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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Establishing the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention: responding to Africa's health threats

The Lancet | Published: 17 January 2017.

John N Nkengasong, John N Nkengasong, Olawale Maiyegun, Matshidiso Moeti

On Jan 31, 2017, heads of states and governments of the African Union and the leadership of the African Union Commission will officially launch the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. As detailed in the African Union's Africa Agenda 2063—a roadmap for the development of the continent—some of the concerns that justified the establishment and initiation of an Africa-wide public health agency include rapid population growth; increasing and intensive population movement across Africa, with increased potential for new or re-emerging pathogens to turn into pandemics; existing endemic and emerging infectious diseases, including Ebola; antimicrobial resistance; increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases and injuries; high maternal mortality rates; and threats posed by environmental toxins.

Knowledge and practices of supervisors on the performance management and development system at rural primary health care facilities in the Limpopo Province

African Journal of Primary Health Care & Family Medicine | Published: 2 December 2016.

Rosemary H. Mashego and Linda Skaal

The South African government has introduced Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) as a tool to monitor and manage the performances of health institutions, in order to improve service delivery within primary health care settings. The aim of the study was to determine the knowledge and practices of supervisors regarding PMDS in primary health institutions of the Limpopo Province.

Significance of informal (on-the-job) learning and leadership development in health systems: lessons from a district finance team in South Africa

BMJ Global Health | Published: 16 February 2017.

S Choonara, J Goudge, N Nxumalo, J Eyles

The district health system (DHS) has a critical role to play in the delivery of primary healthcare (PHC). Effective district management, particularly leadership is considered to be crucial element of the DHS. Internationally, the debate around developing leadership competencies such as motivation or empowerment of staff, managing relationships, being solution driven as well as fostering teamwork are argued to be possible through approaches such as formal and informal training. Despite growing multidisciplinary evidence in fields such as engineering, computer sciences and health sciences there remains little empirical evidence of these approaches, especially the informal approach.

Socioeconomic status and non-communicable disease behavioural risk factors in low-income and lower-middle-income countries: a systematic review

The Lancet | Published: March 2017.

Luke Allen, Julianne Williams, Nick Townsend, Bente Mikkelsen, Nia Roberts, Charlie Foster, Kremlin Wickramasinghe

Non-communicable diseases are the leading global cause of death and disproportionately afflict those living in low-income and lower-middle-income countries (LLMICs). The association between socioeconomic status and non-communicable disease behavioural risk factors is well established in high-income countries, but it is not clear how behavioural risk factors are distributed within LLMICs. We aimed to systematically review evidence on the association between socioeconomic status and harmful use of alcohol, tobacco use, unhealthy diets, and physical inactivity within LLMICs.

Evidence for scaling up HIV treatment in sub-Saharan Africa: A call for incorporating health system constraints

PlosOne | Published: 21 February 2017.

Evelinn Mikkelsen, Jan A. C. Hontelez, Maarten P. M. Jansen, Till Bärnighausen, Katharina Hauck, Kjell A. Johansson, et al

The scale-up of antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV-infected people in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) over the past 15 years is one of the most remarkable achievements in public health. With approximately 12 million people on treatment in 2015, life expectancy on the subcontinent has vastly improved. Nevertheless, ART coverage in SSA is still suboptimal, HIV incidence remains high, and improved survival due to ART implies ever increasing numbers of people on treatment. Substantial additional resources are needed to further scale up ART, yet funding has levelled off over the recent years, increasing the need for optimizing the allocation of limited resources.

From HIV infection to therapeutic response: a population-based longitudinal HIV cascade-of-care study in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

The Lancet | Published: 30 January 2017.

Noah Haber, Frank Tanser, Jacob Bor, Kevindra Naidu, Tinofa Mutevedzi, Kobus Herbst, et al

Standard approaches to estimation of losses in the HIV cascade of care are typically cross-sectional and do not include the population stages before linkage to clinical care. We used Individual level longitudinal cascade data, transition by transition, including population stages, both to identify the health-system losses in the cascade and to show the differences in inference between standard methods and the longitudinal approach.

Developing a Safer Conception Intervention for Men Living with HIV in South Africa

AIDS and Behaviour | Published: 13 February 2017.

Hazar Khidir, Christina Psaros, Letitia Greener, Kasey O'Neil, Mxolisi Mathenjwa, F. N. Mosery, et al

Within sexual partnerships, men make many decisions about sexual behavior, reproductive goals, and HIV prevention. There are increasing calls to involve men in reproductive health and HIV prevention. This paper describes the process of creating and evaluating the acceptability of a safer conception intervention for men living with HIV who want to have children with partners at risk for acquiring HIV in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Based on formative work conducted with men and women living with HIV,

their partners, and providers, we developed an intervention based on principles of cognitive-behavioral therapy to support men in the adoption of HIV risk-reduction behaviors such as HIV-serostatus disclosure and uptake of and adherence to antiretroviral therapy. Structured group discussions were used to explore intervention acceptability and feasibility. Our work demonstrates that men are eager for reproductive health services, but face unique barriers to accessing them.

A realist review of mobile phone-based health interventions for non-communicable disease management in sub-Saharan Africa

BioMed Central | Published: 6 February 2017.

Daniel Opoku, Victor Stephani and Wilm Quentin

The prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is increasing in sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, the use of mobile phones is rising, expanding the opportunities for the implementation of mobile phone-based health (mHealth) interventions. This review aims to understand how, why, for whom, and in what circumstances mHealth interventions against NCDs improve treatment and care in sub-Saharan Africa.

Impact of a clinical program using weekly Short Message Service (SMS) on antiretroviral therapy adherence support in South Africa: a retrospective cohort study

BioMed Central | Published: 20 February 2017.

Nathan Georgette, Mark J. Siedner, Carter R. Petty, Brian C. Zanoni, Stephen Carpenter and Jessica E. Haberer

In randomized controlled trials, short message service (SMS) programs have improved adherence to HIV antiretroviral therapy (ART). In response, the World Health Organization recommended use of SMS programs to support ART. However, there is limited data on real-world implementations of SMS programs. In this study, we evaluated a clinical program of weekly SMS reminders at a government-run HIV clinic near Durban, South Africa. Using a retrospective cohort design, we analyzed routine data collected at the clinic to determine ART prescription coverage, comparing those who were or were not sent SMS reminders.

What device would be best for early infant male circumcision in east and southern Africa? Provider experiences and opinions with three different devices in Kenya

PlosOne | Published: 14 February 2017.

Robert C. Bailey, Irene Nyaboke, Fredrick O. Otieno

Voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC) reduces risk of HIV acquisition in heterosexual men by approximately 60%. As some countries approach targets for proportions of adolescents and adults circumcised, some are considering early infant male circumcision (EIMC) as a means to achieve sustainability of VMMC for long term reduction of HIV incidence. Evaluations of specialized devices for EIMC are important to provide programs with information required to make informed decisions about how to design safe, effective EIMC programs. We provide assessments by 11 providers with experience in Kenya employing all three of the devices most likely to be considered by various EIMC programs in east and Southern Africa.

Comorbidities of HIV infection and health care seeking behavior among HIV infected patients attending public sector healthcare facilities in KwaZulu-Natal: A cross sectional study

PlosOne | Published: 2 February 2017.

Manimbulu Nlooto

HIV-infected people may present with co-infections, comorbidities, and side effects associated with antiretroviral therapy. This study explored the prevalence of comorbid health problems and determined the extent of the use of traditional medicine for treatment of co-infections, comorbidities of HIV infection and side effects.

The right to health of non-nationals and displaced persons in the sustainable development goals era: challenges for equity in universal health care

BioMed Central | Published: 21 February 2017.

Claire E. Brolan, Lisa Forman, Stéphanie Dagon, Rachel Hammonds, Attiya Waris, Lyla Latif and Ana Lorena Ruano

Under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), United Nations (UN) Member States reported progress on the targets toward their general citizenry. This focus repeatedly excluded marginalized ethnic and linguistic minorities, including people of refugee backgrounds and other vulnerable non-nationals that resided within a States' borders. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to be truly transformative by being made operational in all countries, and applied to all, nationals and non-nationals alike. Global migration and its diffuse impact has intensified due to escalating conflicts and the growing violence in war-torn Syria, as well as in many countries in Africa and in Central America. This massive migration and the thousands of refugees crossing borders in search for safety led to the creation of two-tiered, ad hoc, refugee health care systems that have added to the sidelining of non-nationals in MDG-reporting frameworks.

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RECENT NEWS

Press Release: Sixty thousand participants will take part in the fifth National HIV and Health Study

Human Sciences Research Council | 21 February 2017.

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) will visit 60 000 South Africans to request their participation in the country's fifth HIV and Health Study. Professor Leickness Simbayi, Deputy CEO for Research at the HSRC and overall Principal Investigator of the study, says field workers will be visiting selected households across South Africa.

CROI 2017: Added support, speed and communication improve HIV service linkage and retention in Mozambique and South Africa

Science Speaks | 16 February 2017.

Providing immune cell testing and HIV treatment counseling immediately after a positive HIV test was the first in a series of measures that increased rapid linkage to care and retention at ten clinic sites in Mozambique, data presented here Thursday showed.

A benign circle: how a combination of factors has reduced HIV infections in one of the hardest-hit parts of Africa

AIDSMap | 14 February 2017.

HIV incidence has started to tumble in one of the best-studied groups of people in Africa, the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI 2017) heard in Seattle. The annual infection rate has fallen 40% in the last four years, the conference was told. A combination of factors, including wider availability of antiretroviral therapy, increased male circumcision, and later age of sexual debut in young people, all appear to be contributing to this decline.

No more delays: Accelerating access to medicine

Health-E News | 17 February 2017.

Late last month, Heads of State and governments from across the continent gathered in Addis Ababa for the 28th African Union (AU) Summit writes Yolanda Moyo of PATH South Africa.

Potential cure for deadliest form of TB

Health-E News | 16 February 2017.

Usually a death sentence, extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) can potentially be cured with a new drug combination.

How should HIV self-testing services be provided?

AIDSMap | 17 February 2017.

Chairing a session on HIV self-testing at the 2017 Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Seattle this week, Joanne Stekler said that much is already known about the subject – that self-testing is acceptable to a broad range of people, has good uptake with people who have never tested before and can identify new cases, but that the longer window period means that self-testing is a less sensitive method for populations with a high incidence of HIV.

South Africa: Sexual violence in Platinum Mining Belt a major driver of HIV

MSF | 17 February 2017.

MSF's 2015 survey of more than 800 Rustenburg women between the ages of 18-49 established that one in four have been raped in their lifetime, whereas approximately half have experienced some form of sexual or intimate partner violence.

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TRAINING AND RESOURCES

10 Ways to improve the quality of care in health facilities

WHO | Published: February 2017.

This photo story describes some of WHO's recommendations on how countries can improve quality of care in their health facilities and prevent maternal and newborn deaths, based on its Standards for improving quality of maternal and newborn care in health facilities.

Webinar: Programming Along the Life Course: Men and boys as family planning users

The Knowledge for Health (K4Health) Project | 1 March 2017.

Join USAID, the Knowledge for Health (K4Health) Project and the Interagency Gender Working Group (IGWG) for a webinar to highlight the importance of tackling gender norms and inequities that act as barriers to men and boys' use of contraception.

Sex Rights

Regional Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (RSRHR) Fund

This website is a regional networking hub to share evidence and strengthen action to realise sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) for all in Southern Africa and globally.

CROI Webcasts

Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections

Webcasts from the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections 2017, held in Seattle, Washington, USA. CROI brings together top basic, translational, and clinical researchers from around the world to share the latest studies, important developments, and best research methods in the ongoing battle against HIV/AIDS and related infectious diseases.

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PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Annual Report to Congress on the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief: Thirteenth Annual Report to Congress (2017)

PEPFAR | Published: February 2017.

Since its inception in 2003, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has received strong bipartisan support in Congress and through administrations, including two re-authorizations with significant majorities. The United States is unquestionably the world's leader in responding to the global HIV/AIDS crisis. Originally conceived as a compassionate effort to save the lives of those in countries

hardest hit by HIV/AIDS with urgently needed treatment and care, PEPFAR is now also undertaking the challenge of actually controlling the pandemic.

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

31st International Papillomavirus Conference 2017

28 February – 4 March 2017

Cape Town, South Africa

The Africa Health Agenda International Conference (AHAIC 2017)

7 – 9 March 2017

Nairobi, Kenya

Building Children's Nursing for Africa Conference

28 – 30 March 2017

The River Club, Cape Town, South Africa

HEAIDS Conference (Higher Education and Training): Empowering our youth in South Africa

9 – 11 June 2017

ICC Durban, South Africa

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Please click on the job title for more information.

Health Systems Trust: Fleet Interns

Closing Date: 28 February 2017

Health Systems Trust: Copy and Content Editor, SA SURE Plus Project

Closing Date: 3 March 2017

Health Systems Trust: Compliance Officers

Closing Date: 9 March 2017

Health Systems Trust: Graphic Designer

Closing Date: 9 March 2017

Health Systems Trust: CCMDD Provincial Co-Ordinator

Closing Date: 9 March 2017

Health Systems Trust: CCMDD Monitoring and Evaluation System Implementation Co-Ordinator

Closing Date: 9 March 2017

Health Systems Trust: CCMDD District Technical Support

Closing Date: 9 March 2017

Health Systems Trust: CCMDD National Programme Co-Ordinator

Closing Date: 9 March 2017



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