

HST Bulletin



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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Inequalities in health and health risk factors in the Southern African Development Community: evidence from World Health Surveys

International Journal for Equity in Health | Published: 27 April 2018.

Stella M Umuhoza, John E Ataguba

Socioeconomic inequalities in health have been documented in many countries including those in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). However, a comprehensive assessment of health inequalities and inequalities in the distribution of health risk factors is scarce. This study specifically investigates inequalities both in poor self-assessed health (SAH) and in the distribution of selected risk factors of ill-health among the adult populations in six SADC countries.

Unpacking the performance of a mobile health information messaging program for mothers (MomConnect) in South Africa: evidence on program reach and messaging exposure

BMJ Global Health | Published: 24 April 2018.

Amnesty E LeFevre, Pierre Dane, Charles J Copley, Cara Pienaar, Annie Neo Parsons, Matt Engelhard, David Woods, Marcha Bekker

Despite calls to address broader evidence gaps in linking digital technologies to outcome and impact level health indicators, limited attention has been paid to measuring processes pertaining to the performance of programs. In this paper, we assess the program reach and message exposure of a mobile health information messaging program for mothers (MomConnect) in South Africa. In this descriptive study, we draw from system generated data to measure exposure to the program through registration attempts and conversions, message delivery, opt-outs and drop-outs. Using a logit model, we additionally explore determinants for early registration, opt-outs and drop-outs.

User assessments and the use of information from MomConnect, a mobile phone text-based information service, by pregnant women and new mothers in South Africa

BMJ Global Health | Published: 24 April 2018.

Donald Skinner, Peter Delobelle, Michele Pappin, Desiree Pieterse, Tonya Marianne Esterhuizen, Peter Barron, Lilian Dudley

MomConnect was designed to provide crucial health information to mothers during pregnancy and in the early years of child rearing in South Africa. The design drew on the success of the Mobile Alliance for Maternal Action's programme in South Africa, as well as a growing list of mobile health (mHealth) interventions implemented internationally. Services such as MomConnect are dependent on user acceptability as all engagements are voluntary, meaning that tools have to be easy to use and useful to be successful. This paper describes the evaluation of the tool by pregnant women and new mothers using the tool.

Completeness of the Road-to-Health Booklet and Road-to-Health Card: Results of cross-sectional surveillance at a provincial tertiary hospital

Southern African journal of HIV Medicine | Published: 10 April 2018.

Harishia Naidoo, Theunis Avenant, Ameena Goga

Accurate record-keeping is important for continuity and quality of care. Completing a child's Road-to-Health Booklet (RTHB), or the older, less detailed, Road-to-Health Card/Chart (RTHC), immediate interpretation thereof and appropriate action facilitates comprehensive care, which could contribute to a decline in child morbidity and mortality.

Temporal evolution of HIV sero-discordancy patterns among stable couples in sub-Saharan Africa

PlosOne | Published: 30 April 2018.

Susanne F Awad, Hiam Chemaitelly, Laith J Abu-Raddad

The objective [of this study] was to examine the temporal variation of HIV sero-discordancy in select representative countries (Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Niger, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe) in sub-Saharan Africa at different HIV epidemic scales. A sero-discordant couple is defined as a stable couple (SC) in which one partner is HIV-positive while the other is HIV-negative.

Using participatory risk analysis to develop a song about malaria for young children in Limpopo Province, South Africa

BMC | Published: 27 April 2018.

Chad M Anderson, Cheryl M E McCrindle, Taneshka Kruger, Fraser McNeill

In 2015, malaria infected over 212 million people and killed over 429,000 individuals, mostly children under 5 years of age, with 90% of malaria cases occurring in sub-Saharan Africa. The aim was to develop an age and culturally appropriate song for Tshivenda-speaking children under 5 years of age to decrease the risk of malaria in Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Making ward-based outreach teams an effective component of human immunodeficiency virus programmes in South Africa

Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine | Published: 12 April 2018

Nireshni Naidoo, Jean Railton, Geoffrey Jobson, Nthabiseng Matlakala, Gert Marincowitz, James A McIntyre, Helen E Struthers, Remco PH Peters

The implementation of ward-based outreach teams (WBOTs), comprised of community health workers (CHWs), is one of the three interventions of the South African National Department of Health's (NDoH) Primary Health Care (PHC) Re-engineering strategy for improving health outcomes. CHWs provide a necessary structure to contribute to successful implementation of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) programme in four ways: (1) prevention of HIV infection by health education, (2) linkage to care by health education and referrals, (3) adherence support and (4) identification of individuals who are failing treatment. However, CHW programme and HIV programme-specific barriers exist that need to be resolved in order to achieve maximum impact.

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HST IN THE NEWS

Sticking with the Road to Health

Daily Sun | 19 April 2018.

By now, most adults know that diseases like HIV, high blood pressure and diabetes are chronic conditions that can be managed by taking medication and living a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately, it is not always as easy to stick with a treatment plan as we think it is.

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RECENT NEWS

South Africa sliding backwards

The Lancet | 14 April 2018.

After nearly two decades of progress following the abolishment of apartheid, South Africa's societal gains are now deteriorating. These are the conclusions of a report published on March 28 by The World Bank that analysed the country's progress in reducing poverty and inequality from 1994 to 2015. While overall the country's poverty levels have fallen since 1994, at least 2.5 million more South Africans since then have become poor. Over half the population lives under the poverty line, many of whom are black or South Africans of mixed race. Unemployment stands at a staggering 28%. Most worryingly, the gap between the rich and poor has worsened for this upper-middle-income country—71% of wealth is now held by a 10% elite; the bottom 60% of the population hold just 7% of assets—making South Africa the most unequal country in the world.

African women: UNAIDS head Michel Sidibé must go!

Health-e News | 3 May 2018.

Following a sexual harassment investigation at UNAIDS gone wrong, 23 leading African women activists believe executive director cannot be trusted to lead the world's foremost agency fighting AIDS.

Kenya: Hopes of Being Declared Polio-Free Dashed

Africa Report on Business | 1 May 2018.

Kenya's hopes of being certified as a polio-free country have been dashed after the discovery of live polio viruses in sewage samples from Nairobi's Eastleigh estate.

The future of water: From your toilet to your tap and back again

Bhekisisa | 3 May 2018.

The reality is many of us look at water like we do a takeaway container.

Stunting haunts a child for life

Health-e News | 2 May 2018.

Poor nutrition in early childhood has a number of negative consequences for people later in life, according to Professor Daniela Casale, from Wits University's School of Economic and Business Sciences.

Mahikeng's hero: The doctor who delivered 8 babies amid fire and ash

The Citizen | 1 May 2018.

Amid the barricaded roads, burning tyres and black smoke that dominated Mahikeng, George Mothupi looked no different from other frustrated pedestrians without public transport.

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TRAINING AND RESOURCES

AIDSinfo Fact sheets: Drugs

AIDSinfo | Updated periodically.

AIDSinfo provides information for both patients and health professionals: a patient fact sheet includes an overview of the drug and information on clinical trials studying the drug, and a health professional fact sheet includes more detailed, scientific information about the drug, including information on the pharmacology of the drug and on adverse events identified in clinical trials. The lefitolimod, romidepsin, and VAC-3S fact sheets have recently been updated based on research that was presented at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI).

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PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Overcoming Poverty and Inequality in South Africa : An Assessment of Drivers, Constraints and Opportunities (English)

World Bank | 22 March 2018.

This report documents the progress South Africa has made in reducing poverty and inequality since the end of apartheid in 1994, with a focus on the period between 2006 and 2015. The main conclusions are as follows: First, by any measure, South Africa is one of the most unequal countries in the world. Inequality is high, persistent, and has increased since 1994. Second, although South Africa has made progress in reducing poverty since 1994, the trajectory of poverty reduction was reversed between 2011 and 2015, threatening to erode some of the gains made since 1994. Third, high levels of income polarization are manifested in very high levels of chronic poverty, a few high-income earners and a relatively small middle class. Fourth, the role of skills and labor market factors have grown in importance in explaining poverty and inequality while the role of gender and race, though still important, has declined, presenting an opportunity for policy to influence poverty and inequality outcomes. Looking ahead, accelerating poverty and inequality reduction will require a combination of policies that seek to unlock the full potential of labor markets and promote inclusive growth through skilled job creation.

'Multimorbidity: a priority for global health research'.

The Academy of Medical Sciences | 19 April 2018.

The Academy of Medical Sciences has published its international policy report which summarises the available evidence on multimorbidity and highlights key evidence gaps which must be addressed to better understand the issue, and improve the care and outcomes of patients across the globe.

The report calls for a standardised definition and reporting system for multimorbidity, and recommends a series of research priorities to better understand:

- The trends and patterns of multimorbidity across the globe.
- The burden caused by common clusters of conditions.
- The determinants of the most common clusters of conditions.
- How best to prevent the development of multimorbidity.
- How to maximise benefits and limit risks of treatment for patients with multimorbidity.
- How to organise healthcare systems to better manage patients with multimorbidity.

The report draws on insights from a number of workshops, one of which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa.

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Africa Health

29-31 May 2018

Gallagher Conventions Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa

SA TB Conference

12-15 June 2018

Durban ICC, Durban, South Africa

Medicine Quality and Public Health

23-28 September 2018

Oxford, United Kingdom

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Please click on the job title for more information.

Waves for Change: Programme and Monitoring Officer

Closing Date: 10 May 2018

Save the Children South Africa: Human Resources Manager

Closing Date: 11 May 2018

Sizakala Wellness Counsellors (S.W.C): Intern Counselor Volunteer

Closing Date: 31 May 2018

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