

# HST Bulletin



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## HST IN THE NEWS

### **Making an HIV-Free Future Possible For KZN Girls**

*Daily Vox | 8 June 2018.*

In the rolling green hills of the uMgungundlovu district in KwaZulu-Natal lies Vulindlela, a rural community often seen as the epicentre of the HIV and AIDS pandemic in this country. South Africa has the highest number of HIV-infected people in the world, with teenage girls and young women being the hardest hit. For perspective, South Africa's HIV infection rate is almost 19% of adults. In Vulindlela it is 40%. High unemployment in this community along with drug and alcohol abuse, violence and poverty, make it a dangerous place for young women.

### **How should we address governance challenges in the public sector?**

*Daily Maverick | 7 June 2018.*

Over the past few weeks, the need to tackle the governance challenge in South Africa has become increasingly obvious. From patients sent home to die from hospitals in North West or the release of the Auditor-General's report on the state of municipal governance, it has become clear that urgent intervention is required.

### **There are plenty of spanners in vast machinery of public health**

*BD Live | 14 June 2018.*

Over the past decade, "crisis" has been used to describe the provision of public health services in SA. But it would be unfair to describe the entire system as crisis-ridden. Certain sectors of the system are approaching a dysfunctional state while in others achievements have been made.

### **Emerging Public Health Practitioner Award: manuscript submissions open**

*Health Systems Trust | 31 May 2018.*

The South African Health Review's Emerging Public Health Practitioner Award (EPHPA) is open to young public health practitioners or student researchers in the fields of health sciences, medicine or public health who are currently studying for their Masters or Honours degree, or are in the final year of their Bachelor's degree. To apply, please submit your complete chapter along with a copy of your South African ID and

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## RECENT NEWS

### **Mabuza: Youth are the key to fighting TB**

*Health-e News | 13 June 2018.*

Deputy President David Mabuza has called on young people to become “champions” for South Africa’s deadliest disease, tuberculosis (TB), at the opening of the 5th South African TB Conference on Tuesday in Durban.

### **The remarkable story of hope: how attitudes to drug-resistant TB changed**

*The Conversation | 27 May 2018.*

The informal settlement of Khayelitsha in Cape Town is the latest site of a multi country trial that aims to transform the treatment for drug-resistant tuberculosis (DR-TB). The endTB clinic was officially opened by Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and the City of Cape Town and will test five new drug regimens in Peru, Lesotho, Kazakhstan, Georgia and South Africa.

### **Cabinet approves an NHI bill which is thin on details**

*BD Live | 8 June 2018.*

The bill does not provide any details about how NHI will be financed, leaving that to the Treasury to determine.

### **Yogan Pillay: integrating tuberculosis and HIV care in South Africa**

*WHO Bulletin | 1 May 2018.*

South Africa has the highest burden of HIV-associated tuberculosis. Yogan Pillay tells Fiona Fleck how the health ministry has brought the two programmes and services together.

### **ART adherence clubs to help SA eradicate HIV/Aids**

*Medical Brief | 13 June 2018.*

Just being an active member of a club can save a life and make a significant impact on South Africa’s effort to meet the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets focused on ending the Aids epidemic by 2020.

### **Q&A: Unitaid looks to break down silos for better global health**

*DEVEX | 11 June 2018.*

The global health community is increasingly moving away from a siloed approach — favored in the height of the battle against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria — toward a more integrated methodology in the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals. Unitaid, a Geneva-based organization that invests in new ways to prevent, diagnose, and treat the three pandemics, is one of the actors leading this paradigm shift alongside innovators from the private sector, governments, and donors.

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## ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

### **Universal test and treat is not associated with sub-optimal antiretroviral therapy adherence in rural South Africa: the ANRS 12249 TasP trial**

*Journal of the International AIDS Society | Published: 11 June 2018.*

*Collins Iwuji, Nuala McGrath, Alexandra Calmy, Francois Dabis, Deenan Pillay, Marie-Louise Newell, Kathy Baisley, Kholoud Porter*

HIV treatment guidelines now recommend antiretroviral therapy (ART) initiation regardless of CD4 count to maximize benefit both for the individual and society. It is unknown whether the initiation of ART at higher CD4 counts would affect adherence levels. We investigated whether initiating ART at higher CD4 counts was associated with sub-optimal adherence (<95%) during the first 12 months of ART.

### **Outcomes of Patients Lost to Follow-up in African Antiretroviral Therapy Programs: Individual Patient Data Meta-analysis**

*Clinical Infectious Diseases* | Published: 8 June 2018.

*Frédérique Chammartin, Kathrin Zürcher, Olivia Keiser, Ralf Weigel, Kathryn Chu, Agnes N Kiragga, Cristina Ardura-Garcia, Nanina Anderegg, et al*

Low retention on combination antiretroviral therapy (cART) has emerged as a threat to the Joint United Nations Programme on human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/AIDS (UNAIDS) 90-90-90 targets. We examined outcomes of patients who started cART but were subsequently lost to follow-up (LTFU) in African treatment programs.

### **HIV infection in patients with sexually transmitted infections in Zimbabwe – Results from the Zimbabwe STI etiology study**

*PlosOne* | Published: 11 June 2018.

*Peter H Kilmarx, Elizabeth Gonese, David A Lewis, Z Mike Chirenje, Beth A Tippet Barr, Ahmed S Latif, Lovemore Gwanzura, H Hunter Handsfield, et al*

HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STI) frequently co-occur. We conducted HIV diagnostic testing in an assessment of the etiologies of major STI syndromes in Zimbabwe. A total of 600 patients were enrolled at six geographically diverse, high-volume STI clinics in Zimbabwe in 2014–15: 200 men with urethral discharge, 200 women with vaginal discharge, and 100 men and 100 women each with genital ulcer disease (GUD). Patients completed a questionnaire, underwent a genital examination, and had specimens taken for etiologic testing. Patients were offered, but not required to accept, HIV testing using a standard HIV algorithm in which two rapid tests defined a positive result.

### **Drug-resistant tuberculosis: challenges and opportunities for diagnosis and treatment**

*Current Opinion in Pharmacology* | Published: October 2018.

*Anastasia Koch, Helen Cox, Valerie Mizrahi*

With an estimated incidence of 490 000 cases in 2016, multidrug resistant tuberculosis (TB), against which key first-line anti-tuberculars are less efficacious, presents major challenges for global health. Poor treatment outcomes coupled with a yawning treatment gap between those in need of second-line therapy and those who receive it, underscore the urgent need for new approaches to tackle the scourge of drug-resistant TB. Against this background, significant progress has been made in understanding the complex biology of TB drug resistance and disease pathogenesis, and in establishing a pipeline for delivering new drugs and drug combinations. In this review, we highlight the challenges of drug-resistant TB and the ways in which new advances could be harnessed to improve treatment outcomes.

### **Pathway to Deployment of Gene Drive Mosquitoes as a Potential Biocontrol Tool for Elimination of Malaria in Sub-Saharan Africa: Recommendations of a Scientific Working Group**

*The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* | Published: June 2018.

*Stephanie James, Frank H Collins, Philip A Welkhoff, Claudia Emerson, H Charles J Godfray, Michael Gottlieb, Brian Greenwood, Steve W Lindsa, et al*

Mosquitoes modified with gene drive systems are being proposed as new tools that will complement current practices aimed at reducing or preventing transmission of vector-borne diseases such as malaria. Gene drive systems have the potential to spread new genetic traits through interbreeding populations of malaria mosquitoes from low initial introductions. The envisioned goal for applying this technology is to reduce or eliminate vector mosquito populations or, alternatively, to render them less competent to transmit pathogens. Either of these outcomes should contribute to disease reduction. However, the characteristics that make gene drive technology so attractive as a cost-effective and durable vector control tool raise questions about possible adverse effects on human or animal health or the environment that must be seriously considered in product development.

### **Washing with hope: evidence of improved handwashing among children in South Africa from a pilot study of a novel soap technology**

*BMC Public Health* | Published: 7 June 2018.

*Justine Burns, Brendan Maughan-Brown, Âurea Mouzinho*

While regular handwashing effectively reduces communicable disease incidence and related child mortality, instilling a habit of regular handwashing in young children continues to be a challenging task, especially in developing country contexts. This randomised controlled pilot study assessed the effect of a

novel handwashing intervention – a bi-monthly delivery of a colourful, translucent bar of soap with a toy embedded in its centre (HOPE SOAP©) – on children’s handwashing behaviour and health outcomes.

## **Self-Reported Physical Activity is Not a Valid Method for Measuring Physical Activity in 15-Year-Old South African Boys and Girls**

*Children | Published: 6 June 2018.*

*Makama Andries Monyeki, Sarah J Moss, Han CG Kemper, Jos WR Twisk*

Physical activity plays an important role in the prevention of chronic lifestyle-related diseases. The development of valid instruments for the assessment of physical activity remains a challenge in field studies. The purpose of the present study was therefore to determine the level of agreement between physical activity objectively measured by the ActiHeart® (Cambridge Neurotechnology Ltd, Cambridge, UK) device and subjectively reported physical activity by means of the International Physical Activity Questionnaire Short Form (IPAQ-SF) among adolescents attending schools in the Tlokwe Local Municipality, South Africa.

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## **TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

### **Child Rights and Child Law Short Course for Health and Allied Professionals**

*Children’s Institute | 3-7 December 2018.*

Every year the Children’s Institute runs a short course on child rights and child law for health and allied professionals. This five-day intensive course provides an opportunity for doctors, nurses, social workers and allied professionals to explore how we can better give effect to children’s rights in our practice, and is accredited with both the HPCSA and SACSSP.

The short course will be offered from 3 - 7 December 2018.

### **HIV New Product Introduction Toolkit**

*Clinton Health Access Initiative | 28 August 2017.*

The HIV New Product Introduction Toolkit provides Ministries of Health (MoHs) and implementing partners with the tools necessary to evaluate the adoption and introduction of new products in their local context. The toolkit includes a wide-range of information, tools, and resources spanning the entire chain of product introduction including product adoption, forecasting, procurement, facility phase-in, and supply planning and monitoring, ensuring that products reach those in need of them.

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## **PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS**

### **Time to deliver: report of the WHO Independent High-Level Commission on Noncommunicable Diseases**

*World Health Organisation | Published: 1 June 2018.*

Despite the many proven interventions and commitments to combat NCDs, progress has been slow and uneven globally. The WHO Independent High-level Commission on NCDs was convened by the WHO Director-General in October 2017 to advise him on how countries can accelerate progress. The Commission’s report includes six key recommendations.

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## **CONFERENCES AND EVENTS**

### **International Workshop on HIV Pediatrics 2018**

20-21 July 2018

Amsterdam, the Netherlands

### **PHASA**

10-12 September 2018

Khaya iBhubesi, Parys, South Africa

**Medicine Quality & Public Health Conference**

23-28 September 2018

Oxford, United Kingdom

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## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Please click on the job title for more information.

**Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation: Registered Nurse**

Closing Date: 21 June 2018

**CareWorks: Quality Assurance Registered Nurse – NW**

Closing Date: 30 June 2018

**URC: Demand Creation Manager – VMMC Engagement, Campaigns and Advocacy**

Closing Date: 30 June 2018

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