



CATEGORIES

[Academic and Peer Reviewed Articles](#)

[Recent Public Health News](#)

[Training and Resources](#)

[Publications and Reports](#)

[Conferences and Events](#)

[Job Opportunities](#)

ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

The right to health as the basis for universal health coverage: A cross-national analysis of national medicines policies of 71 countries

PlosOne | Published: 28 June 2019.

S Katrina Perehudoff, Nikita V Alexandrov, Hans V Hogerzeil

Persistent barriers to universal access to medicines are limited social protection in the event of illness, inadequate financing for essential medicines, frequent stock-outs in the public sector, and high prices in the private sector. We argue that greater coherence between human rights law, national medicines policies, and universal health coverage schemes can address these barriers. We present a cross-national content analysis of national medicines policies from 71 countries published between 1990–2016.

Population-level impact and herd effects following the introduction of human

papillomavirus vaccination programmes: updated systematic review and meta-analysis

The Lancet | Published: 26 June 2019.

Mélanie Drolet, Élodie Bénard, Norma Pérez, Marc Brisson

More than 10 years have elapsed since human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination was implemented. We did a systematic review and meta-analysis of the population-level impact of vaccinating girls and women against human papillomavirus on HPV infections, anogenital wart diagnoses, and cervical intraepithelial neoplasia grade 2+ (CIN2+) to summarise the most recent evidence about the effectiveness of HPV vaccines in real-world settings and to quantify the impact of multiple age-cohort vaccination.

Twenty Years Of Antiretroviral Therapy For People Living With HIV: Global Costs, Health Achievements, Economic Benefits

Global Health Policy | Published: July 2019.

Steven S Forsythe, William McGreevey, Alan Whiteside, Maunank Shah, Joshua Cohen, Robert Hecht, Lori A Bollinger, Anthony Kinghorn

Since the introduction of azidothymidine in 1987, significant improvements in treatment for people living with HIV have yielded substantial improvements in global health as a result of the unique benefits of antiretroviral therapy (ART). ART averted 9.5 million deaths worldwide in 1995–2015, with global economic benefits of \$1.05 trillion. For every \$1 spent on ART, \$3.50 in benefits accrued globally. If treatment scale-up achieves the global 90-90-90 targets of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, a total of 34.9 million deaths are projected to be averted between 1995 and 2030. Approximately 40.2 million new HIV infections could also be averted by ART, and economic gains could reach \$4.02 trillion in 2030. Having provided ART to 19.5 million people represents a major human achievement. However, 15.2 million infected people are currently not receiving treatment, which represents a significant lost opportunity. Further treatment scale-up could yield even greater health and economic benefits.

Modelling cost-effectiveness of tenofovir for prevention of mother to child transmission of hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection in South Africa

BMC Public Health | Published: 26 June 2019.

Jolynne Mokaya, Edward AO Burn, Cynthia Raissa Tamandjou, Dominique Goedhals, Eleanor J Barnes, Monique Andersson, Rafael Pinedo-Villanueva, Philippa C Matthews

International sustainable development goals for the elimination of viral hepatitis as a public health problem by 2030 highlight the need to optimize strategies for prevention, diagnosis and treatment of hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection. An important priority for Africa is to have affordable, accessible and sustainable prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) programmes, delivering screening and treatment for antenatal women and implementing timely administration of HBV vaccine for their babies.

Prevalence and correlates of sexually transmitted infections in pregnancy in HIV-infected and- uninfected women in Cape Town, South Africa

PlosOne | Published: 1 July 2019.

Dvora L Joseph Davey , Dorothy C Nyemba, Yolanda Gomba, Linda-Gail Bekker, Sophia Taleghani, David J DiTullio, David Shabsovich, Pamina M Gorbach, et al

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are associated with adverse outcomes in pregnancy, including mother-to-child HIV transmission. Yet there are limited data on the prevalence and correlates of STI in pregnant women by HIV status in low- and middle-income countries, where syndromic STI management is routine. Between November 2017 and July 2018, we conducted a cross-sectional study of consecutive pregnant women making their first visit to a public sector antenatal clinic (ANC) in Cape Town. We interviewed women ≥ 18 years and tested them for Chlamydia trachomatis (CT), Neisseria gonorrhoea (NG) and Trichomonas vaginalis (TV) using Xpert assays (Cepheid, USA); results of syphilis serology came from routine testing records. We used multivariable logistic regression to identify correlates of STI in pregnancy.

Cost implications of HIV retesting for verification in Africa

PlosOne | Published: 1 July 2019.

Arielle Lasry , Mireille B Kalou, Paul R Young, Jacqueline Rurangirwa, Bharat Parekh, Stephanie Behel

HIV misdiagnosis leads to severe individual and public health consequences. Retesting for verification of all HIV-positive cases prior to antiretroviral therapy initiation can reduce HIV misdiagnosis, yet this practice has not been widely implemented. We evaluated and compared the cost of retesting for verification of HIV seropositivity (retesting) to the cost of antiretroviral treatment (ART) for misdiagnosed cases in the absence of retesting (no retesting), from the perspective of the health care system. We estimated the number of misdiagnosed cases based on a review of misdiagnosis rates, and the number of positives persons needing ART initiation by 2020. We presented the total and per person costs of retesting as compared to no retesting, over a ten-year horizon, across 50 countries in Africa grouped by income level.

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Fifty years of HIV: how close are we to a cure?

The Guardian | 2 July 2019.

It's half a century since the first known HIV-related death and two patients appear to have been cured of the virus. What does this mean for the 37 million still living with it?

The three big studies pushing at the frontiers of HIV prevention

The Conversation Africa | 12 June 2019.

There are an estimated 5000 new HIV transmissions every day. Around 70% of the 37 million people living with HIV globally are in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the 1.8 million new HIV transmissions worldwide in

2017, 800 000 occurred in eastern and southern Africa. New, effective prevention strategies are essential to reducing HIV transmission.

Urgent tasks await new head of UNAids

Daily Maverick | 27 June 2019.

Earlier this week it was reported that five people are still in the running for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAids) top job. They are South African Professor Salim Abdool Karim, Winnie Byanyima, Professor Chris Beyrer, Dr Bernard Haufiku, and Dr Sani Aliyu.

HPV vaccine 'offers chance' of wiping out cervical cancer in rich countries

The Guardian | 26 June 2019.

Study shows vaccine has greatly reduced infections among girls and young women. Elimination of cervical cancer in wealthy countries such as the UK may be possible within decades, say experts, following a major study showing the success of the HPV jab in protecting women.

G20 Leaders Declare General Commitment To Advance Global Health

Health Policy Watch | 1 July 2019.

Heads of state from the world's largest economies concluded this year's G20 Summit in Japan with a general declaration committing to advance global health priorities – but the statement still left much to be desired in terms of concrete goals and targets.

Africa needs to up its research game to fight non-communicable diseases

The Conversation Africa | 16 June 2019.

Non-communicable diseases are the current leading cause of death worldwide. And the burden is increasingly shifting from developed to developing countries. But it's only been over the last 20 years that the threat of non-communicable diseases has been taken seriously in developing countries.

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

TRAINING AND RESOURCES

MSF School Health Program Implementation Toolkit: King Cetshwayo District

Médecins Sans Frontières | 2019.

In April 2011, Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) in partnership with the KZN Department of Health (DOH) started a HIV/TB project called “Bending the Curves” in King Cetshwayo District (pop. 114 000), aiming to reduce the incidence of HIV and TB, bring down HIV and TB morbidity and mortality, and to help the DoH achieve the UNAIDS 90-90-90 by 2020 targets. MSF has developed this School Health Program “toolkit”, detailing the approach [the] y followed in developing the MSF School Health Program in King Cetshwayo District in KwaZulu-Natal Province.

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

Epilepsy: A public health imperative

World Health Organisation | 20 June 2019.

Epilepsy is one of the most common neurological diseases worldwide, affecting around 50 million people of all ages around the world. The risk of premature death in people with epilepsy is up to three times that of the general population. This report presents encouraging evidence that almost a quarter of epilepsy cases are preventable and 70% of people with epilepsy can live seizure free with low-cost and effective medicines. As evidence from multiple countries shows, it is feasible to integrate epilepsy into primary health care and thereby ensure that all people with epilepsy have access to quality and affordable treatment and services.

Scaling up Programs to Reduce Human Rights-Related Barriers to HIV and TB services: Baseline assessment –South Africa

The Global Fund | November 2018.

This report documents the results of a baseline assessment carried out in South Africa to support its efforts to scale up programs to reduce human-rights-related barriers to HIV and TB services. Since the adoption of its new Strategy 2017-2022: Investing to End Epidemics, the Global Fund has joined with country stakeholders, technical partners and other donors in a major effort to expand investment in programmes to remove such barriers in national responses to HIV, TB and malaria.

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Rural Health Conference

5-7 September 2019

Kapenta Bay Hotel and Conference Resort, Port Shepstone, KwaZulu-Natal

Global Vaccination Summit

12 September 2019

Brussels, Belgium

PHASA Conference

16-18 September 2019

College of Cape Town, Athlone, Cape Town

[\(Return to Top\)](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Please click on the job title for more information.

Health Systems Trust: Clinical eMCI Nurse Mentor

Closing Date: 5 July 2019

Health Systems Trust: CCMDD Provincial Co-ordinators

Closing Date: 5 July 2019

Health Systems Trust: AYFS Co-ordinators

Closing Date: 5 July 2019

Health Systems Trust: Post Basic Pharmacist Assistants

Closing date: 15 July 2019

Health Systems Trust: BBBEE Compliance Officer

Closing Date: 17 July 2019

[\(Return to Top\)](#)



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