

# HST Bulletin



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## HST IN THE NEWS

### **District Health Barometer 2018/2019**

*Health Systems Trust | Published: 25 February 2020.*

The District Health Barometer (DHB) has helped to address a significant challenge in the South African public health sector, namely the challenge of accurately measuring change and progress over time, and effecting the necessary interventions. This challenge has been compounded by incomplete and contradictory information, as well as inadequate analysis and utilisation of data for decision making. Thus the DHB functions as a tool for health-sector managers to monitor and evaluate not only trends in health status and service delivery, but also the underlying quality of routinely collected health information in South Africa. Now in its 14th edition, the DHB continues to produce information on a wide range of health services across the country's 52 health districts, and has become an important planning and management resource for health service providers, managers, researchers and policy-makers.

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## ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

### **Learning health systems: an empowering agenda for low-income and middle-income countries**

*The Lancet | Published: 15 February 2020.*

*Kabir Sheikh, Irene Agyepong, Manoj Jhalani, Walid Ammar, Assad Hafeez, Sushil Pyakuryal, et al*  
Institutions in high-income countries (HICs) are the main funders and generators of academic knowledge on health systems in low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs), and much too often this knowledge reflects their priorities rather than the needs of health systems in LMICs. This power imbalance between HICs and LMICs has been the focus of calls for reforms to global and HIC institutions. However, change must also come from within LMICs. To address this power imbalance, learning must be prioritised as a core part of strengthening health systems in LMICs.

## **What do the Universal Test and Treat trials tell us about the path to HIV epidemic control?**

*Journal of the International AIDS Society* | Published: 24 February 2020.

*Diane Havlir, Shahin Lockman, Helen Ayles, Joseph Larmarange, Gabriel Chamie, Tendani Gaolathe, et al*

Achieving HIV epidemic control globally will require new strategies to accelerate reductions in HIV incidence and mortality. Universal test and treat (UTT) was evaluated in four randomized population-based trials (BCPP/Ya Tsie, HPTN 071/PopART, SEARCH, ANRS 12249/TasP) conducted in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) during expanded antiretroviral treatment (ART) eligibility by World Health Organization guidelines and the UNAIDS 90-90-90 campaign.

## **Men's perspectives on HIV self-testing in sub-Saharan Africa: a systematic review and meta-synthesis**

*BMC Public Health* | Published: 15 January 2020.

*Mbuzeleni Hlongwa, Tivani Mashamba-Thompson, Sizwe Makhunga, Claudine Muraraneza, Khumbulani Hlongwana*

Despite the many HIV testing models implemented in Africa, the level of HIV testing uptake remains relatively poor, especially among men. The HIV self-testing (HIVST) model offers an additional approach for encouraging men to get tested. This study aimed to synthesise evidence on men's perspectives regarding HIVST in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

## **Safety and immune responses after a 12-month booster in healthy HIV-uninfected adults in HVTN 100 in South Africa: A randomized double-blind placebo-controlled trial of ALVAC-HIV (vCP2438) and bivalent subtype C gp120/MF59 vaccines**

*Plos Medicine* | Published: 24 February 2020.

*Fatima Laher, Zoe Moodie, Kristen W Cohen, Nicole Grunenberg, Linda-Gail Bekker, Mary Allen, et al*  
HVTN 100 evaluated the safety and immunogenicity of an HIV subtype C pox-protein vaccine regimen, investigating a 12-month booster to extend vaccine-induced immune responses.

A phase 1–2 randomized double-blind placebo-controlled trial enrolled 252 participants (210 vaccine/42 placebo; median age 23 years; 43% female) between 9 February 2015 and 26 May 2015. Vaccine recipients received ALVAC-HIV (vCP2438) alone at months 0 and 1 and with bivalent subtype C gp120/MF59 at months 3, 6, and 12. Antibody (IgG, IgG3 binding, and neutralizing) and CD4+ T-cell (expressing interferon-gamma, interleukin-2, and CD40 ligand) responses were evaluated at month 6.5 for all participants and at months 12, 12.5, and 18 for a randomly selected subset.

## **Provider perspectives on contraceptive service delivery: findings from a qualitative study in Johannesburg, South Africa**

*BMC Health Services Research* | Published: 21 February 2020.

*Naomi Lince-Deroche, Cheryl Hendrickson, Aneesa Moolla, Sharon Kgowedi, Masangu Mulongo*  
Healthcare providers' skills and attitudes are both barriers and facilitators of contraceptive uptake. In South Africa, migration of healthcare workers and the demands of the HIV epidemic have also contributed to inequitable access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) care. Yet, the country has committed to achieving universal access to SRH services. [The authors] explored healthcare provider's opinions and attitudes on provision of contraceptive services in public facilities, their personal use of methods, and their thoughts on the recent integration of new contraceptive methods in their facilities.

## **Perceived Health System Barriers to Tuberculosis Control Among Health Workers in South Africa**

*Annals of Global Health* | Published: 12 February 2020.

*Prince A Adu, Annalee Yassi, Rodney Ehrlich, Jerry M Spiegel*

The healthcare workforce in high tuberculosis burden countries such as South Africa is at elevated risk of tuberculosis infection and disease with adverse consequences for their well-being and productivity. Despite the availability of international guidelines on protection of health workers from tuberculosis, research globally has focused on proximal deficiencies in practice rather than on health system barriers. This study sought to elicit perceptions of informed persons within the health system regarding health system barriers to protecting health workers from tuberculosis.

## **Health care providers' perspectives of diet-related non-communicable disease in South Africa**

*BMC Public Health | Published: 21 February 2020.*

*Jo Hunter-Adams, Jane Battersby*

In South Africa, diet-related non-communicable diseases (dr-NCDs) place a significant burden on individuals, households and the health system. In this article [the authors] investigate the experiences of eight key informants within the public sector health care system (nurse, doctor and dietician), in order to reflect on their experiences treating dr-NCDs.

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## RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

### **WHO-UNICEF-Lancet Commission Measures Education, Nutrition, Child Health Across 180 Countries**

*Health Policy watch | 19 February 2020.*

Ecological degradation, climate change, and exploitative marketing practices are the greatest emerging threats to children's health, says a new report from a WHO-UNICEF-Lancet Commission on the future of child health.

### **Shocking levels of child hunger in rural KwaZulu-Natal**

*Spotlight | 25 February 2020.*

Alarming statistics put KwaZulu-Natal at the forefront of South Africa's child hunger crisis, with around two to four times the reported levels in other provinces. Spotlight visited one of the province's most rural districts to find the children at the heart of these numbers and the organisations making a difference.

### **Government will not be reckless in implementing NHI policy, says Ramaphosa**

*IOL | 25 February 2020.*

President Cyril Ramaphosa has promised they will not be reckless when implementing the National Health Insurance in the next five years.

### **Deep concerns expressed at final NHI hearings**

*Daily Maverick | 24 February 2020.*

Alarm bells are still ringing even as the final public NHI hearings hosted by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Health wrapped up in Gauteng yesterday.

### **You're Likely to Get the Coronavirus**

*The Atlantic | 24 February 2020.*

Most cases are not life-threatening, which is also what makes the virus a historic challenge to contain.

### **Disease modelers gaze into their computers to see the future of Covid-19, and it isn't good**

*STAT | 14 February 2020.*

At least 550,000 cases. Maybe 4.4 million. Or something in between.

Like weather forecasters, researchers who use mathematical equations to project how bad a disease outbreak might become are used to uncertainties and incomplete data, and Covid-19, the disease caused by the new-to-humans coronavirus that began circulating in Wuhan, China, late last year, has those everywhere you look.

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## TRAINING AND RESOURCES

### **District Health Barometer 2018/2019**

*Health Systems Trust | Published: 25 February 2020.*

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the DHB functions as a tool for health-sector managers to monitor and evaluate not only trends in health status and service delivery, but also the underlying quality of routinely collected health information in South Africa. Now in its 14th edition, the DHB continues to produce information on a wide range of health services across the country's 52 health districts, and has become an important planning and management resource for health service providers, managers, researchers and policy-makers.

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## PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

### **A future for the world's children? A WHO–UNICEF–Lancet Commission**

*The Lancet* | 18 February 2020.

*Helen Clark, Awa Marie Coll-Seck, Anshu Banerjee, Stefan Peterson, Sarah L Dalglish, Shanthi Ameratunga, et al*

Despite dramatic improvements in survival, nutrition, and education over recent decades, today's children face an uncertain future. Climate change, ecological degradation, migrating populations, conflict, pervasive inequalities, and predatory commercial practices threaten the health and future of children in every country. In 2015, the world's countries agreed on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), yet nearly 5 years later, few countries have recorded much progress towards achieving them. This Commission presents the case for placing children, aged 0–18 years, at the centre of the SDGs: at the heart of the concept of sustainability and our shared human endeavour. Governments must harness coalitions across sectors to overcome ecological and commercial pressures to ensure children receive their rights and entitlements now and a liveable planet in the years to come.

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## CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

### **American Conference for the Treatment of HIV (ACTHIV)**

16 April 2020  
Chicago, USA

### **International Forum on Quality and Safety in Healthcare**

4-5 July 2020  
New Delhi, India

### **International Workshop on HIV and Adolescence**

30 September - 2 October 2020  
Lusaka, Zambia

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## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Please click on the job title for more information.

### **Health Systems Trust: Grants and Compliance Officer**

Closing Date: 3 March 2020

### **Health Systems Trust: Enrolled Nurse/ Phlebotomist**

Closing Date: 9 March 2020

### **Health Systems Trust: CCMDD Provincial Co-ordinator**

Closing Date: 11 March 2020

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Health Systems Trust · 34 Essex Terrace · Westville · Durban, KZN 3630 · South Africa

