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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Outcomes for first-episode psychosis after entry via an at-risk mental state clinic compared to direct entry to a first episode of psychosis service: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Science Direct | February 2022

Holly Sizerab, Ellie Brownab, Hellen Gerosab, Alison Yungab, Barnaby Nelson, et al

Early intervention for psychosis services have been established worldwide and consist of specialist services for those with the At-Risk Mental State (ARMS) and a first episode of psychosis (FEP). This systematic review identified the literature on the outcomes of people who initially presented via an ARMS clinic and later transitioned to a psychotic disorder (UHR-T), compared to those who presented directly to an EI service with a FEP (FEP-D). The outcomes examined were (i) symptomatic (ii) functional, (iii) morbidity and mortality (including physical health) and (iv) service-usage.

Trends in suicide mortality among people with HIV after diagnosis during 2012–18: a retrospective, national cohort study in China

The Lancet HIV | February 2022

Fangfang Chen, Chang Cai, Shengfeng Wang, Qianqian Qin, Yichen Jin, et al

Little is known about suicide mortality among people with HIV in low-income and middle-income countries. This study aimed to assess suicide mortality and its temporal change among people with HIV after diagnosis, then describe potential risk factors.

A 4-days-on and 3-days-off maintenance treatment strategy for adults with HIV-1 (ANRS 170 QUATUOR): a randomised, open-label, multicentre, parallel, non-inferiority trial

The Lancet HIV | February 2022

Roland Landman, Pierre de Truchis, Lambert Assoumou, Sidonie Lambert, Jonathan Bellet, et al

Intermittent (on 4 days per week) antiretroviral therapy (ART) for patients with HIV-1 might be more convenient, better tolerated, and cheaper than continuous treatment. We aimed to establish the efficacy and safety of a 4-days-on and 3-days-off (intermittent) maintenance regimen versus a standard 7 day (continuous) maintenance regimen.

Interventions for Reversing Prediabetes: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Karla Galaviz, Mary Beth Weber, Kara Suvada, Unjali Gujral, Jingkai Wei, et al

Pub Med | 9 February 2022

Several interventions have been found to be effective for reversing prediabetes in adults. This systematic review and meta-analysis aims to compare the effectiveness of such interventions.

Early identification of patients admitted to hospital for covid-19 at risk of clinical deterioration: model development and multisite external validation study

The BMJ | 17 February 2022

Fahad Kamran, Shengpu Tang, Erkin Otles, Dustin McEvoy, Sameh Saleh, et al

Objective: To create and validate a simple and transferable machine learning model from electronic health record data to accurately predict clinical deterioration in patients with covid-19 across institutions, through use of a novel paradigm for model development and code sharing.

Body Weight Variability and Risk of Cardiovascular Outcomes and Death in the Context of Weight Loss Intervention Among Patients With Type 2 Diabetes

JAMA Network Open | 18 February 2022

Arnaud Kaze, Prasanna Santhanam, Sebhat Erqou, Rexford Ahima, Alain Bertoni, et al

Importance: Body weight fluctuation is associated with greater risks of adverse health outcomes. Whether intensive weight loss interventions affect the association of variability in adiposity measures with adverse health outcomes in individuals with type 2 diabetes has not been studied previously. In this cohort study of individuals with type 2 diabetes, higher variability of adiposity indices was associated with significantly increased risk of CVD outcomes and death in the control group but not in the intensive lifestyle intervention group.

A public health manifesto

The Lancet | 19 February 2022

Jessamy Bagenal

The way that societies divide and manage our resources and treat our planet is not working. This failure is the starting point of a number of books that have been published during the COVID-19 pandemic, including GO BIG: 20 Bold Solutions to Fix Our World by Ed Miliband. This book, partly based on Miliband and Geoff Lloyd's podcast Reasons to Be Cheerful, identifies what is wrong with our political and multilateral systems and sets out solutions to fix our world. "In saying we need to 'go big' I am advocating not just the consideration of ideas that promise significant change but for politics to rediscover its sense of agency", Miliband argues.

Rural hospital bed management practices during influenza season

Remote and Rural Health | 19 February 2022

Rural health services face greater challenges in managing infectious patients due to lack of specialty beds and longer lengths of stay. The pressures of seasonal influxes of influenza patients with a heavy burden of chronic disease and an ageing population result in an increased demand for hospital beds. During these peak periods it is common for rural hospitals to experience bed block. The result is that patients may be placed into any available bed or ward at the time, increasing the need for transfer and the risk of spreading hospital-acquired respiratory illnesses to other patients and staff across the hospital. This further exacerbates bed block, with patients then requiring more specialised treatment and longer lengths of stay. This places additional strain on already existing workforce shortages and limited resources that must accommodate higher-than-normal patient loads. The objective of this study was to examine rural hospital bed management practices with a focus on the transfer of patients who are actively diagnosed with influenza (either on admission or during their stay in hospital) and to investigate the association of increased bed movement with the rate of nosocomial transmission and staff workload.

Tailoring immunisation programs in Lismore, New South Wales - we want our children to be healthy and grow well, and immunisation really helps

Remote and Rural Health | 19 February 2022

In 2018 in the Australian town of Lismore, New South Wales, 175 children were overdue for scheduled vaccinations, 11% of them being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (2018). This study aimed to gain

a deeper understanding of the reasons for low coverage. The study found that access barriers and vaccine hesitancy have been contributing to children falling behind in their scheduled vaccinations in Lismore. More flexible health services, culturally safe and appropriate care and more practical support can help overcome structural barriers to health services. Tailored health messages for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal parents and carers can assist parents in making wise immunisation choices. More consistent analysis and reporting of routinely available data can identify pockets of low coverage. Publicly funded health services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services are well placed to provide flexible vaccination services for those families who may struggle with access barriers.

Switching to Over-the-Counter Availability of Rescue Inhalers for Asthma

JAMA Network | 21 February 2022

William Feldman, Jerry Avorn, MAaron Kesselheim

In 2018, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved an inhaled epinephrine product (Primatene Mist) as the only over-the-counter (OTC) inhaler to manage asthma symptoms. This product had been sold as an OTC inhaler from 1967 until 2011, when it was phased out along with several other inhalers for containing ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons. Prior to discontinuation, the inhaler was an inexpensive, easy-to-access bronchodilator that particularly benefited uninsured and underinsured patients and those with otherwise limited access to physician care. Before 2018, several organizations strongly opposed the FDA decision to restore the availability of this epinephrine inhaler, arguing that it was less effective than prescription-only β 2-agonists and posed an increased risk of cardiac toxicity and other adverse effects.¹ No current clinical guidelines recommend inhaled epinephrine to treat asthma.

Mortality Among Adults With Cancer Undergoing Chemotherapy or Immunotherapy and Infected With COVID-19

JAMA Network Open | 21 February 2022

Csilla Várnai, Claire Palles, Roland Arnold, Helen Curley, Karin Purshouse, et al

Large cohorts of patients with active cancers and COVID-19 infection are needed to provide evidence of the association of recent cancer treatment and cancer type with COVID-19 mortality. The study set out to evaluate whether systemic anticancer treatments (SACTs), tumor subtypes, patient demographic characteristics (age and sex), and comorbidities are associated with COVID-19 mortality. The findings of this study of patients with active cancer suggest that recent SACT is not associated with inferior outcomes from COVID-19 infection. This has relevance for the care of patients with cancer requiring treatment, particularly in countries experiencing an increase in COVID-19 case numbers. Important differences in outcomes among patients with hematological and lung cancers were observed.

Exploring rural doctors' early experiences of coping with the emerging COVID-19 pandemic

Online Wiley Library | 21 February 2022

Ian Couper, Lucie Walters, Susan Williams, David Campbell, Isabella White, et al

The purpose of the study was to understand how rural doctors (physicians) responded to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic and their strategies for coping. The study found that with limited resources and support, these rural doctors' practical responses to the COVID-19 crisis underscore strong problem-focused coping strategies and shared commitments to their communities, patients, and colleagues. They drew support from sharing experiences with peers (emotion-focused coping) and finding positive meanings in their experiences (meaning-based coping). The psychosocial impact on rural doctors working at the limits of their adaptive resources is an ongoing concern.

Encephalitis awareness: our ambitious global endeavour

The Lancet Neurology | 21 February 2022

Ava Easton, Tom Solomon

Encephalitis is a neurological emergency that can cause severe disability or death but, if diagnosed promptly, it can often be treated. Although epidemiological measures are difficult to determine, in many countries the incidence of encephalitis is believed to be higher than those of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, bacterial meningitis, or multiple sclerosis. Yet, encephalitis remains relatively neglected compared with other neurological diseases, perhaps because eight out of ten people do not know what encephalitis is. The Encephalitis Society has been working to improve education, to support patients, to facilitate research, and to raise awareness, particularly through World Encephalitis Day, which launched on Feb 22,

2014, and has grown annually in size and scope.

Emotion regulation as mediator between childhood adversity and psychopathology: A meta-analysis

Science Direct | 21 February 2022

Andrei Miuab, Aurora Szentágotai-Tátarcd, Róbert Balázsib, Diana Nechitacd, Ioana Bunea, et al

Childhood adversity is a major risk factor for multiple forms of psychopathology, and recent efforts have focused on understanding the underlying psychological mechanisms. One outstanding candidate is emotion regulation, which has been associated with both childhood adversity, and psychopathology. Based on the available evidence, the present meta-analysis set out to investigate the mechanistic involvement of emotion regulation in the relation between childhood adversity and psychopathology. Systematic searches in three databases (PubMed; PsycINFO; Web of Science) identified 215 eligible studies. Using meta-analytic structural equation modeling, we fitted a partial mediation model to the available data across studies, in which childhood adversity was related to psychopathology both directly and through emotion regulation. Multiple emotion regulation dimensions were analyzed, including emotion regulation difficulties and the habitual use of rumination, distraction, reappraisal, and suppression. Measures of psychopathology included a wide range of internalizing and externalizing symptoms in both clinical and non-clinical samples. The results indicated that childhood adversity was positively associated with emotion regulation difficulties, as well as the habitual use of rumination and suppression. In turn, these measures of emotion regulation were positively associated with psychopathology. Habitual reappraisal use showed negative relations with both childhood adversity and psychopathology. All these emotion regulation measures were supported as mediators in the relation between childhood adversity and psychopathology. In contrast, distraction was not related to childhood adversity or psychopathology, and its mediator role was not supported. These results suggest that altered emotion regulation is a consistent marker of childhood adversity and contributes to risk of psychopathology.

Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—2022 Update: A Report From the American Heart Association

American Heart Association | 22 February 2022

Connie Tsao, Aaron Aday, Zaid Almarzooq, Alvaro Alonso, Andrea Beaton, et al

The American Heart Association, in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health, annually reports the most up-to-date statistics related to heart disease, stroke, and cardiovascular risk factors, including core health behaviors (smoking, physical activity, diet, and weight) and health factors (cholesterol, blood pressure, and glucose control) that contribute to cardiovascular health. The Statistical Update presents the latest data on a range of major clinical heart and circulatory disease conditions (including stroke, congenital heart disease, rhythm disorders, subclinical atherosclerosis, coronary heart disease, heart failure, valvular disease, venous disease, and peripheral artery disease) and the associated outcomes (including quality of care, procedures, and economic costs).

Patient and health facility attributes associated with retention and virologic suppression in private for-profit health facilities in Nigeria

AIDS Research and Therapy | 22 February 2022

Muyi Aina, Zeena Yesufu, Abdulateef Salisu, Echezona Ezeanolue, Charles Mensah, et al

In Nigeria, private for-profit health facilities present an opportunity to achieve the UNAIDS 95-95-95 HIV targets because of their reach and patronage. However, little is known about determinants of outcomes in these facilities. This study describes patient outcomes and the patient and health facility characteristics associated with these outcomes in adults receiving HIV treatment in private facilities in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Benue and Nasarawa states in north-central Nigeria.

Advanced HIV disease management practices within inpatient medicine units at a referral hospital in Zambia: a retrospective chart review

AIDS Research and Therapy | 22 February 2022

Nyuma Mbewe, Michael Vinikoor, Sombo Fwoloshi, Mundia Mwitungwa, Shabir Lakhi, et al

Zambia recently achieved UNAIDS 90-90-90 treatment targets for HIV epidemic control; however, inpatient facilities continue to face a large burden of patients with advanced HIV disease and HIV-related mortality. Management of advanced HIV disease, following guidelines from outpatient settings, may be more difficult within complex inpatient settings. We evaluated adherence to HIV guidelines during

hospitalization, including opportunistic infection (OI) screening, treatment, and prophylaxis.

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Help patients understand Nutrition Facts labels to eat smarter

American Medical Association | 9 February 2022

Nearly half of American adults put on weight during the first year of the pandemic, according to survey research published in January in the journal *Diabetes & Metabolic Syndrome: Clinical Research & Reviews*, with depression and anxiety being strong predictors weight gain amid the strains of COVID-19. The pandemic has undoubtedly amplified the need to make chronic disease prevention a priority. This often begins with making healthy food choices, as difficult as that may be given the unprecedented and seemingly unrelenting stressors patients are facing daily. One small but important way for patients to make key decisions that have a lasting impact on their health is by consulting the Nutrition Facts label on food and beverage packages. However, patients often have difficulty understanding the information listed and what it means for making informed food choices. Physicians and other health professionals can learn to effectively educate patients on how to read and understand Nutrition Facts labels through four educational videos. The AMA has developed the continuing medical education module, "Talking to Patients About Using the Nutrition Facts Label to Make Healthy Food Choices" in collaboration with the Food and Drug Administration.

An AIDS-Free Generation Starts with Young People

Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation | 17 February 2022

Matseliso Nchori is a young woman from southwest Lesotho. Five years ago, when she discovered that she was two months pregnant, Matseliso, then 19, attended her first antenatal clinic, where she was offered the opportunity to take an HIV test. She was found positive and immediately enrolled in lifelong antiretroviral treatment to protect herself and her unborn baby. Matseliso recalls that her only worry was if she had already infected her baby in the womb. The health care workers provided calm counseling and educated her about the prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission (PMTCT). Matseliso adhered to her treatment, never missing her appointments, and eventually, she delivered her baby boy safely in a hospital. She breastfed her son for the full recommended 18 months. During that time her son was given prophylaxis to prevent HIV transmission until the baby stopped breastfeeding. The baby tested for HIV regularly, first at 6 weeks, then at 9 months, and yet again at 18 months. All the tests were negative. Matseliso's son is now 4 years old. He was tested recently and found HIV-free.

Uganda makes strides in HIV control

The EastAfrican | 17 February 2022

Uganda has in the past three years registered a decline in HIV prevalence within the country's population signalling positive strides towards controlling the epidemic, a new survey has confirmed. Preliminary results of the 2020 Uganda Population-based HIV Impact Assessment (UPHIA) released last Friday by the country's Health ministry indicates that the current prevalence of HIV among adults aged 15 to 49 years in the country is now 5.5 per cent, representing a slight decline from 6 percent in UPHIA 2016-17. UPHIA 2020 is a nationwide survey that was conducted to provide estimates of HIV incidence, its prevalence, viral load suppression, and other important HIV/Aids programme indicators, according to the ministry.

Drug-resistant TB: Rollout of shorter regimen hits a snag

Health-E News | 18 February 2022

The much-anticipated rollout of the shorter regimen to treat drug-resistant tuberculosis (TB) has failed to make inroads leaving patients stranded across the country. Having started in March last year, only about 70 patients have received treatment – which is only being administered in four provinces. The new oral regimen can treat drug-resistant TB within a period of six months, instead of the usual 18 months.

Early detection: CANSA joins hands with traditional practitioners

Health-E News | 18 February 2022

The Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA), hopes to raise awareness of the importance of early cancer detection by equipping traditional health practitioners (THPs) with the necessary know-how to recognise early signs and symptoms. CANSA Head of Advocacy, Zodwa Sithole, is in the process of training traditional health practitioners. The eight-week course which started late last month, will wrap up on 23 March 2022. Besides focusing on how important early detection is, the training also covers the prevalence of certain cancers, treatment and side effects.

Virtual approaches boost HIV self-testing in India

Aids Map | 18 February 2022

Virtual outreach workers are able to reach key populations in India to promote HIV testing, either with self-testing or at bricks and mortar facilities, researchers reported to the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI 2022) this week. As HIV testing is the key entry point to HIV care cascade, it is worrisome that in India one in four people living with HIV do not know their HIV status. The COVID-19 pandemic has further negatively impacted the pace of HIV testing. The studies presented at CROI 2022 show that virtual approaches can provide an additional entry point to increase uptake of HIV testing in those who are currently getting missed by traditional healthcare services. However, virtual approaches need to be improved so that all those who test positive go for a confirmatory test and are linked to health care.

Championing Inclusivity at the Global Disability Summit

Health Policy Watch | 18 February 2022

From barriers to treatment for people with hearing disabilities to preconceptions about albinism and inaccessible COVID testing for wheelchair users, participants in the Global Disability Summit took a fresh look at the wide range of discriminatory practices that an estimated 1 billion people – 15% of the world's population – living with disabilities have to face. This summit, the second of its kind, was sponsored by the International Disability Alliance, the governments of Norway and Ghana, and the World Health Organization, drew some 5500 participants during two days of online proceedings, 16-17 February. The conference covered issues associated with a wide range of physical disabilities and mental health disorders.

Over 225 Million Covid-19 Vaccinations Administered Across Continent

AllAfrica | 20 February 2022

As of February 20, 2022, confirmed cases of Covid-19 from 55 African countries reached 11,160,281 while over 225,202,633 vaccinations have been administered across the continent. Reported deaths in Africa reached 246,785 and 10,182,217 people have recovered. South Africa has the most reported cases of 3,660,003 and 98,717 people died. Other most-affected countries are Morocco (1,159,265), Tunisia (979,612), Ethiopia (468,284), Libya (486,737), Egypt (467,448) and Kenya (322,723). For the latest totals, see the AllAfrica interactive map with per-country numbers. The numbers are compiled by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University using statistics from the World Health Organization and other international institutions as well as national and regional public health departments.

From Wednesday you can mix the Pfizer and J&J vaccines on request – at least in theory

Business Insider SA | 21 February 2022

By Wednesday, any South African already fully vaccinated against Covid-19 will be able to request a mixer booster vaccine, to potentially benefit from what has become known as the "mix and match" approach. The door for mixing opens to previous J&J recipients today (21 February), when anyone who received a J&J shot no more recent than Christmas may ask for a dose of Pfizer. For the far more numerous recipients of the Pfizer vaccine, the window opens on Wednesday. At that point, anyone who received a second dose of Pfizer no more recently than 24 November can ask for their third jab to be of the J&J variety instead.

South Africa has 'a healthy pipeline of Covid therapies', says Sahpra CEO

Daily Maverick | 21 February 2022

"We are sitting with quite a healthy pipeline of Covid therapies that are either in review or have already been approved," South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (Sahpra) CEO Boitumelo Semete-

Makokotlela told a webinar on Monday. The purpose of the webinar was to provide an update on the latest Covid-19 therapy trends and to reiterate the facts of their safety and efficacy to mitigate against fake news and vaccine hesitancy. "What you'll see in what I would call 'the bucket' of the available therapies that are currently under investigation... you'll find a lot of antivirals, which is the likes of remdesivir, molnupiravir etc, and then you also see a class of monoclonal antibodies that have also been submitted," said Semete-Makokotlela.

A skin expert busts 11 Black skin myths

Bhekisisa | 21 February 2022

One thing that stops Black women (and men) from accessing the best information, treatments and products to care for their skin is the number of myths and misconceptions about Black skin that litter the beauty and skincare world. These create unnecessary fear and confusion, so it's time to settle the matter once and for all.

Covid: Australia's border reopens to international visitors

BBC News | 21 February 2022

Australia has reopened its international border for the first time in nearly two years, bringing joyful family reunions and a boost to tourism. The country imposed some of the world's strictest travel bans after shutting itself off in March 2020 due to Covid. Australians and some others were allowed to return from late last year, but most foreigners have had to wait. There were tearful reunions at Sydney Airport on Monday as hundreds of people began arriving on flights. One young girl, Charlotte, shared an emotional hug with her grandfather. She told the local Nine Network: "I've missed him so much and I've looked forward to this trip for so long."

All hands on deck in a pandemic

Business Live | 21 February 2022

Nonfiction author Rebecca Solnit writes about hope, humanity and the human response, saying: "It's a myth that our reactions to danger are fight or flight. There's a third option often pursued: to gather for reassurance, protection, strength, and insight." Her book *Paradise Built in Hell* looks at this phenomenon, and when interviewed by Time magazine about the notion, she elaborated, saying, "In disasters, the great majority of people behave well. In some ways, they behave better than in ordinary life and in some disasters, people find [out about] the meaningful role of deep social connections and see their absence in everyday life." This sounds a lot like Ubuntu, which, for South Africans, is a collective feeling as much as it's a philosophy.

Vegetables alone not enough to reduce heart risk, study finds

BBC News | 21 February 2022

Vegetables may be good for you, but eating a lot of them is unlikely to reduce your risk of a heart attack or stroke, a large UK study suggests. What else we eat, how much exercise we do and where and how we live may have more of an impact, the researchers say. But they emphasise that a balanced diet helps reduce the risk of many diseases, including some cancers. Eating at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day is recommended by health advisers, including the NHS.

SA slashes interval between Covid-19 jabs and offers option of mix-and-match boosters

Business Day | 21 February 2022

The government has reduced the interval between Covid-19 shots, and will now offer "mix and match" booster jabs to adults, the health department announced on Monday morning. It said homologous boosting is preferred if both vaccines are available at sites, but heterologous boosting is permitted if the person seeking a vaccine wants a different booster, or has experienced adverse events with their primary course. SA currently offers people either a single Johnson & Johnson (J&J) shot, or two shots of Pfizer's vaccine six weeks apart as their primary course, followed by a booster of the same shot. The interval between the first and second Pfizer shots has been halved, from 42 days to 21 days, from Wednesday. The interval for receiving a booster has also been halved, from six months to three months, and the booster may be either a third Pfizer shot or a J&J jab.

The Covid treatment pill is here – and big pharma will ultimately decide who gets it

The Guardian | 20 February 2022

Covid-19 has quietly become the gift that keeps on giving for big pharma. The past two years has seen it reap huge profits from Covid vaccines, while simultaneously opposing wider sharing of the technology required to make them. And now there's a new money-spinner on the rise: Covid antiviral treatment pills. Once again, we're poised to fall into the same inequality traps we're caught in with the global vaccine rollout. Both Pfizer and Merck have new antiviral pills rapidly arriving on the market – Paxlovid and molnupiravir respectively. As with the vaccines that came before them, both corporations have made it their business to ultimately decide who gets to make generic versions through the medical patent system – a crucial, life-saving question for millions around the world.

COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shot: Frequently Asked Questions

National Institute for Communicable Diseases | 21 February 2022

1. *Why should I get vaccinated if the vaccine already needs a booster shot to protect me? Are vaccines not effective?*

Vaccines have been shown in controlled trials and in the evaluation of national vaccination programmes (e.g. United Kingdom) to reduce severe disease and mortality by up to 95-97%. This lifesaving effect has continued, even as variants have emerged. Taking a vaccine will protect you and your loved ones from a devastating illness and/or death. Recently, vaccines have also been shown to reduce transmission of COVID-19 from one person to another. As early as the first clinical trials, vaccines have been shown to reduce but not prevent mild to moderate illness. As COVID variants has emerged, laboratory research has shown that protection against COVID-19 is related to antibody levels. Booster vaccination with the JnJ or Pfizer vaccine is a reliable and safe way of increasing antibody levels.

No evidence that recent cases of typhoid fever are linked to contaminated municipal water in any part of the country

National Institute for Communicable Diseases | 21 February 2022

There are numerous social media posts with false information about enteric fever in South Africa that are attracting widespread attention and causing needless concern and panic at the moment. These posts allege either that there are currently cases of enteric fever in certain towns or provinces caused by contaminated municipal water, or that the bacteria causing enteric fever have been identified in certain municipal water sources. These statements are factually incorrect. There is no evidence that recent cases of enteric fever are linked to contaminated municipal water in any part of the country, and there is no evidence that the bacteria causing enteric fever have recently been identified in municipal water sources anywhere in the country. This includes those districts in Western Cape and North West provinces in which the clusters (small localised outbreaks) have been identified.

Flagship Training Programme Boosts Research in Neglected Tropical Diseases in Global South

Health Policy Watch | 21 February 2022

In a village in eastern Ghana where Comfort Tetteh grew up, many people thought it was normal for a child to urinate blood. But after studying public health, Tetteh recognized this as a sign of schistosomiasis, one of the many neglected tropical diseases that affect her community. "In the districts that I've worked in, everything is about tropical diseases," said Tetteh, who became a disease control officer after graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree. "I saw Buruli ulcers, I saw leprosy, I saw schistosomiasis, I saw yaws and many other diseases. My job was to implement disease control measures, and my interest grew to go beyond treatment and help people to apply community-level measures to prevent the appearance of these diseases," Tetteh said.

New WHO/ILO guide urges greater safeguards to protect health workers

World Health Organization | 21 February 2022

The World Health Organization (WHO) and The International Labour Organization (ILO) have published a new guide on developing and implementing stronger occupational health and safety programmes for health workers, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to exert great pressure on them. "Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the health sector was among the most hazardous sectors to work in," said Dr Maria Neira, Director, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health, WHO. "Only a few healthcare facilities had programmes in place for managing health and safety at work. Health workers suffered from infections, musculoskeletal disorders and injuries, workplace violence and harassment, burnout, and

allergies from the poor working environment.”

Come back for boosters: Why time alone is not enough to get people to line up for their next shot

Bhekisisa | 22 February 2022

The hope that more vaccinated people will return for their second Pfizer COVID vaccine doses and boosters was one of the main reasons behind the health department's decision to half the waiting period between first and second doses (from 42 to 21 days) and second doses and boosters (from 180 days to 90 days), according to the department's Nicholas Crisp, who heads up the vaccine roll-out. According to health department data, 18.93% people vaccinated with Pfizer's COVID vaccine don't return for their second dose within 42 days. People between 50 and 59 years do the best with getting their second jabs in time (only 7.7% don't go back within 42 days) and those between 18 and 34 years the worst (30.12% don't get their second shots within the required period). This is twice as high as data from the United States Centres for Disease Control, which shows that about 9% of people who got their first dose of Pfizer didn't come back for their second dose.

New project advocates for Dapivirine vaginal ring

Aidsfonds | 21 February 2022

We are proud to announce our new project EmpoweRing: Prevention by Choice. Throughout 2022, we will advocate for accelerated approval and uptake of the Dapivirine vaginal ring as an HIV prevention tool for women and girls in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda. Implemented by our valuable partner International Community of Women living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA), the EmpoweRing project builds on new biomedical developments and opportunities that self-care can bring, making use of Aidsfonds' ample experience.

Four years of the Fast-Track cities project—what have we achieved and learned, and what is next?

UNAIDS | 21 February 2022

Implementation of the joint UNAIDS–International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) Fast-Track cities project started in 2018 under the management of UNAIDS and IAPAC, with financial support from the United States Agency for International Development. Recognizing the important role that cities play in achieving national and global HIV targets and in ending AIDS by 2030, the project aims to provide essential and strategic technical support to 15 high-burden cities to accelerate their HIV responses. The 15 cities (Blantyre, eThekweni, Jakarta, Johannesburg, Kampala, Kigali, Kingston, Kinshasa, Kyiv, Lagos, Lusaka, Maputo, Nairobi, Windhoek and Yaoundé) account for about 3 million people living with HIV. The project is implemented in close collaboration with local governments and stakeholders and takes into account the local contexts, epidemics and priorities. Technical support is provided for the development and implementation of city HIV strategic plans, creating an enabling environment for optimized HIV service delivery, strengthening data collection, analysis and use and building clinician and community capacity to facilitate service optimization and to eliminate stigma in health-care facilities.

What's the impact of the new HIV variant on the HIV response?

UNAIDS | 22 February 2022

In the light of the recent identification of a new variant of HIV, we spoke to Lycias Zembe, a medical virologist and technical officer at UNAIDS, about whether the new variant will have an impact on the global HIV response. What is different about this new HIV variant? HIV is one of the fastest-mutating viruses ever studied—versions of the virus can vary from person to person and sometimes even in a single individual. Its ability to mutate rapidly and evolve between and within individuals is a major obstacle to the development of an HIV vaccine—there is still no HIV vaccine available and no cure. Up until now, HIV mutations have not been covered widely in the media because of the effectiveness and availability of antiretroviral therapy in responding to them.

Start planning HIV prevention injection rollout, experts say

Spotlight | 22 February 2022

There is no time to waste in planning the South African rollout of cabotegravir (CAB LA), the long-lasting antiretroviral injection approved for use in the United States in December 2021, say local health experts. The jab, which could transform HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) regimens from a daily oral pill to

injections administered every two months, is currently under review by the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA). PrEP refers to people who are not living with HIV taking antiretroviral medicine to prevent HIV infection. While marketing approval could take anything from several months to several years, experts from advocates to researchers say planning for effective health service delivery of CAB LA should start now.

Finally Cause for Optimism About TB Vaccine Research, Says Fauci

Health Policy Watch | 22 February 2022

There is finally “cause for optimism” in the quest for a tuberculosis vaccine, Dr Anthony Fauci, director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAD), told the opening of the sixth Global Forum on TB Vaccines on Tuesday. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, TB was the most deadly global infectious disease yet there has been little progress on vaccine development for TB for decades as it is seen as a disease of the poor. Acknowledging that there were still “basic knowledge gaps” about TB, Fauci said that “there have been significant research advances and there is cause for optimism in the context of our research advances”.

More than half of parents and pregnant women exposed to aggressive formula milk marketing – WHO, UNICEF

UNICEF | 22 February 2022

More than half of parents and pregnant women (51 per cent) surveyed for a new WHO/UNICEF report say they have been targeted with marketing from formula milk companies, much of which is in breach of international standards on infant feeding practices. The report, How marketing of formula milk influences our decisions on infant feeding, draws on interviews with parents, pregnant women and health workers in eight countries. It uncovers systematic and unethical marketing strategies used by the formula milk industry – now worth a staggering US\$55 billion – to influence parents' infant feeding decisions.

Rapid Rx Quiz: Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs)

Medscape | 22 February 2022

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) are the most commonly prescribed agents for reducing stomach acid and are recommended as first-line therapy for peptic ulcer disease, gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), and other gastrointestinal disorders. PPIs are highly efficacious and among the most commonly dispensed drug classes, both in the United States and around the world. In addition, several are available without a prescription (eg, esomeprazole, lansoprazole, omeprazole). However, PPI safety and long-term use have recently come under increasing scrutiny. Given how widespread PPI use is, updated knowledge regarding clinical concerns is critical. Do you know best practices for PPIs, as well as adverse effects to be aware of and interactions to avoid? Test yourself on this commonly used class of drug with this short quiz.

What I learned from Paul Farmer: Treat the systems around the patient, not just the disease

Stat News | 23 February 2022

As a young physician trying to understand how I could help improve health care delivery for marginalized patients, I was dismayed by the enormity of the barriers — economic, social, and political — that impede the path toward good health. Having grown up in the politically fragile and economically disadvantaged Kashmir region of India, I was all too familiar with the rhetoric local and global leaders employ to get out of answering difficult questions about helping people with no real power. Early in my career as a physician, I was fortunate to come across the writings of Paul Farmer, a physician and global health champion who passed away unexpectedly on Monday, who was championing a radical notion: that people from all backgrounds living in all regions of the world deserve high-quality health care.

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I beat an antibiotic resistant infection - but only just

GroundUp | 24 February 2022

My face is disfigured because of a car accident. But a broken health system and over-exposure to antibiotics also played a role. The accident happened in 2004 when I was 25 years old. I was out for dinner with friends. On our way home our car spun on Republic Road in Johannesburg. It came to a dead stop against a concrete wall. I don't remember much. But I do recall one of the paramedics asking me if I had medical aid. I couldn't answer because I was gurgling so much blood and spinal fluid due to multiple broken bones in my face, and injuries to my neck, back and internal organs. I had been resuscitated on the side of the road. But someone managed to tell the emergency services that I wasn't insured so I needed to be transported to a public facility. After being unconscious for three days, I woke up in Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital.

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TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Subscribe to the Health Systems Trust Bulletin

The Health Systems Trust (HST) produces a weekly bulletin on Fridays focusing on key public health news, peer-reviewed journal articles and other important primary healthcare resources.

Subscribe to the Health Systems Trust 60percent

HST produces a weekly online publication, 60percent, which keeps subscribers abreast with the latest news and developments pertaining to HIV-related maternal, adolescent, child and youth health. The name 60percent signifies that southern Africa is responding to a feminised HIV/AIDS epidemic, with at least 60% of those living with HIV being women.

Subscribe to 60percent by simply visiting HST's website (<https://www.hst.org.za>), scroll to the bottom of the page, hit the SUBSCRIBE button, and follow the prompts. Let's keep you posted!

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

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

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PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

CDC HIV Nexus

The CDC HIV Nexus is a one-stop location for information across the HIV continuum, including up-to-date tools and guidelines for your practice, and educational materials for your patients.

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Launch of the Primary health care monitoring framework and indicators

Date: 28 February 2022

Time: 10:30 – 11:30 CET

A primary health care approach can help countries equitably maximize the level and distribution of health and well-being by focusing on people's needs and preferences (both as individuals and communities) as early as possible along the continuum of care – from health promotion and disease prevention to diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care – and as close as possible to people's everyday environments.

Expanding our understanding of post COVID-19 condition web series: Neurology and Mental Health

Date: 1 March 2022

Time: 13:30 – 15:30 CET

Over the past year, WHO has hosted a webinar series focused on the three “Rs”- recognition, research, and rehabilitation to advance the understanding of post COVID-19 condition. On 1 March 2022, WHO will host the next webinar focused on neurology and mental health in post COVID-19 condition.

Invitation to UKZN webinar | COVID-19: What's Next?

Date: 2 March 2022

Time: 13:00

Register: <https://lnkd.in/eUvZ82Su>

Call for Papers | International Journal of Public Health

Public health and primary care; is 1+1=1?

Public health and primary care have both long been considered to be corner stones of health systems. Although both aim to improve the health of populations, they differ in target group (population vs. individual), approach (promote and prevent vs. diagnose and treat) and methods (risk reduction vs. care). Whether considering the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic, the rise in non-communicable diseases, poor mental health, or the impact of environmental changes (e.g., climate change) or demographic shifts (e.g., migration and aging), there is an urgent need for better coordination and harmonization of public health and primary care in all of these areas. In fact, could these two types of health services contravene basic mathematics and be combined into one? With this call for papers, we invite articles presenting both positive and negative examples of the collaboration and integration between public health and primary care. The Call is open from 15 December 2021 until 31 August 2022. IJPH double-blind peer-review rules and author's guidelines apply.

#EndTB Webinar on TB prevention and care among refugees and other populations in humanitarian settings

Date: 2 March 2022

Time: 13:30 – 15:00 CET

The World Health Organization (WHO), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) are hosting a special #EndTB webinar to launch an interagency field guide on tuberculosis (TB) prevention and care among refugees and other populations in humanitarian settings.

Invitation to Global Health Initiative webinar | How To Beat Pandemics: a route map to ending COVID-19, ending AIDS, and keeping safe from the threats of the future

Date: Thursday, 03 March 2022

Time: 10:00am to 11:15am

This event with Winnie Byanyima, the feminist activist who leads the UN's response to HIV and AIDS and who chairs the People's Vaccine Alliance for COVID-19, will highlight lessons rooted in ongoing experience from the AIDS response and the commonalities between the two pandemics, as well as learnings from other health crises, to set out an approach that can actually succeed in keeping us all safe.

Register: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/Events/2022/03/202203021000/pandemics>

BECOME A DIARIST | The third NCD Diaries series will run from March through July 2022

For the third Series of the NCD Diaries, we are seeking to support and promote NCD Diaries that highlight the impact of healthcare providers on one's NCD journey. Through their Diaries, the lived experience advocates will have the opportunity to shed light on this very foundational relationship between people

living with NCDs and their healthcare providers.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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

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