

HST Bulletin – 8 September 2023

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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Community- and individual-level correlates of HIV incidence in HPTN 071 (PopART)

Timothy Skalland, Helen Ayles, Peter Bock, Justin Bwalya, Kwame Shanaube, et al.

Journal of the International AIDS Society | 29 August 2023

Universal HIV testing and treatment aims to identify all people living with HIV and offer them treatment, decreasing the number of individuals with unsuppressed HIV and thus reducing HIV transmission. Longitudinal follow-up of individuals with and without HIV in a cluster-randomized trial of communities allowed for the examination of community- and individual-level measures of HIV risk and HIV incidence.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/jia2.26155>

Dyspareunia, signs of epithelial disruption, sexual abstinence, and HIV status in female sex workers in Nairobi: a cross-sectional study

Bastian Fischer, Walter Jaako, Elvis Kirui, Bernard Muture, Isaac Madegwa & Lisbeth Kageni

BMC Infectious Diseases | 1 September 2023

Epithelial trauma is a risk factor of HIV infection in men who have sex with men (MSM) and female sex workers (FSWs). Painful intercourse may be indicative of epithelial tissue disruption. Previous studies on a cohort of Kenyan FSWs established an association between prolonged sexual abstinence and late HIV seroconversion. Our research objective was to establish whether there is a relationship between HIV serostatus and signs of epithelial disruption and between HIV serostatus and sexual abstinence behaviour.

<https://bmcinfectdis.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12879-023-08572-7>

Knowledge, attitude and preventative practice of tuberculosis in rural communities of Dikgale, Mamabolo and Mothiba health and demographic surveillance system in Limpopo province, South Africa

BMC Public Health | 1 September 2023

Seloma NM, Makgatho ME & Maimela E

Tuberculosis continues to be a serious public health issue. To reduce the transmission of the disease, it is imperative to address the major obstacle of inadequate understanding regarding the causes, risk factors, treatments, and prevention of pulmonary TB. The study assessed knowledge, attitude, and preventative practices of tuberculosis among community members in Dikgale, Mamabolo and Mothiba (DIMAMO) Health Demographic Surveillance system, Limpopo Province South Africa.

<https://bmcpublikehealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-15845-y>

Human immunodeficiency virus epidemic scenery among Brazilian women: a spatial analysis study

BMC Women's Health | 1 September 2023

Ana Luisa Lemos Bezerra, Paula Regina Barbosa de Almeida, Renata Karina Reis, Glenda Roberta Oliveira Naiff Ferreira, et al.

Approximately 37.7 million people worldwide are infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Although HIV detection among women, they still representing 53% of population living with the virus. Spatial analysis techniques are powerful tools for combating HIV allowing the association of the phenomenon with socioeconomic and political factors. Therefore, the main goal of this study was to spatially analyze HIV prevalence among Brazilian women from 2007 to 2020.

<https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12905-023-02616-5>

Isolated collagenoma in an HIV-positive patient on ART: a case report

BMC Infectious Diseases | 2 September 2023

Kevin K. Wu, Masoud Movassaghi, Brittney DeClerck & Maggie Chow

Collagenomas are rare connective tissue hamartomas composed of dermal collagen. Patients infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) can present with HIV-related lipodystrophy or lipomas. There are no known associations between HIV and collagenomas.

<https://bmcinfectdis.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12879-023-08548-7>

How does HIV-related stigma correlate with HIV prevalence in African countries? Distinct perspectives from individuals living with and living without HIV

Arlette Simo Fotso, Connor G. Wright & Andrea Low

BMC Public Health | 4 September 2023

Population-level research evaluating HIV-related stigma among countries with varied national HIV prevalence is scarce. To better understand HIV-related stigma and mitigate its potential negative effects, it is necessary to evaluate its relationship with HIV prevalence, as well as the mechanisms that influence it. This study aimed to analyze how HIV-related stigma correlates with subnational HIV prevalence in three African countries with varied HIV epidemics.

<https://bmcpublikehealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-16545-3>

Effectiveness of Linkage to Care and Prevention Interventions Following HIV Self-Testing: A Global Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

Oluwafemi Atanda Adeagbo, Oluwaseun Abdulganiyu Badru, Claude Ngwayu Nkfusai & Luchuo Engelbert Bain

Aids and Behavior | 5 September 2023

Over 38.4 million people were living with HIV globally in 2021. The HIV continuum includes HIV testing, diagnosis, linkage to combined antiretroviral therapy (cART), and retention in care. An important innovation in the HIV care continuum is HIV self-testing. There is a paucity of evidence regarding the effectiveness of interventions aimed at linking self-testers to care and prevention, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). To bridge this gap, we carried out a global systematic review and meta-analysis to ascertain the effectiveness of interventions post-HIV self-testing regarding: (1) linkage to care or ART, (2) linkage to PrEP, and (3) the impact of HIV self-test (HIVST) interventions on sexual behaviors.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10461-023-04162-5>

Understanding the effects of universal test and treat on longitudinal HIV care outcomes among South African youth: a retrospective cohort study

BMC Public Health | 5 September 2023

Lindsey M. Filiatreau, Jessie K. Edwards, Nkosinathi Masilela, F. Xavier Gómez-Olivé, Nicole Haberland, et al.

Little is known about the effects of universal test and treat (UTT) policies on HIV care outcomes among youth living with HIV (YLHIV). Moreover, there is a paucity of information regarding when YLHIV are most susceptible to disengagement from care under the newest treatment guidelines. The longitudinal HIV care continuum is an underutilized tool that can provide a holistic understanding of population-level HIV care trajectories and be used to compare treatment outcomes across groups. We aimed to explore effects of the UTT policy on longitudinal outcomes among South African YLHIV and identify temporally precise opportunities for re-engaging this priority population in the UTT era.

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-16353-9>

Syrian refugee women's access to family planning services and modern contraception during overlapping crises in Bekaa, Lebanon

BMC Women's Health | 6 September 2023

Rima Mourtada & Andrea J. Melnikas

Political, financial, and pandemic crises in Lebanon have affected both provision of reproductive health services including family planning and modern contraception methods as well as women's interest and ability to seek those services. This study aims to explore the impact of the compounding crises on the provision and use of family planning services including modern contraception methods for Syrian refugees in Lebanon focusing on the perspectives of Syrian refugee women.

<https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12905-023-02613-8>

What a critical public health perspective can add to the analysis of healthcare responses to gender-based violence that focus on asking

BMC Public Health | 6 September 2023

Isabel Goicolea

In this comment I analyze the effects of approaching gender-based violence as a public health problem, that the health system should address through 'daring to ask'. I acknowledge the potential

of the 'daring to ask' strategy, but I also argue that asking has effects, and that we should be aware of them.

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-16641-4>

Perceptions of everyday life during lenient COVID-19 restrictions in Sweden- an interview study

BMC Public Health | 7 September 2023

Ingrid Lindgren, Anna Trulsson Schouenborg, Caroline Larsson & Kjerstin Stigmar

Both COVID-19 and its associated societal restrictions have affected individuals' health and everyday life. In Sweden, more lenient public health restrictions were implemented, with individuals asked to act responsibly in terms of reducing spread of disease. The majority of studies reporting on experiences of Covid-19 restrictions have been in the context of more substantial mandatory rules aimed at reducing social contact, therefore it is important to describe how more lenient restrictions have impacted individuals' well-being. This study aims to describe perceptions of everyday life during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, perceived by individuals with no underlying medical condition, and living with more lenient public health restrictions in Sweden.

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-16599-3>

Survival times of HIV/AIDS in different AIDS Diagnostic and Treatment Guidelines from 2006 to 2020 in Liuzhou, China

BMC Public Health | 7 September 2023

Susu Ke, Quan Fang, Jianguo Lan, Nini Qiao, Xinhong Zhang, Changping Xie et al

To compare the survival rates of four timing of treatment initiation for people living with HIV/AIDS provided in China in 2006, 2011, 2015, and 2018, and to investigate the factors impacting survival time.

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-023-15662-3>

RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

CLINICAL STUDIES BRING GIFT OF SEXUAL HEALTH CLOSER FOR WOMEN

Health e- News | 30 August 2023

A South African innovation designed to screen for inflammation associated with HIV infections and improve women's sexual and reproductive health has been manufactured and has entered its first in-field clinical studies. Almost 700 women will be involved in the validation of the Genital Inflammation Test (GIFT) developed at the University of Cape Town (UCT). GIFT is the focus of an international collaboration of almost exclusively female scientists led by Professor Jo-Ann Passmore of UCT and Dr Lindi Masson, originally of UCT, but now of the Burnet Institute in Australia. The trial development includes a partnership with Cape Town biotechnology company Medical Diagnostech under the leadership of Ashley Uys and Lyndon Mungar.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/08/30/clinical-studies-bring-gift-of-sexual-health-closer-for-women/>

'Motherhood is hard': young, HIV-positive mums in South Africa open up about regret and anger

Aidsmap | 30 August 2023

For any woman, pregnancy and giving birth are major life-changing experiences. Becoming a mother brings with it a range of emotions and, in many African cultures, positive emotions are centred when talking about motherhood. Scholarship from the eastern, western and southern parts of the continent has emphasised how motherhood is linked to notions of continuity, strength and sacrifice, unconditional love, consecration and spirituality, family ties, loyalty and happiness.

<https://theconversation.com/motherhood-is-hard-young-hiv-positive-mums-in-south-africa-open-up-about-regret-and-anger-192338>

Exchange Sex Associated With Different Types of Sexual Risk

AJMC | 31 August 2023

Sexual risk, prevention behaviors, and psychosocial and sexual health outcomes were found to be associated with exchange sex among people at risk of HIV, with those associations varying by the type of exchange sex, according to a study published in Archives of Sexual Behavior.

<https://www.ajmc.com/view/exchange-sex-associated-with-different-types-of-sexual-risk>

Africa's Cardiovascular Burden: A Silent Cry for Attention

Health Policy Watch | 1 September 2023

A draft political declaration on pandemics, due to be adopted by the United Nations General Assembly later this month, offers "little hope" that the UN process will make a difference in global pandemic preparedness, global health experts said on Friday. The document, made public on Thursday, is long on words but short on commitments. The only specific action the text commits to is to convene another high-level meeting on pandemics in 2026 – and even this is problematic.

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/un-draft-pandemic-declaration-offers-little-hope-for-global-preparedness/>

Research reveals delays in diagnosing women with endometriosis can take at least 10 years

IOL | 1 September 2023

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and endometriosis are two common gynaecological conditions that affect millions of women worldwide. The characteristics, symptoms and treatment options of these conditions may seem similar, but it is essential to understand their differences.

<https://www.iol.co.za/sunday-tribune/lifestyle/research-reveals-delays-in-diagnosing-women-with-endometriosis-can-take-at-least-10-years-710e9916-2998-4665-813b-1060bf16db36>

TB RESEARCH SHOWS A GOOD DIET CAN CUT INFECTIONS BY NEARLY 50%

Health E News | 1 September 2023

For centuries, we have known that tuberculosis is a social disease. It thrives on poverty and social factors such as malnutrition, poor housing, overcrowding, unsafe work environments and stigma. Globally in 2021 an estimated 2.2 million cases of TB were attributable to undernourishment, 0.86 million to HIV infection, 0.74 million to alcohol use disorders, 0.69 million to smoking and 0.37 million to diabetes.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/09/01/tb-research-shows-a-good-diet-can-cut-infections-by-nearly-50/>

Defective HIV proviral particles linked to persistent inflammation and immune activation despite effective ART

HIV Treatment Bulletin | 1 September 2023

US researchers at NIAID report that defective HIV proviral HIV DNA, RNA and proteins were associated with consistent and continued inflammatory responses, despite viral suppression on ART for many years. The study, published in the journal AIDS, describes expansion of defective HIV proviral particles in people living with HIV that are on suppressive ART. Whilst these particles are not replication competent they are transcriptionally active and may produce HIV-related proteins that trigger immune and inflammatory responses.

<https://i-base.info/htb/46185>

Study findings provide new insight into how breast cancer evolves

Medical Xpress | 2 September 2023

From the early stages of cell mutations starting in puberty to their manifestations as breast cancer in later years, the entire process has remained shrouded in mystery. Now, a team of researchers at Kyoto University has revealed the mechanism by which breast cancer is formed in the cells of the mammalian epithelium, whose main function is to secrete milk. The paper is published in the journal Nature.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-08-insight-breast-cancer-evolves.html>

Childhood trauma may affect sexual health of women

UPI | 5 September 2023

A stressful or traumatic childhood experience -- anything from parents divorcing to a sibling's drug problem -- may have long-term effects on a woman's sexual health. These adverse childhood experiences may be linked to sexual inactivity and dysfunction in women later in life, a recent study reports. Healthcare providers should screen their patients with sexual dysfunction for adverse childhood experiences, researchers recommend. Doctors should offer these women treatment that could include a referral for counseling. "This research adds to the literature exploring sexual function in women," said senior author Dr. Ekta Kapoor, assistant director of the Mayo Clinic Center for Women's Health in Rochester, Minn.

https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2023/09/05/childhood-trauma-adult-sex-life/6521693918977/

Launching the Global Consortium: Uniting to Prevent HPV and Eliminate Cervical Cancer

PMNCH | 5 September 2023

On the 5-6 September 2023, The Sabin Vaccine Institute is organizing a Convening event in Kuala Lumpur to launch a Global Consortium on Human Papilloma Virus (HPV). The Sabin Vaccine Institute will lead the Consortium and serve as the Secretariat. It will also act as the host for the Convening. In alignment with WHO's Immunization Agenda 2030 and Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative, the Convening will serve as a platform to kickstart a global movement, propelling country progress towards WHO's 90-70-90 targets and underscoring the need for urgent action towards preventing HPV infections and eliminating cervical cancer as a public health concern.

<https://pmnch.who.int/news-and-events/events/item/2023/09/05/partner-events/launching-the-global-consortium-uniting-to-prevent-hpv-and-eliminate-cervical-cancer>

When It Comes to HIV Treatment, It's Your Choice

Poz | 5 September 2023

There's a magic word to remember when it comes to picking your HIV treatment: choice. Though you may feel that it is best to simply take the pill that your doctor prescribes, the reality is that you are the expert when it comes to your body, and you have a say in which medication you take. After having a conversation with your doctor that includes many of your own preferences around treatment and after they make a recommendation, the ultimate decision on what to take lies with you, as treatment must fit into your routine. Remembering that you get to choose your own treatment is a small mental adjustment that will empower you to live your best life with HIV.

<https://www.poz.com/article/comes-hiv-treatment-choice>

Long-Term Survivors and Youth Benefit From U=U

Poz | 5 September 2023

An HIV survivor for almost 30 years, Gregg Cassin, 65, started his spiritual journey as a boy growing up on Long Island, New York. "As a kid, it was not in the days of Ellen [DeGeneres]," he said, "there were no openly gay people. I had no idea who I was or what I was." Since there were no role models for him in his life, Cassin did what he calls "the Catholic boy thing." "I had a spiritual director who was a priest," Cassin says. "He never came out of the closet; it was just understood that he was gay. I can remember at some point saying to him, 'Do I have a vocation? Am I going to be a priest?' And him saying, 'Move to San Francisco.'"

<https://www.poz.com/article/longterm-survivors-youth-benefit-uu>

Getting the Word Out About U=U

Poz | 5 September 2023

The message of Undetectable Equals Untransmittable (U=U), the fact that a person living with HIV with an undetectable viral load cannot transmit the virus sexually, is easy to understand. It's a message that has been embraced by the world's leading medical, scientific and public health institutions, including the World Health Organization, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the Joint

United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the National Institutes of Health.

<https://www.poz.com/article/getting-word-uu>

Research sheds light on how breast cancer might develop after pregnancy

Medical Xpress | 6 September 2023

A study observing changes in healthy breast cells may explain why breast cancer might develop after pregnancy. The cell-based study has helped begin to disentangle the complex relationship between genetic mutations, pregnancy and breast cancer risk. The research has been published in the journal *Nature Communications*. Researchers from Imperial College London examined healthy breast cells from 29 women who had given birth at different ages and women who did not have any children, to look at genetic mutations and how cells divide.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-09-breast-cancer-pregnancy.html>

SARS-CoV-2, the virus behind COVID-19, can infect sensory neurons

Medical Xpress | 6 September 2023

When COVID-19 began spreading in 2020, some of its most common symptoms affected the peripheral nervous system, the network of nerves that enables communication between the brain and the rest of the body. Many people reported losing their senses of smell and taste, which both rely on sensory neurons in the peripheral nervous system. In the years since, a significant number of people who have contracted COVID-19 have reported developing some sort of neuropathy, meaning a dysfunction of the peripheral nerves that typically causes numbness, weakness, and/or pain. Sometimes, these symptoms persist and become long-term health issues.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-09-sars-cov-virus-covid-infect-sensory.html>

Using ChatGPT to address vaccine hesitancy: a promising tool for guiding users to scientific information?

News Medical Life science | 6 September 2023

In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) identified vaccine hesitancy, intensified by misinformation on social media, as a top global health threat. This hesitancy risks undoing the strides made against vaccine-preventable diseases. Particularly in Europe, confidence in vaccines was notably low in 2016. ChatGPT, OpenAI's artificial intelligence (AI)-driven chatbot, offers interactive responses using advanced language processing. Despite its utility, there are concerns about its misuse, especially academically, prompting regulatory measures. Its wide accessibility also raises concerns about potential misuse in educational contexts.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20230906/Using-ChatGPT-to-address-vaccine-hesitancy-a-promising-tool-for-guiding-users-to-scientific-information.aspx>

WHO Concerned About Rise in COVID Hospitalisation But Lacks Data From Member States

Health Policy Watch | 6 September 2023

There are “concerning trends for COVID-19 ahead of the winter season in the northern hemisphere”, including increased ICU admissions and hospitalisation in Europe, and case increases in the Middle East and Asia, according to World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. However, the WHO’s ability to assess the threat of new COVID-19 variants is hamstrung by member countries’ lack of monitoring of the virus, Tedros told a global media briefing on Wednesday. “Only 43 countries, less than a quarter of WHO member states, are reporting [COVID-19 cases] to WHO and only 20 provide information on hospitalizations globally,” Tedros noted.

<https://healthpolicy-watch.news/who-concerned-about-rise-in-covid-hospitalisation-but-lacks-data-from-member-states/>

Western Cape Health and Wellness Department urges parents to consent to HPV vaccine administered at schools

IOL | 6 September 2023

Cervical cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among women in South Africa and thus the Western Cape Health and Wellness Department urges parents for consent as they embark on its annual human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine drive. The HPV vaccine prevents cervical cancer and the second dose is being administered to children between September 4 and October 31, at schools across the province.

<https://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/health/western-cape-health-and-wellness-department-urges-parents-to-consent-to-hpv-vaccine-administered-at-schools-ed9a7d6d-d396-489d-a29c-b770588ce87d>

COVID-19 VACCINES: SA ‘BULLIED’ INTO UNFAIR DEALS, CHARGED OVER TWO TIMES MORE THAN OTHER COUNTRIES

Health E News | 6 September 2023

The COVID-19 procurement contracts South Africa signed with various pharmaceutical companies were “unethical, immoral, and imperial minded”, says Health Justice Initiative (HJI) director, Fatima Hassan. She says the contracts made no provision for transparency and government as the purchaser had little leverage.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/09/06/covid-19-vaccines-sa-charged-over-two-times-more-than-other-countries/>

TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Subscribe to the Health Systems Trust Bulletin

The Health Systems Trust (HST) produces a weekly bulletin on Fridays focusing on key public health news, peer-reviewed journal articles and other important primary healthcare resources.

<https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Subscription.aspx>

Subscribe to the Health Systems Trust 60percent

HST produces a weekly online publication, 60percent, which keeps subscribers abreast with the latest news and developments pertaining to HIV-related maternal, adolescent, child and youth health. The name 60percent signifies that southern Africa is responding to a feminised HIV/AIDS epidemic, with at least 60% of those living with HIV being women. Subscribe to 60percent by simply visiting HST's website (<https://www.hst.org.za>), scroll to the bottom of the page, hit the SUBSCRIBE button, and follow the prompts. Let's keep you posted!

<https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Subscription.aspx>

The Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) – calling all public health champions!

PHASA is a voluntary organisation of individuals passionate about population health improvements and the reduction of health inequities, and whose work focuses on the prevention of disease, the promotion of health, and the improved functioning of the country's health care system. Are you passionate about improving the health and wellbeing of communities? Do you want to expand your professional network and stay current in the field of public health? Do you want to be part of the movement to improve Public Health? Then join the Public Health Association of South Africa today to make a difference and enhance your career!

As a member, you will:

- Gain access to cutting-edge research, resources, and best practices
- Connect with public health professionals from around the country
- Participate in educational events and conferences
- Contribute to shaping the future of public health
- Have access to mentors in the field
- Be at the forefront of advocacy initiatives.

To become a member, simply visit our [website](#) and complete the membership application. Don't miss this opportunity to advance your career and improve public health.

<https://phasa.org.za/index.php/get-involved/membership>

THE OLIVER TAMBO FELLOWSHIP (OTFP) PROGRAMME: A POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN HEALTH LEADERSHIP

An Opportunity to Grow

- To HR components - This value-for-money health leadership programme directly relates to the manager's workplace within the health system. Acquired skills and competencies have been well-researched. Nominating people from the same team offers the possibility of greater impact, including across successive cohorts.
- To Line managers - Students develop capabilities to lead and to bring improvements in their workplaces. Nominate teams.
- To Health Care Workers and Health System Influencers - Invest in yourself to show up as a leader who lead with confidence.

Why the OTFP?

- Affiliated to the internationally renowned University of Cape Town.
- Proudly bears the name of an exceptional African Leader.

- Nearly 30 years' experience of growing health leaders.
- Offers a unique perspective on leadership, rooted in systems thinking & policy analysis, tailored to the complex challenges of our health system.

What Does the Programme Entail?

- Four sequenced and interrelated 6-day learning blocks, covering:
 - The complex nature of health systems and their challenges.
 - Leading everyday health system strengthening.
 - Engaging health system hard- and software resources for implementing improvement.
 - Sustaining workplace-based interventions for system improvement.
 - Mentorship during and after the course.
 - Direct engagement with senior health leaders, other experts with national and international insights, as well as peer leaders.

What Will You Learn?

- Personal, relational, and technical competencies to lead across the system complexities.
- How to show up as a leader for your team and the wider system.

Who Should Attend?

- Mid- and senior level leaders (managers and clinicians) in the public health sector.
- Mid- and senior level leaders in NGOs and the private sector with public value goals.
- Teams of leaders from the same setting.

Fees and Registration

- The fees for 2024/25 intake is approximately R65 505, thus an average cost of R32 500 per year.
- Students arrange own travel and accommodation.
- Registration open until 9 December 2023.
- The course commences in February 2024.
- How to register? Apply online by clicking on [Application Link](#)

Contact

- Contact Fahiema.titus@uct.ac.za or the Program Convener at Maylene.shungking@uct.ac.za or visit us at <https://health.uct.ac.za/school-public-health>

The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) is committed to meeting the objectives of Employment Equity to improve representativity within the Institution. Preference will be given to applicants from the designated groups in accordance with Employment Equity.

Operation Smile South Africa

Get behind Dr Shetil,

She's just one of hundreds of volunteer doctors, nurses, speech therapists, psychologists and dentists who give generously of their time, skill, and loving care to help Operation Smile.

Calm and soft-spoken, Dr Shetil is the embodiment of grace under fire. As a paediatrician, she's driven to help children ... all children. And those born with a cleft lip and/or cleft palate have a special place in her heart.

"It can be incredibly challenging and difficult for both the child and the parents," says Shetil. "There can be feeding and speech difficulties. And it can be visually distressing. As part of the Operation Smile team, we do our best to help these children as much as we can."

Shetil vividly remembers the first time she joined the Operation Smile Team earlier this year, performing life-changing surgery to correct children's cleft conditions.

"I was awed by the consideration, dedication and care that each child and family received," she says. "It was a humbling experience, and I hope to be part of many more experiences like that."

But surgical programmes are expensive. There are many costs – medical, transport, logistics. And while our volunteer medical professionals give freely of their time and skills, donations from others who care ... people like you ... are also vitally important.

Please be there in spirit, with Dr Shetil and the rest of the Operation Smile Team, during our next surgical programme. Join in by donating now, and be an integral part of our life-changing team.

Like Shetil, you have the power to help give a child a beautiful new smile. But it's only possible when we all join together – and everyone plays their part.

[Watch a recent interview with Dr Shetil](#) to find out more about her experiences as an Operation Smile volunteer.

Donate now: <https://operationsmile.org.za/donate/>

PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

The 2022 South African Health Review is available!

We are pleased to release the 25th edition of the South African Health Review (SAHR). Entitled 'health systems strengthening after COVID-19', the journal provides valuable insights and recommendations on how to improve the response to the pandemic and build more resilient health systems.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the world, and the health sector has been at the forefront of the response. Curated as a supplement to the 2021 edition, which addressed the response of government and the broader health sector to COVID-19, the 2022 South African Health Review provides a platform for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to share their experiences and insights on how they navigated this crisis and build more robust health systems for the future. The journal encompasses a diverse array of subjects, including reflections on the work of the Ministerial Advisory Committee during COVID-19 and the knowledge gained and lessons learned from these processes. Additionally, it explores the ramifications of COVID-19 on maternal, women, and child health and highlights the gendered implications of the pandemic, revealing that women experienced more pronounced effects of stress, fear, and depression during the lockdown period compared to men.

Commenting on its release, CEO and co-editor of the Review Dr Themba Moeti said that "This edition of the South African Health Review offers promising examples of COVID-19 response, mitigation and

recovery strategies for us to use the emerging lessons to enhance our health system resilience and better prepare for future pandemics.”

Strong messages emerging from this edition emphasise that in order to effectively promote national vaccination programmes, it is imperative to equip healthcare workers (HCWs) with comprehensive, relevant, and current information. This will enable them to enhance patient communication and increase vaccine acceptance. Subsequent chapters delineate an inventive collaboration between the public and private sectors aimed at mitigating the accumulated volume of elective surgical procedures at Groote Schuur Hospital and reflect on the importance of consulting, involving and deploying community based organisations such as clinic committees in public health emergencies from the outset.

The crucial importance of inter-country collaboration is emphasised in mitigating disease transmission and impact, with authors advocating for a more coordinated approach to managing cross-border health measures.

Additionally, the Review highlights the intersection between climate change and health systems and reinforces the imperative to prioritise health within the framework of a 'just transition' and to enhance the capabilities of healthcare systems to be low-carbon and climate-resilient as crucial focal points for improving pandemic preparedness.

For more information on the journal and to access the latest edition, visit <https://www.hst.org.za/publications/Pages/SAHR2022.aspx>

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

World Congress of Epidemiology – WCE 2024 – 24 to 27 September 2024

WCE is well-known for bringing epidemiologists and public health experts working in different sectors together in an atmosphere designed to promote dialogue, the interchange of ideas, and state-of-the-art scientific research. The theme of WCE2024 is **“Epidemiology and complexity: challenges and responses”** which will engage the full depth and breadth of methods and practice in contemporary epidemiology. The meeting will feature top-calibre invited speakers presenting plenary lectures, workshops and interactive sessions. The abstract-driven programme will include oral and poster presentations including theory and application from every sub-discipline of epidemiology. With more than 1000 delegates expected, WCE2024 promises to be a unique opportunity to share experiences and expertise – the opportunities to learn, grow and network within the field will be phenomenal. This is the first time the congress will be hosted on the African continent and the Cape Town International Convention Centre provides a world-class venue for this meeting.

<https://www.wce2024.org/>

South African Paediatric Association (SAPA)

When: 8 – 10 September 2023

Where: The Capital on the Park, Sandton

For more information, go to: <https://paediatrics.org.za/>

Hospital Association of South Africa (HASA)

When: 18 – 19 September 2023

Where: Century City Conference Centre, Cape Town

Every year HASA hosts a world-class conference featuring a number of international and South African experts in healthcare. An exhibition runs simultaneously to showcase advances in healthcare. The 2023 conference takes place at the Century City Conference Centre, designed as the hub and pivotal point of the Century City precinct.

Register: <https://www.registrationsonline.co.za/hasa/register>

Africa Health Exhibition

When: 17 – 19 October 2023

Where: Gallagher Convention Centre, Johannesburg

Registration: https://register.visitcloud.com/survey/1np6yfi5p7kqm?actioncode=PPC7&utm_source=Adwords&utm_medium=Paid%20Search&utm_campaign=AEL23ZAH-RK-Visprom%20Paid%20Search%20Branded

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Medical Officer: Cervical Cancer Prevention, Access and Control (CCPAC) Project

Closing date: 08 September 2023 @ 16:30

[https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Medical-Officer-Cervical-Cancer-Prevention,-Access-and-Control-\(CCPAC\)-Project.aspx](https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Medical-Officer-Cervical-Cancer-Prevention,-Access-and-Control-(CCPAC)-Project.aspx)