and infertility. It damages genital organs, which results

in abnormal menstruation and infertility. FGTB is a chronic condition that manifests as mild symptoms. Almost all cases of genital TB include the fallopian tubes, which, together with endometrial involvement, render patients infertile. There may be asymptomatic cases. In order to save women from invasive surgery, it is vital to keep in mind the extremely rare but critical role of FGTB in the differential diagnosis of any malignancy. A thorough physical examination, careful history collection, and careful use of tests are done to arrive at a diagnosis. Hysterosalpingography has been recognised as the most accurate method for detecting FGTB and as the gold standard screening test for determining tubal infertility. Recently, there have been numerous improvements and modifications to FGTB management. The primary treatment for TB is a multidrug anti-TB regimen, while surgery may be necessary in more severe cases. Even after receiving multimodal therapy for TB, infertile women with genital TB have low conception rates and a significant risk of complications like ectopic pregnancy and loss.

HIV incidence estimation among female sex workers in South Africa: a multiple methods analysis of cross-sectional survey data

The Lancet HIV | 5 September 2022

Reshma Kassanjee, Alex Welte, Kennedy Otwombe, Maya Jaffer, Minja Milovanovic, et al.

Women are disproportionately affected by HIV in South Africa; of the 7.3 million adults living with HIV, 64% are women. A quarter of South African women aged 15–49 years are HIV positive. National incidence estimates for the general population suggest that the highest risk of acquisition is among 20–34-year-old Black African women, at 4.5% per year, declining steadily with age. This high prevalence and incidence of HIV is attributed to many factors, including age, concurrent partnerships, substance use, violence, and low level of education.³ HIV prevalence among female sex workers in South Africa is high, estimated to be 39–89% across different geolocations. A national study of female sex workers reported a prevalence of 62%. These data were collected before the COVID-19 pandemic, which is likely to have negatively affected provision of HIV services.

Risk Factors for Suboptimal Adherence Identified by Patient-Reported Outcomes Assessments in Routine HIV Care at 2 North American Clinics

Dove Press | 5 September 2022

D Short, X Want, S Suri, TK Hsu, B Jones, et al.

Modern antiretroviral therapy (ART) regimens are highly effective at achieving virologic suppression, thereby reducing HIV-associated morbidity and mortality and increasing health-related quality of life among people with HIV (PWH). However, suboptimal adherence to ART is associated with increased rates of virologic failure. Therefore, detecting and addressing suboptimal adherence among PWH is critical in HIV clinical care. Adherence to ART is associated with multiple behavioral, social, and clinical factors. However, identifying and addressing all factors potentially contributing to suboptimal ART adherence in individual patients can be challenging for healthcare providers during brief clinic visits. Screening assessments using patient-reported outcomes assessments (PROs) in routine HIV care can improve patient–provider communication and focus provider attention on symptoms or behaviors that may not otherwise be addressed, such as mental health issues and substance use.

Help-seeking intention for depression and suicidal ideation during pregnancy and postpartum in rural Sri Lanka, a cross-sectional study

Remote and Rural Health | 5 September 2022

Gayani S Amarasinghe, Suneth Buddhika Agampodi

Suicides are a leading cause of maternal deaths. Depression, the commonest mental illness during pregnancy, amidst its numerous morbidities, can precipitate suicides. So, early detection and treatment of maternal depression and suicidal thoughts are important for reducing maternal morbidity and mortality. Pregnant women's help-seeking patterns play a crucial role in this. Limited availability and accessibility of potential sources, poor knowledge, and perceptions of the condition and the help-seeking process itself, would act as barriers for help-seeking, especially in resource-constrained settings. This study explores the help-seeking intention, preferred sources, and factors influencing help-seeking for depression and suicidal thoughts among pregnant women in rural Sri Lanka.

Impact of COVID-19 on paediatric diabetes clinic attendance

Remote and Rural Health | 6 September 2022

Pharasi D, Lynn S, Fountain-Polley S

The COVID pandemic has affected provision of outpatient services due to face-to-face clinic cancellation. Our local paediatric diabetes service sought innovative solutions to service replacement, initiating telephone clinics and then drive-through clinics (families travelling to the clinic, but remaining in the car, with blood obtained for HbA1c from the patient's finger projecting through an open car window). Concerns remained that COVID lockdowns would adversely affect clinic attendance, despite changes to clinic structures to mitigate this. The clinic cares for a rural population, covering the south-west quarter of Wales, in the United Kingdom.

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

A Breakthrough Tuberculosis Treatment Just Got Safer

Health Policy Watch | 1 September 2022

Researchers have significantly strengthened the safety profile of a watershed treatment course for highly drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis — a heartening breakthrough set to change the lives of millions of MDR-TB patients around the world. The results of a randomized-controlled trial published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* today showed the new oral TB antibiotic regimen BPaL had half as many side effects but maintained an efficacy rate of 91% after an adjustment to the course of one of the three component antibiotics in the regimen. The breakthrough findings have already been hailed by experts as one of the most important developments in tuberculosis research this century.

The Stitches Doll Project: Preserving the Stories of Women Living With HIV for Over 20 Years

The Body HIV/AIDS Resource | 1 September 2022

"If your doll could talk, what would she say?" Since 1999, this is the question that the Stitches Doll Project has asked of women dealing with different health and life challenges. The project started as a way to help women deal with the challenges of living with HIV, but the project has grown to now offer its healing services to women who are dealing with a spectrum of heavy issues. The idea is to give a voice to any woman who feels silenced, for a variety of reasons. Often, participants feel as if they have been made voiceless by the very issues that their doll speaks to. Creating her own doll to visually represent what she wants to say to the world can be incredibly empowering, cathartic, healing, and redeeming.

How a 4th Person Was 'Cured' of HIV After Stem Cell Treatments

Healthline | 1 September 2022

In July, cancer research and treatment center City of Hope presented research at the 2022 International AIDS Conference that shed a positive spotlight on the continued push to better understand, treat, and combat HIV. The news reverberated around the world — the 66-year-old patient, who wishes to remain anonymous, is the oldest individual to achieve remission from both HIV and leukemia, following a successful stem cell transplant from a donor who possesses an extremely rare genetic mutation.

Phaahla: Don't blame migrants for healthcare challenges

Health-e News | 2 September 2022

The challenges South Africa's healthcare system faces cannot be blamed on migrants seeking treatment at the country's facilities, said Health Minister Dr Joe Phaahla. Speaking outside Kalafong Hospital in Atteridgeville, Pretoria, Phaahla admitted poor management, maladministration, staff shortages, and corruption weaken the public health sector. Phaahla visited the hospital after a picket by Operation Dudula outside Kalafong Hospital started to grow and gained more media attention. The organisation spent all of August outside the hospital to stop foreigners from accessing care.

Community-led monitoring of HIV services leads to investment and policy change

Aidsmap | 2 September 2022

Community-led monitoring is an emerging model in which communities take the lead on the routine monitoring of a specific issue that matters to them, in any place where they are the end user. At the 24th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2022) in Montreal last month, Solange Baptiste of the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC) presented a look into community-led monitoring.

Bilharzia: A silent disease lurking in our waters

Health-e News | 3 September 2022

A distressed mother from the North West was left with more questions than answers after her nine-year-old son was diagnosed with bilharzia. It all started when Mokgadi Sebone* noticed blood stains on her son's underpants. She immediately sat down with him before discovering that he'd been passing blood in his urine for some time. Worried sick, she took him to the nearest clinic where he was diagnosed with the tropical disease. "When I saw the blood, I thought it was prostate cancer or kidney failure. But bilharzia? I'd never heard of such a disease. I didn't know how to feel or what to think. Was my baby going to die and where did he get it? I had so many questions," said Mokgadi.

Wastewater Covid-19 data indicate an 'impending wave' - NICD

News24 | 3 September 2022

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) says an increase of Covid-19 in wastewater treatment facilities may indicate an impending wave. "We are beginning to see increases in SARS-CoV-2 in certain wastewater treatment plants which may indicate an impending wave," the NICD said in its weekly wastewater surveillance report released on Friday. The centre said it saw increases in the virus in samples for the week ending August 23. The report further states increases are being seen in Daspoort in Tshwane, Goudkoppies in Johannesburg, Hartebeesfontein in Ekurhuleni, Sterkwater in Bloemfontein and the central wastewater plant in eThekweni.

Kenya adopts three-test HIV testing in latest efforts to deal with the virus

African Business | 3 September 2022

Kenya is set to implement a three-test HIV testing algorithm as it seeks to optimize ongoing efforts to deal with the virus. Speaking after he received a preliminary report of a technical taskforce on the adoption of the procedure, health Cabinet secretary Mutahi Kagwe said the field testing will be piloted in selected counties ahead of the national roll out. "I congratulate and thank members of the Taskforce for exhibiting professionalism and adhering to WHO recommendations while undertaking the assignment," said the health CS.

Dolutegravir associated with improved viral suppression in HIV-positive pregnant patients

2 Minute Medicine | 5 September 2022

HIV-positive pregnant patients require antiretroviral therapy (ART) to prevent pregnancy complications. The data on the effectiveness and safety of dolutegravir-based therapies have not been sufficient in the current literature. Participants who received dolutegravir had a higher percentage of pregnancies in which viral suppression was present compared to other types of ART. Of pregnancies where ART was started during pregnancy, dolutegravir had greater rates of viral suppression at delivery than those on other ART. The adverse outcomes of being born premature, having low birth weight, and being small for gestational age were not significantly different between groups on dolutegravir versus other forms of ART. No neonatal deaths occurred in any of the groups. Four instances of perinatal HIV transmission occurred, none of which were in participants taking dolutegravir.

What is the END TB Strategy?

News Medical Life Science | 5 September 2022

The World Health Organization (WHO) developed the End TB Strategy to ultimately eliminate tuberculosis (TB) from the world. The strategy was endorsed in 2014 by the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly and aims to "end the global TB epidemic" by 2035. The strategy initially aims to reduce the number of people suffering from TB by 90% by this deadline while reducing deaths from the disease by 95% and protecting families from the negative impact of the disease. Here, we discuss the strategy in detail as well as outline what TB is and why it is important to focus on eliminating it.

SMHS to lead initiative to remove barriers to HIV and COVID screening

The GW Hatchet | 5 September 2022

The GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences will lead an education initiative for primary care practitioners to improve communication about HIV and COVID-19 for vulnerable patients. SMHS received funding from biotechnology company Gilead Sciences to train primary care practitioners over the next 18 months to engage in "culturally responsive" conversations about HIV and COVID screening and testing

with patients who identify as LGBTQ+ and Black, Indigenous People of Color. The Two In One HIV + COVID Screening & Testing Model aims to create better relationships between patients and health care officials to lessen the negative stigma surrounding HIV and COVID screening. The model hopes to eliminate “discomfort” from patients when talking about the risks and barriers to care patients face when dealing with HIV and COVID.

WHO releases new module of the PrEP implementation tool on integration of STI services

WHO | 6 September 2022

At the 23rd World Congress of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections (IUSTI) WHO released a new module of its implementation tool for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to support countries implementing, and scaling up integrated STI services for people who use PrEP. The module provides a framework and practical guidance for decision-makers, programme and facility managers, and health care workers for the gradual integration of sexually transmitted infection (STIs) services considering the local context and modes of PrEP delivery services.

'Call me Tumi': Meet the young woman who heads SA's medicines regulator

Bhekisisa | 6 September 2022

“Call me Tumi,” says Boitumelo Semete-Makokotlela. This after an awkward “do we shake hands nowadays or not?” in the doorway of her Centurion home. Unexpected winter rain had clogged up the roads and drawn out the school run, putting Tumi, casually-dressed in a grey workout tracksuit, slightly behind schedule. “I drop the two of them off at school myself every morning because it's important to me that we use that time to connect,” she says and adjusts her stylish spectacles.

A new smartphone app can detect Covid-19 in voices

IOL | 6 September 2022

A new smartphone app can detect Covid-19 in a person's voice. Researchers at the Institute of Data Science, Maastricht University in the Netherlands claimed that they have had “promising results” with the new app, which with the use of a “simple voice recording” and AI technology can reportedly detect whether a person has contracted a case of coronavirus. Wafaa Aljbawi said: “The promising results suggest that simple voice recordings and fine-tuned AI algorithms can potentially achieve high precision in determining which patients have Covid-19 infection.”

Powerful New Antibody Neutralizes All Known COVID Variants

SciTech Daily | 6 September 2022

Future vaccine development may be inspired by the findings.

Therapeutic antibodies that were effective early in the pandemic have lost their efficacy as SARS-CoV-2 has changed and mutated, and more recent variants, particularly Omicron, have learned how to circumvent the antibodies our systems produce in response to vaccinations. We may be able to better guard against possible variations thanks to a new, widely neutralizing antibody created at Boston Children's Hospital. In tests, it neutralized all known SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern, including all Omicron variants. “We hope that this humanized antibody will prove to be as effective at neutralizing SARS-CoV-2 in patients as it has proven to be thus far in preclinical evaluations,” says Frederick Alt, Ph.D., of the Program in Cellular and Molecular Medicine at Boston Children's Hospital, who co-led the research.

Childhood cancer: Traditional healers have vital role

Health-e News | 6 September 2022

A KwaZulu-Natal healer is one of the thousands playing a vital role in spotting the early signs of childhood cancer. Catherine Ntanjana is one of 5,000 traditional health practitioners (THP) who the Childhood Cancer Foundation of SA (CHOC) trained to recognise warning signs. Since her training in 2018, Ntanjana advised three families to take their children for testing. “I noticed their children had some symptoms we trained to spot. But what saddened me is that all of them just brushed me off instead of going to the local clinic,” Ntanjana said.

FACT CHECK | Africa didn't fare better during Covid than rest of the world

News24 | 6 September 2022

There is a view being promoted that Covid didn't hit Africa as badly as the rest of the world. The reason for this, as recently expressed in an article by Boniface Oyugi in *The Conversation*, was the effective and well-coordinated response of African governments. We understand the desire to find good news on the continent. But, on balance, the very little evidence available shows that Covid has hit Africa hard. The continent is highly diverse with over 50 states, so broad generalisations should be treated cautiously, but with an exception or two, there is little evidence of an effective response to the Covid pandemic. For one thing, Africa has the lowest vaccination rate of any continent.

Tuberculosis & HIV In Pregnancy – A Concerning State Of Affairs

iAfrica | 6 September 2022

Tuberculosis, historically one of the most significant global public health concerns, remains an infection of concern, especially during pregnancy. The WHO reports that 3.3 million women were infected with TB in 2020. Responsible for over half a million deaths each year, TB is thought to be a major factor contributing to concerning rates of perinatal and maternal morbidity in Africa. People living with conditions that impair the immune system – like HIV – are at a higher risk of developing an active case of TB. One study found that HIV-infected women may be twice as likely to contract TB (1–11% prevalence, compared to 0.06–0.53%). The immunological changes associated with pregnancy could render mothers-to-be more vulnerable to either new or latent persisting TB infections.

Unitaid Invests in New TB Tests, as South Africa Study Reports Importance of Better Screening

Health Policy Watch | 6 September 2022

Two-fifths of people with tuberculosis are unaware that they are infected because their diagnosis relies on outdated tests – something Unitaid and partners aim to change with a \$30 million investment in new diagnostic technologies to enable same-day results. Announcing the investment on Tuesday, the global health agency explained that the current diagnosis in low and middle-income countries relies on sputum tests that have low sensitivity, especially in the presence of HIV coinfection, require patients to make multiple visits to health centres and are “largely ineffective in diagnosing children or people in advanced stages of disease who have difficulty producing sputum”.

Integrated action review brings hope for reaching UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets in Zululand

Health Systems Trust | 7 September 2022

Meet the Health Systems Trust's (HST) Zululand District Co-ordinator, Makhosazana (Makhosi) Khoza – a fervent and compassionate game-changer for health service delivery in partnership with her local Department of Health (DoH) within the province of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). She is employed under HST's South Africa Sustainable Response to HIV/AIDS (SA SURE PRO) Project, which is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Makhosi co-ordinated a successful three-day Integrated Action Review (IAR) in August, attended by a full house of HST and DoH colleagues from Zululand: District Management Team members, District and Sub-district Programme Co-ordinators, Data Management Team members, and Area Co-ordinators. Facilitated by a joint HST and DoH team, with specialist facilitation on Wellness for Effective Leadership (WEL) by Sarah Davids, the group convened away from their place of work and home district in order to give full focus to the purpose of the event – finding effective solutions for improving programme performance.

People living with HIV speak loudly and clearly at World Council of Churches Assembly

UNAIDS | 7 September 2022

The 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) is meeting in Karlsruhe, Germany, from August 31 to September 8, 2022. The WCC brings together delegates and participants from 345 denominations from around the world, representing more than 500 million Christians. Faith leaders and activists living with HIV expressed huge concerns for the future of the HIV response. Young people continue to be exposed to HIV; women are experiencing violence in all forms. Governments are moving away from HIV and many ecumenical organizations too. What we need is a continued engagement with people with HIV and those at risk.

At long last, we might have an HIV vaccine

Big Think | 7 September 2022

HIV-1 is one of the fastest-mutating viruses ever studied. Over a dozen distinct subtypes exist, with countless specific versions of the virus varying from person to person. The extraordinary diversity of HIV-1 and rapid mutation rate makes vaccine development a challenge that researchers have failed to overcome for over three decades. However, a new vaccination strategy for HIV-1 induced a diverse arsenal of protective antibodies in monkeys. Most vaccines offer protection by inducing antibodies that recognize and bind to a functional region of the pathogen. For example, COVID vaccines result in antibodies that attach to the virus' spike protein, which the virus uses to hook to the membrane of host cells. These antibodies effectively neutralize the virus, preventing it from attaching (and subsequently entering and infecting). But what happens when that spike protein changes? Those neutralizing antibodies (nAbs) are less protective and cannot bind as efficiently. In the case of COVID, researchers are working to develop vaccines that induce antibodies to regions of the spike protein that rarely mutate. HIV-1 also has spike proteins that it uses to attach to host cells, but scientists are taking a different approach. HIV-1's diversity requires a vaccine capable of inducing not just nAbs in general but a broad arsenal of nAbs that can neutralize the multiple circulating strains. These broadly neutralizing antibodies (bnAbs) emerge in approximately 20-30% of HIV-1-infected people. Thus, the human immune system can produce bnAbs against HIV-1 under the right conditions. But those conditions are tricky.

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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

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

PHASA (Public Health Association of South Africa) 17th annual public health conference

Date: 11 – 14 September

Location: Durban

Late Registration: 16 July – 26 Aug 2022

The Public Health Association of South (PHASA) invites you to attend their annual conference in Durban (eThekweni), on the east coast of South Africa. PHASA hosts an annual conferences, with the aim of engaging public health practitioners and interested people from around the country and world to share their experiences and research, discuss topical public health issues, and mentor public health students and young researchers. Hosting the national PHASA conference in Durban aims to add stimulus to the local economy, and contribute to enhanced awareness and widespread advocacy, for health, the social determinants of health, and healthcare in the region.

World Health Organization | Consultation on the global oral health action plan

Date: 12 August – 16 September 2022

Web-based consultation

The resolution on oral health WHA74.5 requested WHO to translate the Global Strategy on Oral Health A75/10 Add.1 into an action plan for public oral health by 2023 and in consultation with Member States, including a framework for tracking progress with clear measurable targets of oral health to be achieved by 2030. In addition to the Global Strategy on Oral Health, the action plan will be aligned with the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2030 and pillars 1 and 3 of WHO's Thirteenth General Programme of Work.

World Health Organization | Storytelling for Infodemic Management Workshop Application

16 August – 12 September 2022

Through building storytelling skills, infodemic managers can become more effective communicators and explain to others the power of narratives that can mislead and cause harm online, talk about their infodemic management work and how stories can be used as a force for promoting public health. This is a free training for successful applicants who have been working in and responding to health misinformation, worked in the COVID-19 pandemic, and understand how information informs people's personal health decisions. Successful applicants will be invited to the workshop and encouraged to share and record their stories of how health misinformation and information overload have affected their lives either professionally or personally during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their stories will be featured in a community storytelling project of the WHO infodemic manager community.

South Africa to host the final eight-country Border Health regional meeting in Cape Town

South Africa, 7 September 2022 – The Health Systems Trust will be hosting a Strengthening Cross-border Collaboration and Information-sharing Regional Meeting, uniting eight Southern African countries from 12 to 16 September 2022 at Le Franschhoek Hotel and Spa in Cape Town, South Africa.

The countries are:

Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Purpose of the meeting:

The meeting will be attended by international delegates, including the United States of America Consul General, Todd Haskell, and representatives from the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), International Organization of Migration (IOM), Africa CDC, World Health Organization (WHO), and Ministries of Health in the eight countries, including South Africa's National Department of Health (NDoH).

Of importance: Population movement influences the spread of communicable diseases and affects the capabilities of public health systems in neighbouring countries, requiring the establishment and maintenance of cross-border collaboration in order to improve co-ordination and communication. With the goal of advancing strategies for cross-border information-sharing and co-ordination, these eight SADC member states, along with other regional bodies, will finalise regional, bilateral and multilateral frameworks and operational guidance for cross-border collaboration. There is sustained value in conducting a multinational meeting to work towards achieving this goal.

The September meeting will facilitate dedicated time for countries to align their border health and mobility surveillance strategies to strengthen regional cross-border public health information-sharing and improve co-ordinated public health surveillance, communication, preparedness, and response across southern Africa. The purpose is to improve co-ordination of a public health response in the region to outbreaks of communicable diseases.

The media are invited to cover the opening remarks by representatives of CDC and the NDoH on Monday 12 September 2022 at 09h00, or the closing remarks on Friday 16 September at 12h00. The concept note and agenda are attached.

For more information about the meeting, please contact communications@hst.org.za or hst@hst.org.za.

World Health Organization | World Patient Safety Day

Date: 17 September 2022

Medications are the most widely utilized interventions in health care, and medication-related harm constitutes the greatest proportion of the total preventable harm due to unsafe care, let alone the economic and psychological burden imposed by such harm. Acknowledging this substantial burden and recognizing the complexity of medication-related harm prevention and reduction, the theme of World Patient Safety Day 2022 is "Medication Safety". The campaign is envisaged to provide the needed impetus to consolidate the efforts of the existing WHO Global Patient Safety Challenge: Medication Without Harm, emphasizing the need to adopt a systems approach and promote safe medication practices to prevent medication errors and reduce medication-related harm. Special consideration will be given to areas where most harm occurs. The key action areas are high-risk situations, transitions of care, and polypharmacy.

Reducing teen pregnancies in South Africa: what works and what can be scaled up?

Access to youth-focused sexual and reproductive health services in South Africa is challenging. Dr Yogan Pillay, Country Director of South Africa and Senior Global Director for Universal Health Coverage for the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), with the Health Systems Trust (HST) and HIP-G invites you to a webinar to discuss:

- youth experiences in accessing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services,
- sharing best practices for improving access to SRH services, and
- possible actions for scaling up teen pregnancy prevention (Dr Venkatraman Chandra-Mouli, Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research, World Health Organization)

The webinar will focus on youth voices, with participants including youth engaged in programmes, facility level service providers and representatives from the Ritshidze Campaign (partnered by the Treatment Action Campaign), with:

Speakers on:

- research evidence on the prevention of teenage pregnancy (from the UNFPA)

- implementing partner and DoH perspectives on providing SRH services (Jenny Mcloughlin, TB HIV Care, Programme Director: PPPREV/PrEP)
- possible actions for scaling up teen pregnancy prevention (Dr Chandra)
- contributions on experiences of facility Youth Health services including:
 - Nelly Mahlatsi from Ngangaliswe Clinic in Umtata
 - Thulina Moukangwe, Treatment Acton Campaign Young LGBTQI Sector Leader, Gauteng
 - Amahle Ndlovu from Inanda Seminary Clinic in Durban

Moderator TBC.

When: Monday, 19 September 2022, 14h00 – 15h30 SAST (GMT+2)

Please Register Here

Q & A: Participants will be able to submit questions during the webinar by using the "Q&A" feature. You may also submit your questions in advance to the email Webinar@hst.org.za

Pathways Forward to End HIV: How HIV Cure Research is Helping to Advance HIV Vaccine Research

Date: 20 September 2022

Time: 2:00pm-3:30pm EST (11:00am-12:30pm PST)

HIV vaccine research and cure research are both critically needed to end HIV. Research involving broadly neutralizing antibodies (bnAbs) is helping pave the way towards a possible HIV vaccine as shown in the AMP Study. However, new trials designs and concepts using bnAbs must be developed. As such, the HIV Vaccine Trials Network is currently conducting a study with AMP participants who acquired HIV that includes an analytical treatment interruption (ATI), a well-known cure research method. The study is assessing whether receipt of a bnAb may promote control of HIV when antiretroviral therapy is interrupted, and will gather information that can potentially assist the development of bnAbs and vaccines for both HIV prevention and cure. Please join Treatment Action Group, Dr. Shelly Karuna, and Dr. Karine Dubé for a webinar on the next generation of bnAbs trial design and ethics related to ATIs in HIV vaccine and cure research.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

HSS Cervical Cancer Prevention, Access and Control (CCPAC) Project Patient Navigators (x4)

Closing Date: 2022-09-12

Information System Support Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist (HSS)

Closing Date: 2022-09-12

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