

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

Malaria-specific Type 1 regulatory T cells are more abundant in first pregnancies and associated with placental malaria

eBioMedicine | 24 August 2023

Adam S. Kiroosingh, Alea Delmastro, Abel Kakuru, Kattria van der Ploeg, Sanchita Bhattacharya et al.

Malaria during pregnancy remains a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in sub-Saharan Africa. The increased susceptibility of pregnant women to malaria is due, at least in part, to a unique physiologic niche provided by the human placenta. During pregnancy, the expression of the variant surface antigen of *Plasmodium falciparum* (Pf) VAR2CSA allows the parasite to bind to chondroitin sulphate A (CSA) on the placental syncytiotrophoblast, leading to placental sequestration of parasites, commonly referred to as placental malaria. Malaria in pregnancy can result in a number of maternal complications, such as anaemia and hypertension, and adverse perinatal outcomes, such as intrauterine growth restriction, low birth weight, foetal anaemia, and foetal mortality.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/ebiom/article/PIIS2352-3964\(23\)00338-9/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/ebiom/article/PIIS2352-3964(23)00338-9/fulltext)

Warning symptoms associated with imminent sudden cardiac arrest: a population-based case-control study with external validation

The Lancet Digital Health | 26 August 2023

Kyndaron Reinier, Bernadine Dizon, Harpriya Chugh, Ziana Bhanji, Madison Seifer, et al.

Out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest is a common cause of death with a high fatality rate (>90%). Improved methods are needed for predicting and preventing sudden cardiac arrest, and thereby reducing mortality. Approximately half of patients with sudden cardiac arrest report symptoms in the hours, days, or weeks before their cardiac arrest, and some contact their health-care provider in the week preceding the cardiac arrest. We previously reported that, among patients with sudden cardiac arrest in the community-based Oregon Sudden Unexpected Death Study (SUDS), most patients and their families did not act on these early warning signs, with only a minority (81 [19%] of 430) seeking urgent medical care by calling 911 in response to symptoms before their collapse.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/landig/article/PIIS2589-7500\(23\)00147-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/landig/article/PIIS2589-7500(23)00147-4/fulltext)

Expanding HIV clinical monitoring: the role of CD4, CD8, and CD4/CD8 ratio in predicting non-AIDS events

eBioMedicine | 26 August 2023

Javier Martínez-Sanz, Jorge Díaz-Álvarez, Marta Rosas, Raquel Ron, José Antonio Iribarren, et al.

People living with HIV (PWH) continue to have a higher risk of mortality and severe clinical events than people without HIV, despite the efficacy of current antiretroviral therapy (ART). In this population, CD4 count normalization does not reflect a complete return-to-health state. Persistent residual immune dysfunction contributes to an increased risk of serious non-AIDS events (SNAEs). The CD4/CD8 ratio has emerged as a useful indicator of immune dysfunction in PWH. It can be easily monitored in routine clinical practice and correlates with markers of immunosenescence and inflammation, which are technically difficult to measure and too variable to be used at an individual level. PWH with a low CD4/CD8 ratio exhibit increased inflammation and immunosenescence despite successful ART (i.e., having achieved a CD4 count >500 cells/ μ L).

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/ebiom/article/PIIS2352-3964\(23\)00339-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/ebiom/article/PIIS2352-3964(23)00339-0/fulltext)

Perceptions of Health, Body Size, and Nutritional Risk Factors for Obesity in People with HIV in South Africa

Jennifer Manne-Goehler, Nicholas Rahim, Eva van Empel, Rebecca de Vlieg, Grace Chamberlin, et al.

AIDS and Behavior | 26 August 2023

Metabolic disease is increasing in people with HIV (PWH) in South Africa, but little is known about self-perceptions of body size, health, and nutritional behavior in this population. We performed a cross-sectional analysis of individual-level data from the 2016 South Africa Demographic and Health Survey. This survey measured HIV serostatus and body mass index (BMI). We categorized participants into six BMI groups: 18.5–22 kg/m², 22–25 kg/m², 25–27.5 kg/m², 27.5–30 kg/m², 30–35 kg/m², and \geq 35 kg/m² and stratified them by HIV serostatus. Our outcomes were self-reported (1) body size and (2) health status among all participants, and intake of (3) chips and (4) sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB) in PWH. We described these metrics and used multivariable regression to evaluate the relationship between the nutritional behaviors and BMI \geq 25 kg/m² in PWH only, adjusting for age, sex, educational attainment, and household wealth quintile.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10461-023-04152-7>

A decision support tool has similar high PrEP uptake and increases early PrEP persistence in adolescent girls and young women in South Africa: results from a randomized controlled trial

Journal of the International AIDS Society | 27 August 2023

Connie Celum, Dominika Seidman, Danielle Travill, Christine Dehlendorf, Sanele Gumede, et al.

African adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) have high rates of HIV acquisition and are a priority population for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). PrEP implementation has been limited by AGYW's low perceived HIV risk and provider demands. A decision support tool (DST) with information about PrEP could improve clients' risk perception, knowledge about PrEP, informed decision-making and motivation to use PrEP based on their risk, facilitating PrEP delivery in primary healthcare (PHC) clinics.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jia2.26154>

Gender differences in the acceptance of wife-beating: evidence from 30 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa

Jones Arkoh Paintsil, Kenneth Setorwu Adde, Edward Kwabena Ameyaw, Kwamena Sekyi Dickson & Sanni Yaya

BMC Women's Health | 27 August 2023

The World Health Organization (WHO) has cited domestic violence as an urgent global maternal and child health priority. Gender differences in the acceptance of wife-beating have not been explored at the multi-country level in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) where the occurrence of wife-beating (36%) is greater than the global average (30%). It is against this backdrop that we examine the gender differences in the acceptance of wife beating in SSA.

<https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12905-023-02611-w>

The AIDS and Cancer Specimen Resource (ACSR): HIV malignancy specimens and data available at no cost

Aids Reseach and Therapy | 28 Agust 2023

Sylvia Silver & Monika Schmelz

The goal of the AIDS and Cancer Specimen Resource (ACSR) is to play a major role in the advancement of HIV/AIDS cancer-related research/treatment by providing richly annotated biospecimens and data to researchers at no cost. The ACSR acquires, stores, and equitably distributes these samples and associated clinical data to investigators conducting HIV/AIDS-related research, at no costs. Currently, it is the only biorepository of human biospecimens from people with HIV and cancer available to eligible researchers globally who are studying HIV associated malignancies.

<https://aidsrestherapy.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12981-023-00558-4>

Body mass index and cervical cancer screening among women aged 15–69 years in Eswatini: evidence from a population-based survey

BMC | 28 August 2023

Mfundu P. S. Motsa, Wanda Estinfort, Yohane V. A. Phiri, Maswati S. Simelane & Peter A. M. Ntenda

Cervical cancer stands as one of the most prevalent cancer types among women, despite its preventable nature through early screening and vaccination strategies. The link between being overweight or obese and various adverse health outcomes, including an elevated cancer risk, is well established. Within this study, our central objective was to explore the correlation between body mass index (BMI) and cervical cancer screening (CCS) rates. Moreover, we sought to investigate whether socioeconomic status potentially modulates this relationship.

<https://bmcpublikealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-16520-y>

Attrition one year after starting antiretroviral therapy before and after the programmatic implementation of HIV “Treat All” in Sub-Saharan Africa: a systematic review and meta-analysis

BMC Infectious Diseases | 28 August 2023

Richard Makurumidze, Tom Decroo, Bart K. M. Jacobs, Simbarashe Rusakaniko, Wim Van Damme, et al.

At the end of 2020, there were an estimated 38 million people living with HIV (PLHIV) globally, and of these, 25 million (67%) were in Sub-Saharan Africa. To control HIV-related mortality and HIV transmission, UNAIDS launched the 90–90–90 targets: 90% of PLHIV should know their status, 90% of people with confirmed HIV infection should receive antiretroviral therapy (ART), and 90% of those on ART should be virally suppressed by the end of 2020. The region of Eastern and Southern Africa made important progress toward these 90–90–90 targets, with an estimated 87% of PLHIV aware of their status, 72% of them receiving ART, and 65% of them having achieved viral load (VL) suppression by 2020. In Western and Central Africa, the 90–90–90 targets had reached 81%, 73%, 59%, respectively, at the end of 2020. While most countries (Burundi, Eswatini, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Lesotho, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) in the region are close to reaching the 90–90–90 targets, others, like Botswana, have already surpassed them. Most countries now aim at achieving the next target: 95–95–95.

<https://bmcinfectdis.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12879-023-08551-y>

Determinants of precancerous cervical lesion among HIV infected women on ART in Woldia comprehensive specialized hospital NorthEast Ethiopia

BMC Women's Health | 29 August 2023

Tazeb Melkie Dessie, Abebe Tarekegn Kassaw and Gedefaw Diress Alen

Precancerous cervical lesion is a priority public health problem that jeopardizes the life of enormous women. Previous studies in Ethiopia were more focused on knowledge, attitude, and practices of Cervical cancer screening. Studies on the risk factors of pre-cancerous cervical lesions among the risk population (HIV infected) relative to the general population were limited. This study aimed to identify the determinants of precancerous cervical lesions among HIV Infected Women in Woldia Comprehensive Specialized Hospital in Northeast Ethiopia, 2022.

<https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12905-023-02580-0>

Molecular investigations of Mycobacterium tuberculosis genotypes among baseline and follow-up strains circulating in four regions of Eswatini

BMC Infectious Diseases | 29 August 2023

Talent C. Dlamini, Brenda T. Mkhize, Clive Sydney, Nontuthuko E. Maningi & Lesibana A. Malinga

The tuberculosis (TB) epidemic remains a major global health problem and Eswatini is not excluded. Our study investigated the circulating genotypes in Eswatini and compared them at baseline (start of treatment) and follow-up during TB treatment.

<https://bmcinfectdis.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12879-023-08546-9>

A Comparison of the Awareness, Attitude, and Uptake of COVID-19, Hepatitis B Virus, and Yellow Fever Vaccines Between Rural and Urban Respondents in Edo State, Nigeria

Cureus | 29 August 2023

John O. Osarenkhoe, Godwin O. Agbon, Hendrith Esene, Victor Ohenhen and Aniekeme S. Bassey

Introduction: Despite the target set by WHO, Africa still falls short when it comes to individuals' use of COVID-19 vaccines. There is a similar pattern of low vaccine usage for the hepatitis B virus (HBV) and yellow fever (YF).

Aim and objective: The objective of our study is to compare the awareness, attitude, and uptake of vaccine-preventable diseases (VPD), COVID-19, HBV, and YF, between a rural and an urban community in Nigeria.

<https://www.cureus.com/articles/164945-a-comparison-of-the-awareness-attitude-and-uptake-of-covid-19-hepatitis-b-virus-and-yellow-fever-vaccines-between-rural-and-urban-respondents-in-edo-state-nigeria#!/>

Delayed gut microbiota maturation in the first year of life is a hallmark of pediatric allergic disease

Nature Communications | 29 August 2023

Courtney Hoskinson, Darlene L. Y. Dai, Kate L. Del Bel, Allan B. Becker, Theo J. Moraes, et al.

Allergic diseases affect millions of people worldwide. An increase in their prevalence has been associated with alterations in the gut microbiome, i.e., the microorganisms and their genes within the gastrointestinal tract. Maturation of the infant immune system and gut microbiota occur in parallel; thus, the conformation of the microbiome may determine if tolerant immune programming arises within the infant. Here we show, using deeply phenotyped participants in the CHILD birth cohort (n = 1115), that there are early-life influences and microbiome features which are uniformly associated with four distinct allergic diagnoses at 5 years: atopic dermatitis (AD, n = 367), asthma (As, n = 165), food allergy (FA, n = 136), and allergic rhinitis (AR, n = 187).

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-023-40336-4>

Impact of COVID-19 on the Utilization of HIV Testing and Linkage Services in Sierra Leone: Experience from Three Public Health Facilities in Freetown

Sulaiman Lakoh, Moses M. Bangura, Olukemi Adekanmbi, Umu Barrie, Darlinda F. Jiba, et al.

AIDS and Behavior | 29 August 2023

The COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected the delivery of essential health services globally. In this study, we aimed to assess the impact of the pandemic on HIV testing and linkage services at three public health facilities in Freetown, Sierra Leone. We conducted a retrospective study to assess the impact of COVID-19 on HIV testing and linkage to treatment services (HTS) at Connaught Hospital (CH-tertiary), Lumley Government Hospital (LGH-secondary) and George Brooke Community Health Center (GBC-primary) in Freetown. Statistical analyses were conducted in Stata (16.1, StataCorp LLC, College Station, TX). Intra-pandemic HTS (2020) and HTS during recovery (2021) were compared with pre-pandemic HTS (2019). Of the 8538 people tested for HIV in the three facilities, 4929 (57.5%) visited CH.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10461-023-04149-2>

Sustained response following BTK inhibitors based treatment in HIV-related primary central nervous system lymphoma: case report

Aids Research and Therapy | 29 August 2023

Ying Zhou, Xiaoxue Wang, Xuyong Lin, Jun Wang, Xiaojing Yan et al.

Despite increasing effort for treating primary central nervous system lymphoma (PCNSL), the prognosis of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) -related PCNSL was still unsatisfactory. There is currently a lack of clinical evidence for the application of Bruton tyrosine kinase (BTK) inhibitor in HIV-related PCNSL. We reported two HIV-related PCNSL patients, who achieved sustained remission by application of BTK inhibitor based treatment. This protocol had not been previously reported for the treatment of HIV-related PCNSL.

<https://aidsrestherapy.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12981-023-00554-8>

Individual risk preference as a predictor of health behaviour: evidence from the use of condoms against HIV/AIDS in Ghana

Abel Gbogbolu & Edward Nketiah-Amponsah

BMC Public Health | 29 August 2023

It is evident that public health education interventions to promote the use of condoms against HIV infections in Ghana have yielded modest results. However, existing studies in the field of sexual and reproductive health in Ghana have failed to account for differences in risk preferences of individuals. This study fills the gap by investigating how individuals' risk preferences predict their behaviour toward using condoms against HIV in Ghana.

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-16579-7>

Analysis of the Mediation Effects of Adverse Mental Health Outcomes in HIV-Infected Women of Childbearing Age from Multiple Perspectives Including Discrimination Perception

Dovepress | 29 August 2023

Zheng Y, Li X, Xia Y, Li X, Yang G, et al.

HIV infection (Human immunodeficiency virus) has become a manageable chronic disease. Research across several disciplines has sought to inform the development of new HIV prevention and treatment efforts. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome reports that by 2020, an estimated 37.7 million people worldwide will be living with HIV, of whom more than half (53%) will be women aged 15 years and older. The same report also shows that women in sub-Saharan Africa have a high rate of HIV infection, with girls and women living with HIV accounting for 63% of total infections in the region.

<https://www.dovepress.com/analysis-of-the-mediation-effects-of-adverse-mental-health-outcomes-in-peer-reviewed-fulltext-article-PRBM>

Neglected gaps in improving the health, wellbeing, and care for sexual and gender minority young people living in low- and lower-middle- income countries: a scoping review

BMC Public Health | 30 August 2023

Cara Frances, Camille Garnsey & Jessica DeMulder

There is a lack of reliable data on the size, characteristics, and experiences of sexual and gender minority (SGM) young people (ages 10–24) in low- and lower-middle- income countries (LMICs). This review examines the research conducted in the last thirteen years with and about SGM young

people living in low-income settings and seeks to answer the question: What is known about the mental and physical health needs, safety, and wellbeing of SGM young people living in LMICs?

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-16443-8>

Pregnancy risk and contraception among reproductive-age women with rheumatic heart disease attending care at a tertiary cardiac center in Tanzania: a hospital-based cross-sectional study

BMC Women's Health | 31 August 2023

David G. Paulo, Reuben Mutagaywa, Henry Mayala & Aileen Barongo

Rheumatic heart disease (RHD) remains prevalent in the developing world and reproductive-age women are disproportionately affected. It is among the commonest cardiac diseases during pregnancy and is associated with poor pregnancy outcomes. Despite its importance among reproductive-age women, there are no local studies that characterize the clinical characteristics, risk of poor pregnancy outcomes and contraception which represents one effective way to prevent unplanned pregnancies in this population.

<https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12905-023-02332-0>

Barriers and Intention to Get Vaccinated for COVID-19 and Associated Factors Among Adults in Southwest Ethiopia: A Theory of Planned Behavior Approach

DovePress | 31 August 2023

Assefa Legesse Sisay,¹ Habtamu Abebe Getahun,¹ Nigusu Getachew,² Tadesse Gebremedhin,¹ Feyissa Mama Sebero et al.

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has become a pandemic and is a topic of high public health priority.¹ The pandemic spread to many countries, affecting more than 13 countries in one day.² The International Monetary Fund estimated that the world might lose 5.2 trillion dollars by 2026 if COVID-19 continues to spread. As it is known that the virus has no curative approach, the government has developed a vaccine for the community. It has started providing it to high-risk and elderly individuals. The World Health Organization planned to vaccinate 10%, 40%, and 70% of the population by the end of September 2021, December 2021, and June 2022, respectively. Based on this strategy the first two dates by the end of 2021 were not implemented by 56 countries.

<https://www.dovepress.com/barriers-and-intention-to-get-vaccinated-for-covid-19-and-associated-f-peer-reviewed-fulltext-article-IDR>

RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Pregnant and postpartum women with mental health disorders more likely to use cannabis

News Medical Life Science | 25 August 2023

Pregnant and recently postpartum women who suffer with mental health disorders may be vulnerable to using cannabis to self-medicate, according to a Rutgers-led study. In a nationally representative survey, Qiana L. Brown, an assistant professor at the Rutgers School of Social Work, examined the relationship between mental health disorders, cannabis use and cannabis use disorder (CUD) among pregnant and postpartum women in the US. The findings were published online in advance of print in the July 2023 issue of the journal *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20230825/Pregnant-and-postpartum-women-with-mental-health-disorders-more-likely-to-use-cannabis.aspx>

MEET OLIVIA PHARO, THE NURSE WHO USED HER PENSION TO PROVIDE BETTER HEALTHCARE IN ATLANTIS

Health-e News | 25 August 2023

When Sister Olivia Pharo retired from her job as a nurse at Wesfleur hospital in Cape Town in 2018 it was just the beginning. Most retirees look forward to putting their feet up and spending time with their families. But Pharo did something extraordinary. She used her pension payout to open her own private clinic in Atlantis, a neighbourhood she's lived and worked in for most of her life. "Wesfleur [hospital] covers a large area. It was supposed to be a day hospital. But because of the segregation act and the amount of people that were moved to Atlantis, it became a 24 hour casualty, maternity and in-patient facility with a community health centre attached to it."

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/08/25/meet-olivia-pharo-the-nurse-who-used-her-pension-to-provide-better-healthcare-in-atlantis/>

OPINION: We are short-changing women with budget cuts, corruption, and underspending in health

Spotlight | 25 August 2023

It is often said that when you educate a girl; you educate a nation. The same rings true for investing in women's health, which ultimately benefits our entire country. The World Economic Forum has described women's health as the cornerstone of economies and societies worldwide. While some progress has been made in ensuring access to quality healthcare for women in this country, gender inequality continues to negatively impact health outcomes. A public healthcare system that is both adequately funded and capable of ensuring that resources reach the intended beneficiaries is critical to advancing gender equity in the country.

<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2023/08/25/opinion-we-are-short-changing-women-with-budget-cuts-corruption-and-underspending/>

Top 5 HIV PrEP stories from IAS 2023

Aidsmap | 25 August 2023

There were lots of new studies on using PrEP (regular medication to prevent HIV infection) at the recent 12th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Science (IAS 2023) in Brisbane, including the use of tablets and injectables. Here are five highlights. Exposure to tenofovir-based PrEP in the womb does not affect children's bone density or stunt their growth, according to a new analysis. The bone mineral density of 40 PrEP-exposed and 71 matched unexposed children was measured using DEXA scans. Measurements were taken at the age of three. Whole body bone density and median height was similar for children with and without PrEP exposure in the womb. The study will continue to monitor the children with DEXA scans up to five years of age.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/aug-2023/top-5-hiv-prep-stories-ias-2023>

CDC: Significant disparities seen in maternity care

Contemporary OB/GYN | 25 August 2023

According to a recent report from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in 5 women experience mistreatment during pregnancy and delivery care. Maternity care data was obtained from the Porter Novelli View Moms survey, which was completed by 2402 individuals from April 24 to April 30, 2023. Most of these patients experienced satisfaction with maternity care, but mistreatment rates were high among those who did not experience satisfaction.

<https://www.contemporaryobgyn.net/view/cdc-significant-disparities-seen-in-maternity-care>

How lessons from HIV programmes are keeping diabetes and cancer patients alive

Bhekisisa | 25 August 2023

Community health workers go door-to-door in Neno, Malawi, to test people and to put those who need it on treatment — and stick to it. Home visits have worked so well to diagnose HIV early on and to get them on treatment that HIV-positive people in Neno have much higher survival rates than in parts of the country where no such visits are conducted. Now, the same programmes are used to diagnose people with conditions such as diabetes, cancer and high blood pressure — to help them live longer and have higher quality lives.

<https://bhekisisa.org/article/2023-08-25-how-lessons-from-hiv-programmes-are-keeping-diabetes-and-cancer-patients-alive/>

Medical gaslighting: Women's pain ignored and serious health problems left undiagnosed due to sexist healthcare system

Mail Online | 27 August 2023

Ged Kearney knew there was a crisis simmering in Australian hospitals and GP clinics after her cousin's tragic death just hours after she was sent home by a doctor with some Panadol. Australia's Assistant Minister for Health was a nurse for 20 years before moving into politics. She says back then, women were systemically dismissed, accused of 'doctor shopping' for pills and girls as young as 12 put on birth control pills with very little consideration. Unfortunately, not a lot has changed.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-12391297/Ged-Kearney-medical-misogyny-women-share-trauma.html>

Nigerians with HIV are stigmatised: study shows support from family and friends is crucial to well-being

The Conversation | 27 August 2023

Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the regions most affected by HIV. In Nigeria alone, an estimated 1.8 million people are living with the virus. Antiretroviral therapy has made strong gains in reducing HIV-related deaths. But people living with HIV in resource-constrained settings, like Nigeria, still face psychological challenges and poor health outcomes that are attributed to HIV-related stigma.

<https://theconversation.com/nigerians-with-hiv-are-stigmatised-study-shows-support-from-family-and-friends-is-crucial-to-well-being-211021>

A trial is underway that could be 'the last roll of the dice' for an HIV vaccine this decade

CCN | 27 August 2023

A novel trial that has been described as “the last roll of the dice” for a generation of HIV vaccines has entered its latter stages. Called PrEPVacc, the trial is testing two vaccines alongside two forms of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to test vaccine efficacy while offering protection to prevent the spread of HIV. African-led and coordinated out of Entebbe, Uganda, with international support, its success could mark the start of a new phase of vaccine development. Should it fail, it could also see immunologists give up on a generation of vaccines.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/08/28/health/prepvacc-hiv-vaccine-trial-spc-scn-intl/index.html>

TB research shows a good diet can cut infections by nearly 50%

The Conversation | 27 August 2023

For centuries, we have known that tuberculosis is a social disease. It thrives on poverty and social factors such as malnutrition, poor housing, overcrowding, unsafe work environments and stigma. Globally in 2021 an estimated 2.2 million cases of TB were attributable to undernourishment, 0.86 million to HIV infection, 0.74 million to alcohol use disorders, 0.69 million to smoking and 0.37 million to diabetes.

<https://theconversation.com/tb-research-shows-a-good-diet-can-cut-infections-by-nearly-50-211377>

Nigerians with HIV are stigmatised: study shows support from family and friends is crucial to well-being

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Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the regions most affected by HIV. In Nigeria alone, an estimated 1.8 million people are living with the virus. Antiretroviral therapy has made strong gains in reducing HIV-related deaths. But people living with HIV in resource-constrained settings, like Nigeria, still face psychological challenges and poor health outcomes that are attributed to HIV-related stigma.

<https://theconversation.com/nigerians-with-hiv-are-stigmatised-study-shows-support-from-family-and-friends-is-crucial-to-well-being-211021>

HIV is a “disease of shame” but diabetes is often harder to manage for African migrants in France

Aidsmap | 28 August 2023

A qualitative study explored how migrants from sub-Saharan Africa in France who were living with both HIV and type 2 diabetes managed the two conditions. The study found that participants most often managed both conditions in a similar way, more commonly an ‘emotion-based’ strategy such as spirituality to manage the stress of the conditions, rather than ‘problem-solving’ strategies such as lifestyle and diet changes. In 2021, 48% of all people living with HIV in France were born in sub-Saharan Africa. Migrants are more likely to experience health complications, including late diagnosis, because of social and economic marginalisation and difficulties in the immigration process.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/aug-2023/hiv-disease-shame-diabetes-often-harder-manage-african-migrants-france>

Future doctors take active role in HIV response to end AIDS

UNAIDS | 28 August 2023

Medical student Anaïs Maillat, 21, joined METIS (Movement of The Students Against Inequalities in Health Access) for a simple reason. The children's beaming smiles drew her in. As a member organization of the International Federation of Medical Students Association (IFMSA), the Swiss Medical Students Association (SWIMSA) Switzerland, launched the program CALWHA which works with children and adolescents living with HIV and AIDS in Tanzania. Ms. Maillat focused on the Mwanza region where the rate of HIV infection is higher than the national average as its project coordinator. "Our project is currently helping more than 400 children living with HIV and AIDS," she said. "We organize activity days in hospitals where children and adolescents get check-ups, medicine, a meal, educational activities, and a safe space to play," she added.

https://unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2023/august/20230828_future-doctors-hiv-response

For a new approach to fighting malaria, study focuses on special RNA molecules in human malaria parasite

Phys Org | 28 August 2023

The mosquito-borne infectious disease malaria resulted in about 241 million clinical episodes and 627,000 deaths in 2020. In young children and pregnant women living in areas where the disease is endemic, a major cause of death is Plasmodium falciparum, the most virulent, prevalent, and deadly human malaria parasite. Scientists are keen to understand the mechanisms that regulate gene expression through the different stages of P. falciparum's lifecycle because such knowledge can help in the discovery of novel antimalarial therapies.

<https://phys.org/news/2023-08-approach-malaria-focuses-special-rna.html>

UCT professor working on radical technology for testing bacterial vaginosis, a key agent of HIV

News24 | 28 August 2023

A University of Cape Town professor is developing technology to test for bacterial vaginosis and associated genital tract inflammation. Research shows that adolescent girls and young women aged 15 to 24 are at higher risk of HIV infection than their male counterparts as a result of genital inflammation being linked to sexually transmitted infection. Alarming rates of HIV infection among adolescent girls and African young women underscore the urgency of addressing underlying factors.

<https://www.news24.com/news24/health/uct-professor-working-on-radical-technology-for-testing-bacterial-vaginosis-a-key-agent-of-hiv-20230828>

Rwanda Biomedical Centre Relies on Youth Centres, Campaigns to Curb HIV in Eastern Province

allAfrica | 28 August 2023

Officials at the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC) are emphasizing community engagement, the utilization of youth centers, and parental involvement as key measures to counter the high spread of HIV in the Eastern Province. Information from the RBC indicates that the Eastern Province has the highest rate of HIV transmission in the country. For instance, between June 22 and July 21 of this year, 97 new cases were recorded in the province, compared to 52 in the Southern Province, 39 in Kigali City, 32 in the Northern Province, and 27 in the Western Province.

<https://allafrica.com/stories/202308290228.html>

New online course: How data can help to end violence against women

WHO | 28 August 2023

A new online course for public servants and policy makers on how to use data to end violence against women is now available, launched by the WHO-UN Women Joint Programme on Violence Against Women Data and Measurement, in collaboration with Apolitical and the UN Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP). The free to access course is being hosted on Apolitical's peer-to-peer learning platform, an online community for people working in government and closely supporting government.

<https://www.who.int/news/item/28-08-2023-new-online-course--how-data-can-help-to-end-violence-against-women>

Thriving or just surviving? The State of Women's Mental Health

Plos Blogs | 28 August 2023

Why women's mental health matters? An important facet of optimal healthcare is improving patient reported and clinical outcomes in physical and mental health care offered. Mental illness in particular remains complex and, a preference to receive non-invasive treatments as well as early diagnosis has become important to patients and clinicians alike. The World Health Organization (WHO) indicates a need for differing approaches to promote wellbeing among men and women as the needs are profoundly different.

<https://yoursay.plos.org/2023/08/thriving-or-just-surviving-the-state-of-womens-mental-health/>

UNEMPLOYMENT, SUBSTANCE ABUSE DRIVING GBV IN BOTSHABELO

Health-e News | 28 August 2023

Police and community members say the growing cases of gender-based violence (GBV) in the Seloshesha cluster in Botshabelo east of Bloemfontein is likely the result of substance abuse and high unemployment rates. Speaking at a community dialogue in August police spokesperson and visible policing office delegate Lefu Masiza says more cases are being reported at the Botshabelo police station than other parts of the cluster.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/08/28/unemployment-substance-abuse-driving-gbv-in-botshabelo/>

Researchers make breakthrough in developing TB vaccine

SABC News | 29 August 2023

A collaborative research project between the Walter Sisulu and North West universities has made a breakthrough in developing a tuberculosis vaccine. Researchers conducted three different immunogenicity studies in two animal models where the vaccine showed 100% protection. Tuberculosis kills more than 55 000 South Africans every year, an average of 153 people a day.

<https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/researchers-make-breakthrough-in-developing-tb-vaccine/>

About 1.6 Million Children Vaccinated Against Cholera

Vax before Travel | 29 August 2023

Gavi announced today that the Republic of Kenya surpassed its target of vaccinating 1.59 million people during a 10-day oral cholera vaccine (OCV) campaign conducted in early August 2023. Speaking in Nairobi on August 28, 2023, the Acting head of the Health Ministry's Disease Surveillance and Response Unit, Dr. Emmanuel, said in a media statement the OCV campaign was in response to a Kenyan cholera outbreak, which was first reported in October 2022 and has so far resulted in 11,872 cases and 196 deaths across Kenya.

<https://www.vaxbeforetravel.com/2023/08/29/about-16-million-children-vaccinated-against-cholera>

Chronic illness among women is on the rise — have you had these screenings?

Daily Maverick | 29 August 2023

In a post-Covid era, the country's biggest medical scheme is seeing a significant increase in chronic diseases among female members, rising from 24% of female members registered for a chronic illness in June 2017, to 32.7% by July this year. These startling statistics were revealed this week by Dr Noluthando Nematswerani, chief clinical officer at Discovery Health, who emphasises that the focus on women's health should include a focus on screenings as well as the treatment and prevention of chronic illnesses.

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-08-29-chronic-illness-among-women-is-on-the-rise-have-you-had-these-screenings/>

How biological differences between men and women alter immune responses – and affect women's health

Daily Maverick | 29 August 2023

Most people will have heard the term "man flu", which refers to men's perceived tendency to exaggerate the severity of a cold or a similar minor ailment. What most people may not know is that generally speaking, women mount stronger immune responses to infections than men. Men are more susceptible to infections from, for example, HIV, hepatitis B, and Plasmodium falciparum (the parasite responsible for malaria). They can also have more severe symptoms, with evidence showing they're more likely to be admitted to hospital when infected with hepatitis B, tuberculosis, and Campylobacter jejuni (a bacteria that causes gastroenteritis), among others.

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2023-08-29-how-biological-differences-between-men-and-women-alter-immune-responses-and-affect-womens-health/>

Dealing with diabetes

Bizcommunity | 29 August 2023

South Africa is the most obese nation in sub-Saharan Africa*. It's not surprising then that we also have the highest rate of Type 2 diabetes. The danger is that most people are unaware of the risk until they are diagnosed as pre-diabetic or Type 2 diabetic. Diabetes is the third most significant risk factor for disability and early death in South Africa. While 4.5 million South Africans are currently diagnosed with the condition, what's more alarming is it's estimated that 61% of diabetics remain undiagnosed.

<https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/154/241401.html>

PATIENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA LIVING IN LIMBO AMID STOMA BAG SHORTAGE IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS

Health-e News | 29 August 2023

“I don’t even want to leave the house. I am scared that I might leak urine or faeces in public – this usually happens when I am at home. I am stressed most of the time, and live with consistent fear and worry. Most people don’t even understand the daily challenges I face,” says Heather White. 50-year-old White is living with a stoma. This is a small opening in the abdomen which is used to remove body waste like faeces and urine into a collection bag, known as colostomy pouches, urostomy or ileostomy pouches. White got a stoma in July 2014 after being diagnosed with Crohn’s disease, a type of inflammatory bowel disease.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/08/29/patients-in-south-africa-living-in-limbo-amid-stoma-bag-shortage-in-government-hospitals/>

Bridging the funding gap to defeat malaria in Africa

WHO | 29 August 2023

Senior Africa health officials, donors and development partners convened today on the side-lines of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for Africa and urged for increased investments to end malaria, a disease responsible for close to 600 000 deaths in the region. The meeting comes at a time when the fight against malaria in Africa is facing significant unprecedented funding and biological threats.

<https://www.afro.who.int/news/bridging-funding-gap-defeat-malaria-africa>

First-hand: stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV in Zimbabwe

Be In The Know | 29 August 2023

HIV stigma and discrimination in Zimbabwe is a major challenge that prevents people from accessing HIV prevention, treatment, and care services. People living with HIV in Zimbabwe often face social exclusion, denial of employment, housing, and education, and even violence.

<https://www.beintheknow.org/news-and-blogs/first-hand-stigma-and-discrimination-against-people-living-hiv-zimbabwe>

WATCH: Aussie scientists make world-first discovery of parasitic worm in woman's brain

IOL | 29 August 2023

An Australian scientist detailed on Tuesday a world-first discovery after an 8cm-long parasitic worm was found in the brain of a woman in Canberra, spotlighting the risks of infectious organisms jumping between species.

<https://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/health/watch-aussie-scientists-make-world-first-discovery-of-parasitic-worm-in-womans-brain-5519e794-79eb-55e4-80dd-35b4f5d00d56>

South Africa's traditional medicines should be used in modern health care

The Conversation | 29 August 2023

Traditional medicines are part of the cultural heritage of many Africans. About 80% of the African continent's population use these medicines for healthcare. Other reasons include affordability, accessibility, patient dissatisfaction with conventional medicine, and the common misconception that "natural" is "safe". The growing recognition of traditional medicine resulted in the first World Health Organization global summit on the topic, in August 2023, with the theme "Health and Wellbeing for All". Traditional medicines are widely used in South Africa, with up to 60% of South Africans estimated to be reliant on traditional medicine as a primary source of healthcare. Pre-colonoscopy bowel preparation: Everything you should know before procedure

<https://theconversation.com/south-africas-traditional-medicines-should-be-used-in-modern-health-care-211382>

Cervical cancer awareness and women's health equity

The New Times | 29 August 2023

The international Women Deliver conference that was held in Kigali last month, was a platform for discussions surrounding women's health, technology in vaccine development, community health workers, and overall SRHR. However, discussions were not solely focused on advancements in medicine. The alarming cervical cancer related deaths was a topic that stayed with me. In countries such as the Philippines, Guatemala, and Burkina Faso, cervical cancer takes over 11 women's lives daily, over 500 annually, and records 1130 new cases per year, respectively. These alarming numbers remain a poignant reminder that education and awareness about the importance of early screening and treatment is desperately needed.

<https://www.newtimes.co.rw/article/10275/opinions/cervical-cancer-awareness-and-womens-health-equity>

Transforming Women's Health: Four Key Pillars of Empowerment

Euromonitor International | 29 August 2023

Women's Health has been identified by industry leaders and through Euromonitor International's global analyst network as one of the most commercially relevant themes across a wide range of consumer-facing industries, including health, beauty, nutrition, feminine care and lifestyle sectors. Euromonitor International's introductory women's health and wellness framework enables the mapping of potential investment spaces through an all-encompassing view of care and their relevance by life stage.

<https://www.euromonitor.com/article/transforming-womens-health-four-key-pillars-of-empowerment>

Health Beat #11 | Why do more Black SA women get cervical cancer than any other race in the country?

Bhekisisa | 29 August 2023

The United Kingdom and Australia have virtually wiped out cervical cancer with jabs. But in South Africa thousands of women, particularly Black women, still die of the disease each year. The human papillomavirus (HPV), which is mostly contracted via sex, causes cervical cancer. HPV jabs are over 90% effective. That's why state schools in South Africa give girls the jabs for free — but we've fallen behind. This month on Health Beat, we find out why this vaccine drive has hit a snag and we meet a nurse who is convincing parents to get their daughters vaccinated. Mia Malan finds out why cervical cancer is a political disease and talks to the National Institute for Communicable Diseases about the impact of COVID-19 on parents' willingness to get their kids vaccinated.

<https://bhekisisa.org/bhekisisa-tv/2023-08-29-health-beat-11-why-do-more-black-sa-women-get-cervical-cancer-than-any-other-race-in-the-country/>

Are we failing to bridge the gap in HPV vaccine coverage globally?

News Medical Life science | 29 August 2023

Cervical cancer is among the five most prevalent cancers among women and also one of the major causes of cancer mortality, with statistics from 2020 reporting over 600,000 new cases and close to 350,000 deaths worldwide. In about 36 countries, it is associated with the most significant number of cancer mortalities, with low- and middle-income countries having the highest burden of cervical cancer. Currently, there are six approved vaccines against HPV, with one nonavalent, two quadrivalent, and three bivalent vaccines. Some are effective against the most prevalent cancer-causing genotypes, while others are more effective against the high-risk HPV genotypes. Based on various clinical trials, the World Health Organization (WHO) has modified its HPV vaccine dosing regimen since its introduction in 2006, with the current recommendations consisting of a single or two-dose regimen for girls between the ages of nine and 14 years and women between the ages of 15 and 20 years, and a two-dose regimen for women over the age of 21 years.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20230829/Are-we-failing-to-bridge-the-gap-in-HPV-vaccine-coverage-globally.aspx>

Why our changing climate is bad for your health

Bhekisisa | 30 August 2023

The Earth's changing climate, driven by human activities, will bring more floods and heatwaves more often — and it's bad news for our physical and mental health. Hot, polluted air will make it even harder for people who already are short of breath. Infectious diseases will spread faster and further. Longer droughts, extreme heatwaves and worsening storms will make it harder for people to grow food, so more people will go hungry. In this first article in a Bhekisisa series on the link between climate change and health, we break down what the issues are.

<https://bhekisisa.org/features/2023-08-30-why-our-changing-climate-is-bad-for-your-health/>

In-depth: Mental health needs of GBV survivors are not being met – what to do?

Spotlight | 30 August 2023

A year or so ago, a young woman arrived at the St Anne's Homes Women's Shelter in Woodstock, Cape Town, so traumatised after a brutal sexual assault that she wept, alone, in her room for a week.

“We have a counsellor at the shelter, but this woman was not able to open up about what had happened to her. She needed expert help,” says Oslynn Macounie, the manager at St Anne’s. Macounie is showing Spotlight around the facility as she recalls some of the cases. St Anne’s Homes is located in an old house on Balfour Street in Woodstock. The shelter, founded by the Anglican Church in 1904, is preparing for its 120th anniversary next year.

<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2023/08/30/in-depth-mental-health-needs-of-gbv-survivors-are-not-being-met-what-to-do/>

New genetic variant found in those of African ancestry halves HIV viral load

Aidsmap | 30 August 2023

A genetic variant found by an international team of scientists present only in people of African ancestry seems to halve the set point viral load in people with HIV who are not on treatment. The set point is where viral load stabilises after the early stage of infection, and it determines how fast HIV damages the immune system. This variant may be protective against quick disease progression and lessen transmission, concludes the paper published in the journal Nature.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/aug-2023/new-genetic-variant-found-those-african-ancestry-halves-hiv-viral-load>

COVID-19 pandemic associated with changes in gestational weight gain

Contemporary OB/GYN | 30 August 2023

According to a recent study published in JAMA Network Open, rates of gestational weight gain (GWG) increased during the COVID-19 pandemic but leveled out in the later years of the pandemic. Maternal and child health is significantly impacted by maternal weight, but only about 1/3 of pregnant women are able to have appropriate weight gain during pregnancy. GWG occurs in most pregnancies, often leading to adverse outcomes and increased cardiovascular disease risk.

<https://www.contemporaryobgyn.net/view/covid-19-pandemic-associated-with-changes-in-gestational-weight-gain>

CLINICAL STUDIES BRING GIFT OF SEXUAL HEALTH CLOSER FOR WOMEN

Health-e News | 30 August 2023

A South African innovation designed to screen for inflammation associated with HIV infections and improve women’s sexual and reproductive health has been manufactured and has entered its first in-field clinical studies. Almost 700 women will be involved in the validation of the Genital Inflammation Test (GIFT) developed at the University of Cape Town (UCT). GIFT is the focus of an international collaboration of almost exclusively female scientists led by Professor Jo-Ann Passmore of UCT and Dr Lindi Masson, originally of UCT, but now of the Burnet Institute in Australia.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/08/30/clinical-studies-bring-gift-of-sexual-health-closer-for-women/>

In-depth: Mental health needs of GBV survivors are not being met – what to do?

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<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2023/08/30/in-depth-mental-health-needs-of-gbv-survivors-are-not-being-met-what-to-do/>

Teens and depression: A back-to-school concern

Medical Xpress | 30 August 2023

With many teens heading back to school, peer pressure and academic expectations are once again a reality. These added pressures can cause ups and downs during what can be an already tumultuous time of life. For some teens, though, the lows are more than just temporary feelings. They're symptoms of depression.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-08-teens-depression-back-to-school.html>

Breastfeeding while hungry – Is enough being done to support mothers in the Free State?

Spotlight | 31 August 2023

Earlier this month, from 1 to 7 August, the world celebrated breastfeeding week under the theme – "Enabling breastfeeding: making a difference for working parents". This global campaign aims to create support and awareness about the benefits of breastfeeding among women who are physically able to do so. Exclusive breastfeeding for babies within the first six months of life is encouraged – also in South Africa – because breast milk contains all the nutrition that a baby needs. To improve infant nutrition by 2025, the World Health Organization (WHO) set targets to eliminate malnutrition and increase breastfeeding rates to at least 50% – targets South Africa also subscribes to.

<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2023/08/31/breastfeeding-while-hungry-is-enough-being-done-to-support-mothers-in-the-free-state/>

"We went back to the community and told them it didn't work" – lessons learned from a trial of youth-friendly health services

Aidsmap | 31 August 2023

A large cluster randomised trial which offered community-based health services to young people in Zimbabwe failed to demonstrate improvements in the HIV care cascade but did showcase the positive impact of integrated health services. Results were presented at the 12th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Science (IAS 2023) in Brisbane last month. Dr Rashida Ferrand of London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine said that the high attendance and uptake of services demonstrates the need for accessible, youth-friendly sources of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information, including menstrual health management, contraception, and HIV testing in Zimbabwe. However, the outcomes, which were aligned to UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets, failed to meet the metrics of success.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/aug-2023/we-went-back-community-and-told-them-it-didnt-work-lessons-learned-trial-youth>

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.

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

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!

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

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

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

As a member, you will:

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

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

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

THE OLIVER TAMBO FELLOWSHIP (OTFP) PROGRAMME: A POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN HEALTH LEADERSHIP

An Opportunity to Grow

- To HR components - This value-for-money health leadership programme directly relates to the manager's workplace within the health system. Acquired skills and competencies have

been well-researched. Nominating people from the same team offers the possibility of greater impact, including across successive cohorts.

- To Line managers - Students develop capabilities to lead and to bring improvements in their workplaces. Nominate teams.
- To Health Care Workers and Health System Influencers - Invest in yourself to show up as a leader who lead with confidence.

Why the OTFP?

- Affiliated to the internationally renowned University of Cape Town.
- Proudly bears the name of an exceptional African Leader.
- Nearly 30 years' experience of growing health leaders.
- Offers a unique perspective on leadership, rooted in systems thinking & policy analysis, tailored to the complex challenges of our health system.

What Does the Programme Entail?

- Four sequenced and interrelated 6-day learning blocks, covering:
 - The complex nature of health systems and their challenges.
 - Leading everyday health system strengthening.
 - Engaging health system hard- and software resources for implementing improvement.
 - Sustaining workplace-based interventions for system improvement.
 - Mentorship during and after the course.
 - Direct engagement with senior health leaders, other experts with national and international insights, as well as peer leaders.

What Will You Learn?

- Personal, relational, and technical competencies to lead across the system complexities.
- How to show up as a leader for your team and the wider system.

Who Should Attend?

- Mid- and senior level leaders (managers and clinicians) in the public health sector.
- Mid- and senior level leaders in NGOs and the private sector with public value goals.
- Teams of leaders from the same setting.

Fees and Registration

- The fees for 2024/25 intake is approximately R65 505, thus an average cost of R32 500 per year.
- Students arrange own travel and accommodation.
- Registration open until 9 December 2023.
- The course commences in February 2024.
- How to register? Apply online by clicking on [Application Link](#)

Contact

- Contact Fahiema.titus@uct.ac.za or the Program Convener at Maylene.shungking@uct.ac.za or visit us at <https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health>

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) is committed to meeting the objectives of Employment Equity to improve representativity within the Institution. Preference will be given to applicants from the designated groups in accordance with Employment Equity.

Operation Smile South Africa

Get behind Dr Shetil,

She's just one of hundreds of volunteer doctors, nurses, speech therapists, psychologists and dentists who give generously of their time, skill, and loving care to help Operation Smile.

Calm and soft-spoken, Dr Shetil is the embodiment of grace under fire. As a paediatrician, she's driven to help children ... all children. And those born with a cleft lip and/or cleft palate have a special place in her heart.

"It can be incredibly challenging and difficult for both the child and the parents," says Shetil. "There can be feeding and speech difficulties. And it can be visually distressing. As part of the Operation Smile team, we do our best to help these children as much as we can."

Shetil vividly remembers the first time she joined the Operation Smile Team earlier this year, performing life-changing surgery to correct children's cleft conditions.

"I was awed by the consideration, dedication and care that each child and family received," she says. "It was a humbling experience, and I hope to be part of many more experiences like that."

But surgical programmes are expensive. There are many costs – medical, transport, logistics. And while our volunteer medical professionals give freely of their time and skills, donations from others who care ... people like you ... are also vitally important.

Please be there in spirit, with Dr Shetil and the rest of the Operation Smile Team, during our next surgical programme. Join in by donating now, and be an integral part of our life-changing team.

Like Shetil, you have the power to help give a child a beautiful new smile. But it's only possible when we all join together – and everyone plays their part.

[Watch a recent interview with Dr Shetil](#) to find out more about her experiences as an Operation Smile volunteer.

Donate now: <https://operationsmile.org.za/donate/>

PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

The 2022 South African Health Review is available!

We are pleased to release the 25th edition of the South African Health Review (SAHR). Entitled 'health systems strengthening after COVID-19', the journal provides valuable insights and recommendations on how to improve the response to the pandemic and build more resilient health systems.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the world, and the health sector has been at the forefront of the response. Curated as a supplement to the 2021 edition, which addressed the response of government and the broader health sector to COVID-19, the 2022 South African Health

Review provides a platform for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to share their experiences and insights on how they navigated this crisis and build more robust health systems for the future. The journal encompasses a diverse array of subjects, including reflections on the work of the Ministerial Advisory Committee during COVID-19 and the knowledge gained and lessons learned from these processes. Additionally, it explores the ramifications of COVID-19 on maternal, women, and child health and highlights the gendered implications of the pandemic, revealing that women experienced more pronounced effects of stress, fear, and depression during the lockdown period compared to men.

Commenting on its release, CEO and co-editor of the Review Dr Themba Moeti said that “This edition of the South African Health Review offers promising examples of COVID-19 response, mitigation and recovery strategies for us to use the emerging lessons to enhance our health system resilience and better prepare for future pandemics.”

Strong messages emerging from this edition emphasise that in order to effectively promote national vaccination programmes, it is imperative to equip healthcare workers (HCWs) with comprehensive, relevant, and current information. This will enable them to enhance patient communication and increase vaccine acceptance. Subsequent chapters delineate an inventive collaboration between the public and private sectors aimed at mitigating the accumulated volume of elective surgical procedures at Groote Schuur Hospital and reflect on the importance of consulting, involving and deploying community based organisations such as clinic committees in public health emergencies from the outset.

The crucial importance of inter-country collaboration is emphasised in mitigating disease transmission and impact, with authors advocating for a more coordinated approach to managing cross-border health measures.

Additionally, the Review highlights the intersection between climate change and health systems and reinforces the imperative to prioritise health within the framework of a 'just transition' and to enhance the capabilities of healthcare systems to be low-carbon and climate-resilient as crucial focal points for improving pandemic preparedness.

For more information on the journal and to access the latest edition, visit <https://www.hst.org.za/publications/Pages/SAHR2022.aspx>

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

The Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) hosts an annual conference, with the aim of engaging public health practitioners from around the country, region and world to share their experiences and research, discuss topical public health issues, and mentor public health students and young researchers.

This year it will be from 10 – 13 September in Qheberha, Eastern Cape. The theme is, **Transforming Research Translation, Reimagining Public Health Evidence, Policies and Practice.**

The 2023 Public Health Association of South Africa’s conference will provide an opportune setting for engaging with the most recent public health research and evidence, for rethinking current models of research translation, for identifying barriers and opportunities for change, and for exploring new strategies for knowledge exchange and dissemination.

Join fellow public health experts, academics, researchers, students, non-governmental organisations, and civil society members at this year's annual PHASA Conference; as we transform the ways we think about and approach priority areas of public health research, policy, and practice, to ultimately improve health outcomes for all.

<https://phasa.samrc.ac.za/about.html>

World Congress of Epidemiology – WCE 2024 – 24 to 27 September 2024

WCE is well-known for bringing epidemiologists and public health experts working in different sectors together in an atmosphere designed to promote dialogue, the interchange of ideas, and state-of-the-art scientific research. The theme of WCE2024 is **“Epidemiology and complexity: challenges and responses”** which will engage the full depth and breadth of methods and practice in contemporary epidemiology. The meeting will feature top-calibre invited speakers presenting plenary lectures, workshops and interactive sessions. The abstract-driven programme will include oral and poster presentations including theory and application from every sub-discipline of epidemiology. With more than 1000 delegates expected, WCE2024 promises to be a unique opportunity to share experiences and expertise – the opportunities to learn, grow and network within the field will be phenomenal. This is the first time the congress will be hosted on the African continent and the Cape Town International Convention Centre provides a world-class venue for this meeting.

<https://www.wce2024.org/>

SA Congress of Oncology 2023 Conference

When: 1 – 3 September 2024

Where: Cape Town CTICC

We would like to invite you to the second South African Congress of Oncology (SACO) to be held from 1 – 3 September 2023 in Cape Town. There will also be a pre-congress workshop on 31 August 2023 with a focus on radiotherapy contouring for the oncologists and RTTs as well as a workshop for allied health. SACO is a collaboration of multiple Societies including the Clinical and Radiation Oncologists, Paediatric Oncologists, Gynaecologic Oncologists, Medical Physicists, Radiotherapists, Pharmacists, Oncology Nurses and Oncology Social Workers. Furthermore, for the first time in 2023, the Radiological Society of South Africa (RSSA) will also participate in SACO, and we look forward to welcoming them to our congress and collaborating in combined sessions to the benefit of all our societies. Together, our Societies are striving to build on our knowledge, experience and expertise to ultimately improve the quality of cancer care for our patients.

Register: <https://saco2023.co.za/register/>

Society for Endocrinology, Metabolism and Diabetes of South Africa (SEMDSA) 56th Congress

When: 7 – 10 September 2023

Where: Johannesburg

On behalf of the organising committee for SEMDSA (Society for Endocrinology Metabolism and Diabetes of South Africa) and LASSA (Lipid and Atherosclerosis Society of South Africa), we would like to invite you to attend the 56th SEMDSA Congress taking place from 7 to 10 September 2023.

Register: <https://congress.semdsa.org.za/registration.html>

South African Paediatric Association (SAPA)

When: 8 – 10 September 2023

Where: The Capital on the Park, Sandton

For more information, go to: <https://paediatrics.org.za/>

Hospital Association of South Africa (HASA)

When: 18 – 19 September 2023

Where: Century City Conference Centre, Cape Town

Every year HASA hosts a world-class conference featuring a number of international and South African experts in healthcare. An exhibition runs simultaneously to showcase advances in healthcare. The 2023 conference takes place at the Century City Conference Centre, designed as the hub and pivotal point of the Century City precinct.

Register: <https://www.registrationsonline.co.za/hasa/register>

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Medical Officer: Cervical Cancer Prevention, Access and Control (CCPAC) Project

Closing date: 08 September 2023 @ 16:30

[https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Medical-Officer-Cervical-Cancer-Prevention,-Access-and-Control-\(CCPAC\)-Project.aspx](https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Medical-Officer-Cervical-Cancer-Prevention,-Access-and-Control-(CCPAC)-Project.aspx)