

# HST Bulletin



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## ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

### **Mental health financing challenges, opportunities and strategies in low- and middle-income countries: findings from the Emerald project**

*BJPsych Open* | Published: 6 August 2019.

*Dan Chisholm, Sumaiyah Docrat, Jibril Abdulmalik, Atalay Alem, Oye Gureje, Dristy Gurung, Charlotte Hanlon, Mark J D Jordans, et al*

Current coverage of mental healthcare in low- and middle-income countries is very limited, not only in terms of access to services but also in terms of financial protection of individuals in need of care and treatment. [This study aimed] to identify the challenges, opportunities and strategies for more equitable and sustainable mental health financing in six sub-Saharan African and South Asian countries, namely Ethiopia, India, Nepal, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda. In the context of a mental health systems research project (Emerald), a multi-methods approach was implemented consisting of three steps: a

quantitative and narrative assessment of each country's disease burden profile, health system and macro-fiscal situation; in-depth interviews with expert stakeholders; and a policy analysis of sustainable financing options.

### **Continuity of care for TB patients at a South African hospital: A qualitative participatory study of the experiences of hospital staff**

*PlosOne* | Published: 18 September 2019.

*Frederick Marais, Idriss Ibrahim Kallon, Lilian Diana Dudley*

Ensuring effective clinical management and continuity of TB care across hospital and primary health-care services remains challenging in South Africa. The high burden of TB, coupled with numerous health system problems, influence the TB care delivered by hospital staff. [The aim of this study was] To understand factors from the perspectives of hospital staff that influence the clinical management and discharge of TB patients, and to elicit recommendations to improve continuity of care for TB patients.

### **What will it take for the Global Plan priority countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV?**

*BMC Infectious Diseases* | Published: 16 September 2019.

*Ameena E. Goga, Thu-Ha Dinh, Shaffiq Essajee, Witness Chirinda, Anna Larsen, Mary Mogashoa, Debra Jackson, Mireille Cheyip, et al*

The 2016 'Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free' global agenda, builds on the 2011-2015 'Global Plan'. It prioritises 22 countries where 90% of the world's HIV-positive pregnant women live and aims to eliminate vertical transmission of HIV (EMTCT) and to keep mothers alive. By 2019, no Global Plan priority country had achieved EMTCT; however, 11 non-priority countries had. This paper synthesises the characteristics of the first four countries validated for EMTCT, and of the 21 Global Plan priority countries located in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). We consider what drives vertical transmission of HIV (MTCT) in the 21 SSA Global Plan priority countries.

### **Prevalence of HIV-1 drug resistance amongst newly diagnosed HIV-infected infants age 4–8 weeks, enrolled in three nationally representative PMTCT effectiveness surveys, South Africa: 2010, 2011–12 and 2012–13**

*BMC Infectious Diseases* | Published: 16 September 2019.

*Gillian M Hunt, Johanna Ledwaba, Anna Salimo, Monalisa Kalimashe, Thu-Ha Dinh, Debra Jackson, Gayle Sherman, Adrian Puren, et al*

South Africa (SA) has expanded efforts to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV (MTCT) to less than 2% at six weeks after birth and to less than 5% at 18 months postpartum by 2016. Despite improved antiretroviral regimens and coverage between 2001 and 2016, there is little data on infant HIV drug resistance. This paper tracks the prevalence of HIV drug resistance patterns amongst HIV infected infants from three nationally representative studies that assessed the effectiveness of national programs to prevent MTCT (PMTCT). The first study was conducted in 2010 (under the dual therapy PMTCT policy),

the second from 2011 to 12 (PMTCT Option A policy) and the third from 2012 to 13 (PMTCT Option A policy).

### **Measuring sexual relationship power equity among young women and young men South Africa: Implications for gender-transformative programming**

*PlosOne | Published: 25 September 2019.*

*Kalysha Closson, Janan J Dietrich, Mags Bekinska, Andrew Gibbs, Stefanie Hornschuh, Tricia Smith, Jenni Smit, Glenda Gray, et al*

Measures used to assess equitable relationship dynamics, including the sexual relationship power scale (SRPS) have previously been associated with lower HIV-risk among young women, and reduced perpetration of intimate partner violence among men. However, few studies describe how the SRPS has been adapted and validated for use within global youth sexual health studies. We examined gender-specific psychometric properties, reliability, and validity of a SRPS used within a South African youth-engaged cohort study.

### **Corporations' use and misuse of evidence to influence health policy: a case study of sugar-sweetened beverage taxation**

*BMC Globalization and Health | Published: 25 September 2019.*

*Gary Jonas Fooks, Simon Williams, Graham Box, Gary Sacks*

Sugar sweetened beverages (SSB) are a major source of sugar in the diet. Although trends in consumption vary across regions, in many countries, particularly LMICs, their consumption continues to increase. In response, a growing number of governments have introduced a tax on SSBs. SSB manufacturers have opposed such taxes, disputing the role that SSBs play in diet-related diseases and the effectiveness of SSB taxation, and alleging major economic impacts. Given the importance of evidence to effective regulation of products harmful to human health, we scrutinised industry submissions to the South African government's consultation on a proposed SSB tax and examined their use of evidence.

### **Seasonality of antenatal care attendance, maternal dietary intake, and fetal growth in the VHEMBE birth cohort, South Africa**

*PlosOne | Published: 25 September 2019.*

*Carolyn A Fahey, Jonathan Chevrier, Madelein Crause, Muvhulawa Obida, Riana Bornman, Brenda Eskenazi*

Seasonality of food availability, physical activity, and infections commonly occurs within rural communities in low and middle-income countries with distinct rainy seasons. To better understand the implications of these regularly occurring environmental stressors for maternal and child health, this study examined seasonal variation in nutrition and health care access of pregnant women and infants in rural South Africa.

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## RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

### **Study challenges the idea of region-specific HIV vaccines**

*Business Day | 19 September 2019.*

South African volunteers' immune systems respond well to an experimental preventive shot against the virus that causes Aids developed in Thailand.

### **Why alcohol remains a big threat to unborn babies in South Africa**

*The Conversation Africa | 23 September 2019.*

South Africa has the highest recorded prevalence of foetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the world. The prevalence rates range from 29 to 290 affected children per 1000 live births.

### **Building alliances for the global governance of migration and health**

*BMJ | 16 September 2019.*

Health governance has an important role in dealing with global migration, argue Jo Vearey and colleagues.

### **Midlevel workers: Africa's unsung health heroes need more support**

*The Conversation Africa | 13 September 2019.*

Midlevel health workers can play an important role in addressing shortages of health professionals and improving access to care. This is especially true in low and middle-income countries. These workers fill a niche between community health workers, the most basic of workers in the health system, and highly trained professionals.

### **Putting the "U" back into Universal Health Care: Do South Africans know what the NHI is?**

*Health-e News | 23 September 2019.*

While the country's draft policy for bringing universal health care to all bewilders many, long waiting times at health facilities, drug shortages and clinics not operating for 24 hours, remain the biggest concerns they face.

### **UN Adopts Political Declaration On Health Coverage For All – Financing A Big Challenge**

*Health Policy Watch | 23 September 2019.*

United Nations members [on Monday] quickly adopted a high-level political declaration raising the stakes in the global push to ensure everyone in the world has affordable access to health a decade from now. The political declaration is "the most comprehensive agreement ever reached on global health," UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres told the opening session General Assembly.

### **A new global initiative aims to use AI to improve public health in the developing**

## **world**

*STAT | 25 September 2019.*

It's challenging enough to develop artificial intelligence models using health data generated at the world's most elite academic medical centers. Now, a group of humanitarian organizations is taking on an even steeper challenge: using data collected in developing countries to improve public health overseas.

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## **TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

### **Making the Switch**

*MSF | Published: 18 September 2019.*

Saving more lives with optimal treatment for drug-resistant TB.

Previously recommended treatment regimens for drug-resistant tuberculosis (DR-TB) used by most countries had a high pill burden, long treatment duration (of up to two years), painful daily injections (for up to eight months), severe side effects (due to toxic drugs) and poor treatment outcomes. These suboptimal regimens achieved treatment success rates of only 55% for people with multidrug-resistant/rifampicin-resistant tuberculosis (MDR/RR-TB) and 34% for people with extensively drug-resistant TB.

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## **PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS**

### **Primary Health Care on the Road to Universal Health Coverage: 2019 Global Monitoring Report**

*WHO | 23 September 2019.*

WHO develops with partners a Global Monitoring Report on UHC every two years, a formal monitoring mechanism critical to attaining UHC. The new edition provides the latest information on progress. It highlights the global coverage of health services and financial protection, addresses gender- and equity-related challenges, and identifies primary health care as the route to universal coverage.

### **Trends in Maternal Mortality: 2000 to 2017**

*Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group & the United Nations Population Division | 19 September 2019.*

This report presents internationally comparable global, regional and country-level estimates and trends for maternal mortality between 2000 and 2017. Countries and territories included in the analyses are WHO Member States with populations over 100 000 in 2019, plus two territories (Puerto Rico, and the West

Bank and Gaza Strip). The results described in this summary are the first available estimates for maternal mortality for the SDG reporting period; but since two years (2016 and 2017) is not sufficient to show trends, estimates have been developed and presented covering the period 2000 to 2017.

### **Levels & Trends in Child Mortality Report 2019**

*Estimates by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation | 19 September 2019.*

Thirty years ago, the world made a commitment to protect and fulfil children's rights as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Among the most fundamental of these rights is the right of every child to survive. While substantial progress in child survival has been made since then, the failure to fully meet that commitment reverberates today for millions of children: In 2018 alone, 5.3 million children died before reaching their fifth birthday and almost 1 million children aged 5–14 years died. This report presents the UN IGME's latest estimates – through 2018 – of neonatal, infant and under-five mortality as well as mortality among children aged 5–14 years.

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## **CONFERENCES AND EVENTS**

### **National Pharmacy Conference**

3-6 October 2019

Sun City, South Africa

### **23<sup>rd</sup> International AIDS Conference**

6-10 July 2019

San Francisco & Oakland, United States of America

### **HIV Research for Prevention**

11-15 October 2019

Cape Town, South Africa

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## **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

Please click on the job title for more information.

### **Bhekisisa: Health Reporter**

Closing Date: 2 October 2019

### **m2m: SI Systems Specialist – Cape Town**

Closing Date: 2 October 2019

**SAFMH: Programmes Coordinator**

Closing Date: 4 October 2019

**Friends of Valkenberg Trust: Part-time Volunteer Coordinator**

Closing Date: 15 October 2019

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