

# HST Bulletin



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## HST IN THE NEWS

### **Siyenza's Impact: Hitting the Right Target, House by House**

*CDC | 22 November 2019.*

In early 2019, the Redhill Clinic, north of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal Province, was lagging behind in reaching the UNAIDS 90-90-90 goals... the facility was meeting its HIV testing targets, but it was not identifying sufficient numbers of positives among those being tested. This low "yield" of newly identified positives – in a region of the country often considered the epicenter of its HIV epidemic — suggested to Facility Manager Annabel Pretorius the need for a new approach to HIV testing. She would soon find one —thanks to an initiative known as Siyenza, which means "we are doing it" in isiZulu.

### **Siyenza's Innovations: The Man Bringing Men into Care**

*CDC | 22 November 2019.*

Ask anyone who works at a public health facility in South Africa about convincing men who don't feel sick to come and test for HIV, and they will probably tell you that it's no easy feat. Addressing poor health-seeking behaviors among men is a known challenge in the fight against HIV, and South Africa is no exception. While engaging men in HIV testing, prevention, and treatment services may be a challenge for many, it is a special talent for Thami Dlomo, a lay counsellor from KwaMashu B Clinic, north of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal Province.

### **Siyenza Innovation: Improving client retention through SMS reminders**

*CDC | 22 November 2019.*

South Africa maintains the largest antiretroviral treatment (ART) program in the world, with more than four million people estimated to be on treatment. Despite progress in getting people living with HIV (PLHIV) into treatment, the country struggles with poor retention-to-care as clients continue to fall through the cracks and are lost to follow-up (LTFU). Yet, retaining PLHIV on treatment is the only way to achieve viral suppression and, ultimately, control of South Africa's epidemic.

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## ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

### **Acceptability and uptake of an electronic decision making tool to support the implementation of IMCI in primary healthcare facilities in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

*Paediatrics and International Child Health* | Published: 29 November 2019.

*Cecilie Jensen, Neil H McKerrow, Gabrielle Wills*

Despite progress in reducing child mortality, preventable child deaths remain a challenge in South Africa. Poor implementation of Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) guidelines has been well described, and the reported barriers to implementation include a lack of user-friendly implementation tools. [The aim of this study was] to investigate whether an electronic decision support tool to strengthen IMCI implementation is acceptable to nurses, clinic managers and caregivers at primary care facilities in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

### **A qualitative study on teachers' perceptions of their learners' mental health problems in a disadvantaged community in South Africa**

*Curationis* | Published: 27 November 2019.

*Donald Skinner, Carla Sharp, Lochner Marais, Motsaathebe Serekoane, Molefi Lenka*

The combination of extensive poverty, violence and HIV has potential mental health impacts on children in Southern Africa. This article is nested in a broader study to evaluate the strength and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ) among Sotho speakers, and assess the mental health status of children made orphans by AIDS. The aim of this study was to describe the mental health problems that the teachers perceive among learners in their classrooms, to understand what the teachers saw as causing these problems and to identify potential approaches to address these problems within the school setting.

### **Declines in HIV incidence among men and women in a South African population-based cohort**

*Nature Communications* | Published: 2 December 2019.

*Alain Vandormael, Adam Akullian, Mark Siedner, Tulio de Oliveira, Till Bärnighausen, Frank Tanser*

Over the past decade, there has been a massive scale-up of primary and secondary prevention services to reduce the population-wide incidence of HIV. However, the impact of these services on HIV incidence has not been demonstrated using a prospectively followed, population-based cohort from South Africa—the country with the world's highest rate of new infections. To quantify HIV incidence trends in a hyperendemic population, we tested a cohort of 22,239 uninfected participants over 92,877 person-years of observation.

### **Estimates of the global population of children who are HIV-exposed and uninfected, 2000–18: a modelling study**

*The Lancet Global Health* | Published: 29 November 2019.

*Amy L Slogrove, Kathleen M Powis, Leigh F Johnson, John Stover, Mary Mahy*

Children who are HIV-exposed uninfected (HEU) have higher morbidity and mortality than children who are HIV-unexposed and uninfected despite safer breastfeeding and improved maternal health with maternal antiretroviral therapy. We present the first global estimates of the population of children who are HEU (aged 0–14 years) and the geographical and temporal trends in HIV high-burden countries between 2000 and 2018.

### **Process elements contributing to community mobilization for HIV risk reduction and gender equality in rural South Africa**

*PlosOne* | Published: 2 December 2019.

*Catherine MacPhail, Nomhle Khoza, Sarah Treves-Kagan, Amanda Selin, Xavier Gómez-Olivé, Dean Peacock, Dumisani Rebombo, Rhian Twine et al*

Community mobilization has been recognized as a critical enabler for HIV prevention and is employed for challenging gender inequalities. We worked together with community partners to implement the 'One Man Can' intervention in rural Mpumalanga, South Africa to promote gender equality and HIV risk reduction. During the intervention, we conducted longitudinal qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with community mobilizers (n = 26), volunteer community action team members (n = 22) and community members (n = 52) to explore their experience of being part of the intervention and their experiences of

change associated with the intervention. The objective of the study was to examine processes of change in community mobilization for gender equity and HIV prevention.

### **Quality of TB care among people living with HIV: Gaps and solutions**

*Journal of Clinical Tuberculosis and Other Mycobacterial Diseases* | Published: 20 September 2019.

Kogieleum Naidoo, Santhanalakshmi Gengiah, Satvinder Singh, Jonathan Stillo, Nesri Padayatchi

Tuberculosis (TB) is the leading infectious cause of death among people living with HIV, causing one third of AIDS-related deaths globally. The concerning number of missing TB cases, ongoing high TB mortality, slow reduction in TB incidence, and limited uptake of TB preventive treatment among people living with HIV, all indicate the urgent need to improve quality of TB services within HIV programs. In this mini-review we discuss major gaps in quality of TB care that impede achieving prevention and treatment targets within the TB-HIV care cascades, show approaches of assessing gaps in TB service provision, and describe outcomes from innovative quality improvement projects among HIV and TB programs. We also offer recommendations for measuring quality of TB care.

### **Descriptive analysis of World Health Organization-recommended second-line antiretroviral treatment: A retrospective cohort data analysis**

*The South African Medical Journal* | Published: 27 November 2019.

S B Gumede, A Fischer, W D F Venter, S T Lalla-Edward

World Health Organization guidelines recommend that HIV patients who do not achieve viral suppression on efavirenz-based first-line antiretroviral therapy (ART) should be changed to a protease inhibitor (PI)-based regimen. In South Africa (SA), ~200 000 people are on second-line treatment, but little is known about these patients. [The objective of this study was] to describe second-line black African patients in a large urban area.

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## **RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS**

### **In graphics: Will South Africa meet UNAIDS's HIV targets for 2020?**

*Spotlight NSP* | 29 November 2019.

UNAIDS's so-called 90-90-90 targets provide one of the best means by which to measure how well we are doing in the HIV response. The three 90s represent three targets relating to HIV testing, treatment, and viral suppression, that are to be met by 2020. With a month to go to 2020, we assess South Africa's progress against the targets using estimates from the Thembisa model.

### **Anglo shows how to get men tested for HIV and treated**

*Business Day* | 2 December 2019.

The SA mining industry has done what much of the country, NGOs and the government cannot — persuade men to test for HIV and get treatment if they test positive.

### **New Strawberry-Flavored H.I.V. Drugs for Babies Are Offered at \$1 a Day**

*The New York Times* | 28 November 2019.

Thousands of infants are doomed to early deaths each year, in part because pediatric medicines come in hard pills or bitter syrups that need refrigeration.

### **Innovative WHO HIV testing recommendations aim to expand treatment coverage**

*World Health Organisation* | 27 November 2019.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued new recommendations to help countries reach the 8.1 million people living with HIV who are yet to be diagnosed, and who are therefore unable to obtain lifesaving treatment.

### **NHI Bill could be law by August**

*Spotlight NSP* | 3 December 2019.

If all goes according to plan and there's agreement the NHI Bill may just be on the President's desk to be signed into law by July or August next year.

### **How KZN is trying to improve services**

*Health-e News | 28 November 2019.*

Drastic measures have been taken in KwaZulu-Natal to deal with patient complaints in hope they'll be treated with dignity and respect.

### **Winning the fight against TB**

*Health-e News | 29 November 2019.*

South Africa is one of the few countries globally to have completely switched to offering shorter regimens for treating tuberculosis (TB). And the results can already be seen.

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## **TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

### **ACCESS PrEP blog series: Oral PrEP – The pill with a big heart**

*OPTIONS Consortium | 25 November 2019.*

In 2016, something pretty incredible happened in South Africa. Oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a once-a-day pill that prevents HIV negative people from getting infected with HIV, became available through the National Department of Health (NDoH).

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## **PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS**

### **No time to lose: detect, treat and prevent AIDS**

*Medecins Sans Frontieres | 29 November 2019.*

AIDS related mortality remains high - 770,000 deaths in 2018 - and has hardly declined in recent years. This global trend is reflected in countries where Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) works and continues to witness high ongoing mortality. To achieve the UNAIDS target of 500,000 deaths in 2020 requires a focus on and a drastic acceleration of measures to decrease mortality. For this it is necessary to plan, fund and implement a package of care to prevent, detect and treat Advanced HIV Disease (AHD) or AIDS, as outlined in the World Health Organisation's 2017 Guidelines for managing Advanced HIV Disease and rapid initiation of antiretroviral therapy. This report, compiled by MSF, presents data from the AHD dashboard initiated by the HIV Advanced Disease Consortium (HIV-ADC).

### **World Malaria Report 2019**

*World Health Organisation | 4 December 2019.*

The World malaria report 2019 provides a comprehensive update on global and regional malaria data and trends. The report tracks investments in malaria programmes and research as well as progress across all intervention areas: prevention, diagnosis, treatment, elimination and surveillance. It also includes dedicated chapters on the consequences of malaria on maternal, infant and child health, the "High Burden to High Impact" approach as well as biological threats to the fight against malaria.

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## **CONFERENCES AND EVENTS**

### **Virology Africa**

10-14 February 2020

Radisson Blu Hotel V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, South Africa

### **23rd International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2020)**

6-10 July 2020

San Francisco & Oakland, United States

### **HIVR4P (HIV Research for Prevention)**

11-15 October 2020

Cape Town, South Africa

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## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Please click on the job title for more information.

### **Health Systems Trust: District Co-ordinator, eThekweni**

Closing Date: 9 December 2019

### **Health Systems Trust: Medical Officer**

Closing Date: 9 December 2019

### **Health Systems Trust: Driver**

Closing Date: 9 December 2019

### **Health Systems Trust: Junior IT Technician**

Closing Date: 9 December 2019

### **Health Systems Trust: Lab Technicians**

Closing Date: 9 December 2019

### **Health Systems Trust: Team Leader**

Closing Date: 9 December 2019

### **Health Systems Trust: Senior Administrator**

Closing Date: 16 December 2019

### **Health Systems Trust: Junior Data Manager**

Closing Date: 16 December 2019

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