



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 WHO Global Diabetes Compact: a new initiative to support people living with diabetes

The Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology | 13 April 2021

Daniel Hunt, Bianca Hemmingsen, Alena Matzke, Cherian Varghese, Asmus Hammerich, et al.

Diabetes is a global epidemic. Today, approximately 6% of the world's population—more than 420 million people—live with either type 1 or type 2 diabetes. This number has quadrupled since 1980, and is estimated to rise beyond half a billion by the end of the decade. Whereas premature mortality from other major non-communicable diseases is decreasing, early deaths from diabetes have actually increased by 5% since 2000.

2021: the beginning of a new era of immunisations?

The Lancet Editorial | 24 April 2021

While the world is firmly focused on the efficacy, adverse events, licensing, and roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines, the disruption of and barriers to routine immunisations during the pandemic have garnered much less attention. World Immunization Week (April 24–30) presents an opportunity to reflect on the state of immunisation efforts for vaccine-preventable diseases, how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected progress, and what lessons can accelerate efforts to prevent diseases through immunisation. The Immunization Agenda 2030 (IA2030) will be officially launched on April 26. This agenda provides a new global vision and strategy for vaccines for the next decade, following on from the Global Vaccine Action Plan (2011–20). Before the beginning of the pandemic, progress in vaccine coverage had already been stalling between 2010 and 2019. For example, according to WHO and UNICEF data, global rates of immunisation with the first dose of measles-containing vaccine remained at 84–85%. The Global Vaccine Action Plan was important to bring partners together and broadened the vaccine coverage to include newer vaccines, such as those for rotavirus and hepatitis B. However, the conclusion of a WHO evaluation was that it did not make progress in addressing inequity and was only partly successful in influencing national actions as a top-down approach.

Urine lipoarabinomannan for rapid tuberculosis diagnosis in HIV-infected adult outpatients in Khayelitsha

South African Journal of HIV medicine | 26 April 2021

Bianca Sossen, Amanda Ryan, Joanna Bielawski, Riana Greyling, Gillian Matthews, et al.

In 2019, there were an estimated 10.0 million cases of tuberculosis (TB) worldwide. Those who had co-infection with HIV were at a disproportionately higher risk of death, despite TB being a curable disease. The World Health Organization (WHO) has highlighted that continued high rates of TB mortality relate to gaps in detection and diagnosis of this disease, as well as in poor linking of patients with care and treatment once TB is diagnosed. While sputum-based diagnostics have been the mainstay of TB diagnosis for decades, they have lower yield in people living with HIV (PLHIV) and are currently not able to provide a rapid answer at the bedside or in the clinic. Lipoarabinomannan (LAM) is a component of the mycobacterial cell wall and has been assessed as a potential biomarker for active TB diagnosis in samples such as urine, sputum and serum – both with complex laboratory-based assays and in simple point-of-care devices.

Is there a role for doravirine in African HIV treatment programmes? A large observational resistance study in South Africa

Journal of International AIDS Society | 4 May 2021

Kim Steegen, Michelle Moorhouse, Annemarie Wensing, Willem Venter, Lucia Hans

South Africa has the largest HIV epidemic globally with 7.5 million estimated infections and approximately 5.2 million HIV-infected people on antiretroviral treatment (ART) making it the biggest ART programme in the world. The preferred first-line regimen in South Africa is tenofovir–lamivudine–dolutegravir (TLD), introduced in late 2019 following a WHO recommendation. Dolutegravir replaced efavirenz for first-line ART in light of rising regional non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI) resistance, as well as for selected second-line patients. In clinical studies, dolutegravir demonstrated excellent tolerability, a formidable resistance barrier, and provides cost benefits over efavirenz-based regimens in generic co-formulations in lower and middle-income countries (LMICs). However, with wider use of dolutegravir, concerns about significant weight gain among African women treated with integrase inhibitors (InSTIs) have been raised. It is prudent to consider which other antiretrovirals might be suitable for first-line ART in LMICs, taking into account the moderate to high level of pre-treatment NNRTI resistance in this region. Due to the limited availability of genotypic resistance testing these drugs would ideally have sufficient predicted efficacy avoiding the requirement of limited drug resistance testing resources.

Evaluation of Drug Trials in High-, Middle-, and Low-Income Countries and Local Commercial Availability of Newly Approved Drugs

JAMA Network Open | 5 May 2021

Jennifer Miller, Michelle Mello, Joshua Wallach, Emily Gudbranson, Blake Bohlig, et al.

In drug pricing policy discussions, an often heard refrain is that US taxpayers subsidize a substantial portion of drug research, particularly basic research, which benefits patients around the world, yet US drug prices are much higher than those in other countries. Not often mentioned is that clinical research supporting US medicine and vaccine approvals has been globalized and is largely conducted in other countries, increasingly lower-income countries. For heart failure trials, for example, participant enrollment from North America decreased from 43% in 2001 to 2004 to 27% in 2013 to 2016. The participation of patients in research conducted across international settings allows US patients to benefit from new medications. This arrangement could, in theory, maximize benefits for all: the US contributes capital that other countries lack, while those countries contribute the human volunteers and workforce necessary to complete clinical trials expeditiously, and all enjoy the fruits of the research. Yet, for this to be true, the other countries would need to have access to the investigational products ultimately approved for marketing. Notably, the fact that a new drug receives approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not ensure market access in other countries. Pharmaceutical companies must decide to submit additional marketing approval applications in other countries.

Negative Impact of Fear of COVID-19 on Health-Related Quality of Life Was Modified by Health Literacy, eHealth Literacy, and Digital Healthy Diet Literacy: A Multi-Hospital Survey

International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health | 6 May 2021

Minh Nguyen, Thu Pham, Kien Nguyen, Yen Nguyen, Tien Tran, et al.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been placing unprecedented challenges and burdens on the economic, health, and political systems of the affected countries. The numbers of new infections and deaths are

increasing, and there is no sign of control. Therefore, the COVID-19 pandemic has been significantly affecting people's health and well-being around the world. Preventive measures have been implemented worldwide to control COVID-19 transmissions such as lockdowns, social distancing, mask-wearing, and handwashing. However, these measures have also caused a wide range of negative consequences such as a lack of social connection, mental health problems, and lifestyle changes. Thus, people's psychological and physical health have seriously been affected, resulting in a deterioration in the health-related quality of life (HRQoL). Therefore, it is crucial to determine the risk and protective factors affecting the health-related quality of life during a pandemic to develop early and effective interventions to improve the HRQoL. The COVID-19 pandemic is still rapidly spreading with record numbers of new infections and deaths, leading to an increased fear of virus transmission in the community. Fear may cause adverse effects such as lifestyle changes, delays in healthcare access, and mental health problems such as depression or even suicide.

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

RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Four factors blocking medicines made in Africa

Bhekisisa | 26 April 2021

As COVID-19 began to spread around the globe in March 2020, drug supplies — ironically — shrank, because of the pandemic's impact on global supply chains. Chinese factories, which produce about 70% of the active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) that Indian drug manufacturers use, were shuttered during China's severe lockdown early last year. Much of the world relies on India's exports of 26 key generic drugs and drug ingredients, but without raw ingredients, India was forced to restrict its pharmaceutical exports, which account for one fifth (in volume) of the world's exports of generics. The Chinese and Indian supply and export contractions exposed sub-Saharan Africa's vulnerability to variation in the supply of medical products because of these countries' dependence on imports (which make up 70% to 90% of their medicines). The severe repercussions of pharmaceutical supply shocks reach beyond what is needed to combat COVID-19: A UNAids analysis in June projected that the pandemic could lead to stock-outs and increased costs for the antiretrovirals needed to treat HIV, potentially leading to 500 000 additional Aids-related deaths in sub-Saharan Africa alone.

CCMDD: “The right medicine, for the right patient, in the right parcel, in the right place, at the right time.”

Health-E News | 3 May 2021

The Health Systems Trust reports that the Central Chronic Medicine Dispensing and Distribution (CCMDD) programme has alleviated an overburdened and under-resourced public health system, reports Lilita Gcwabe. “Because we serve such a large community, there would often be elderly patients having to arrive as early as 6AM in order to collect their medicine,” Dr. Dimakatso Letsie at the George Mukhari Academic Hospital. “Many of whom travel from areas that are further away and end up being hungry during the day while they wait in the long queues.” Long queues of patients waiting for their chronic medication is a common sight at public hospitals. They are also a sign of an over-burdened health system, in which health care workers struggle to prioritise patients due to the sheer numbers. The Central Chronic Medicine Dispensing and Distribution (CCMDD) programme eases this burden by enabling patients to pick up their medication away from the crowded clinic. A new report by the Health Systems Trust shows that the programme is working to make collecting chronic medication more accessible.

Covid-19 third wave warning for South Africa – what to expect

BusinessTech | 3 May 2021

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) published its latest Covid-19 modelling report, looking at how the spread of the virus could accelerate in the coming months, bringing about a third wave of infections locally. According to the NICD, the purpose of the report is to assist government planners and decision makers – as well as the general public – to track the start of the third wave, as well as provide planning support. The NICD said that the data does not predict when the third wave will hit, but rather what shape it will take and what will drive it. In this regard, it said that seasonal factors will play a part, echoing views from medical experts who believe the third wave will likely hit around the end of May

entering June, coinciding with the shift to winter.

New case deals with a South African employee who went into work after testing positive with Covid-19

Business Tech | 3 May 2021

An assistant butcher at national meat supplier Eskort Limited, who defied Covid-19 regulations and went to work even though he had tested positive for the virus, has been dismissed. This is the recent decision of the Labour Court in Johannesburg in which Judge Edwin Tlhotlhemaje overturned a previous ruling by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), that Sturman Mogotsi be reinstated with a final written warning. The judge said the case raised a topical issue surrounding the fairness of the dismissal on account of gross misconduct and gross negligence. “The facts of this case are, indeed, extraordinary. They are indicative of the need for more to be done at both the workplace and in our communities, ensuring that employers, employees and the general populace are sensitised to the realities of this pandemic; and to further reinforce the obligations of both employers and employees in the face of it, or event of an exposure,” the judge said.

Spina bifida: Surgery in the womb saves 32 babies from paralysis

BBC Science Focus | 4 May 2021

Dozens of babies with spina bifida have been spared paralysis by having surgery before they were even born. NHS England said the intricate surgery, which involves a team of up to 30 medics, has been carried out on 32 babies in the womb since January 2020. Spina bifida prevents the spine and spinal cord developing properly and can lead to paralysis, as well as bowel, bladder and kidney problems.

WHO calls for better hand hygiene and other infection control practices

World Health Organization | 5 May 2021

WHO’s latest global survey on implementation of national infection prevention and control programmes highlights the urgent need to reduce inequalities in the availability of good hand hygiene and other infection prevention and control measures between high and lower income countries. A new WHO online monitoring portal will help countries identify and address gaps. This is a serious challenge at any time, but COVID-19 has dramatically demonstrated just how important good hand hygiene practices are in reducing the risk of transmission, when used as part of a comprehensive package of preventative measures. Good hand hygiene is also vital in preventing any infections acquired in health care, the spread of antimicrobial resistance and other emerging health threats. Infection acquired during health care delivery is a major global health problem, but patients in low- and middle-income countries are twice as likely to experience this as patients in high-income countries (15% and 7% of patients respectively); the risk in intensive care units (ICU), especially among newborns, is between 2 and 20 times higher. One reason for this is that in some low-income countries only 1 in 10 health workers practices proper hand hygiene while caring for patients at high risk of health care-associated infections in ICU - often because they simply do not have the facilities to do so.

UN report sounds alarm on acute global shortage of midwives

United Nations | 5 May 2021

The 2021 State of the World’s Midwifery report, launched on Wednesday by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Confederation of Midwives, said that fully resourcing midwife-delivered care by 2035 would avert roughly two-thirds of maternal, newborn deaths and stillbirths, saving 4.3 million lives per year. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), highlighted the “enormous impact” midwives have on women and their families. “A capable, well-trained midwife can have an enormous impact on childbearing women and their families – an impact often passed on from one generation to the next.” “At UNFPA, we have spent more than a decade strengthening education, enhancing working conditions and supporting leadership roles for the midwifery profession. We have seen that these efforts work”, she added. The report called on governments to provide an enabling work environment for midwives, free from gender-related stigma, violence and discrimination. It also urged greater investment in the education and training of midwives and midwife-led service delivery, and midwifery leadership and governance. Appointing senior midwives as leaders at country level would provide a significant lever for building capacity, it noted.

The Case for Midwives in South Africa. Is Midwifery Prioritised Enough?

Health Systems Trust | 5 May 2021

All South African midwives are trained as general nurses and midwives, and are seen as nurse- midwives, able to work in any healthcare setting. They form an integral part of South Africa's healthcare system, meaning that a woman will see a midwife at any stage of her pregnancy, right through to giving birth and to the post-natal period. Midwives are the sole providers of maternal care in pregnancy and birth worldwide. As the International Confederation of Midwives celebrates International Day of the Midwife on 5 May, it is indeed time to reflect on the value of the midwife in a healthcare system by looking at the data and investing even more in midwifery as probed by the theme for 2021. To reduce the risk of problems when giving birth, women should be attended to by a skilled professional. A first study of its kind to be conducted in the country, the South Africa Demographic Health Survey (SADHS) of 1998 indicated that only 3 in 7 women in the public sector see a medical doctor once in pregnancy and birth. South Africa has an attendance skills level of 94% meeting the required international standard for maternal health but has not been able to reduce the maternal mortality to reach the set acceptable level for quality of care in birth and new-born care yet.

Black donors needed to help save lives*Goundup | 5 May 2021*

Many South Africans with blood diseases and cancers are dying because they cannot find bone marrow donors. The South African Bone Marrow Registry (SABMR) is urgently seeking more people of colour to register as donors — to help give more South Africans a better shot at a second chance at life. Every year, thousands of people around the world reach a critical point in their medical journey where the only possible cure for their condition is a bone marrow transplant. But because donors are usually found in a patient's ethnic group, and with people of colour representing only 30% of all registered donors in South Africa, many South Africans may not find their lifesaving match in time— and many don't survive. Having more donors will improve the chances that a patient will be able to find their match. But getting more people to register means correcting longstanding misconceptions about what it means to be a bone marrow donor. Because, as it turns out, being a donor is not as painful, invasive or permanent as many people believe.

Mkhize: SA has measures in place to deal with Covid-19 variant found in India*EWN | 5 May 2021*

Health Minister Zweli Mkhize on Wednesday said that while he shared the worries of South Africans about possible imports of COVID-19 variants, he believed that South Africa was a "very capable nation that knows how to deal with the burden of a variant of concern." India is grappling with the B.1.617 variant, which is spreading fast and appears to be escaping immune response.

Covid-19 update: 'High alert' over variants as samples taken from positive travelers*The Citizen | 5 May 2021*

Health Minister Dr Zweli Mkhize has again reassured citizens that the B.1.617 coronavirus (Covid-19) variant has not been detected yet in South Africa. In a statement, Mkhize said that the concerns over new variants had driven "exclusion, mistrust and sometimes even racist rhetoric". This comes as several peoples' samples were taken for testing — including the three people, who flew from India amid the resurgence of infections, that tested positive for Covid-19.

UK HIV funding tap closes: Big and 'shameful' blow to Africa*Daily Maverick | 6 May 2021*

The trickle-down impact of the UK's announcement in April to slash funding to UNAids by 83% is expected to hit hard in South Africa where the HIV burden remains high and NGOs are already on the ropes. The UK contribution to the agency drops to £2.5-million in 2021 from £15-million in 2020. UNAids called the cuts "deep and significant", but UK charities and NGOs, including Frontline Aids, which has offices in South Africa, have slammed the decision by Boris Johnson's government as "shameful" and "maddeningly short-sighted".

How rare is very rare? Your questions about blood clots – answered

On 17 May, South Africa will start to roll out COVID jabs to people over the age of 60, as well as the 700 000 health workers not covered by the country's vaccine implementation study, the Sisonke trial. Health workers are covered by the study because they're the most likely group to get infected with SARS-CoV-2,

the virus that causes COVID-19, as they deal with infected patients. Older people, on the other hand, are more vulnerable to falling severely ill with COVID, or die of the disease, than younger people, which is why they're the next group that's getting prioritised. South Africa will be using two types of shots: Pfizer/BioNTech's, in urban areas, and Johnson & Johnson's (J&J), in more rural areas. But the Sisonke trial, which uses the J&J jab, was recently paused because of concerns about a potential link to unusual blood clots. International researchers and regulators call the clots an "extremely rare" side effect. But how rare is rare and why are these blood clots unusual?

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

TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Live Webinar: COVID-19 Vaccination Training for Healthcare Workers

Module 4 Update: Use of the Med Safety App for Reporting of Adverse Events Following Immunisation. CPD accredited.

Dates: 10 May 13:00; 13 May 18:00

FPD Nursing Education Unit: Short Course in Integrated Case Management and ICD10 Coding

Date: 14 – 15 June 2021

Venue: Pretoria, Gauteng

Health Systems Training Institute

The Health Systems Training Institute (HSTi) offers innovative, tailored and application-driven clinical and non-clinical training solutions aimed at strengthening health systems at all levels and improving the quality of primary health care. Courses on offer include accredited short programmes, non-accredited short programmes and full NQF programmes.

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

PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

The State of the World's Midwifery 2021

United Nations Population Fund | May 2021

The State of the World's Midwifery (SoWMy) 2021 builds on previous reports in the SoWMy series and represents an unprecedented effort to document the whole world's Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Adolescent Health (SRMNAH) workforce, with a particular focus on midwives. It calls for urgent investment in midwives to enable them to fulfil their potential to contribute towards UHC and the SDG agenda.

How to use the State of the World's Midwifery (SoWMy) 2021 country profile

United Nations Population Fund | May 2021

A detailed explanation of the data in the State of the World's Midwifery (SoWMy) 2021 country profile and the sources and definitions used to produce it. The data and analysis are explained, and advice is provided on how to interpret and use the country profiles.

Global Progress Report on Wash in Health Care Facilities

This global progress report on water, sanitation, hygiene, waste management and cleaning (WASH) in health care facilities comes at an unprecedented moment, when coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is exposing key vulnerabilities in health systems, such as inadequate infection prevention and control. WASH services in health care facilities, so often taken for granted – or as this report highlights, outright neglected – are needed more than ever to protect vulnerable health workers and patients. The report identifies major global gaps in WASH services: one third of health care facilities do not have what is needed to clean hands where care is provided; one in four facilities lack basic water services, and one in 10 have no sanitation services. This means that 1.8 billion people use facilities that lack basic water

services and 800 million use facilities with no toilets. Across the world's 47 least-developed countries, the problem is even greater: half of health care facilities lack basic water services. Furthermore, the extent of the problem remains hidden because major gaps in data persist, especially on environmental cleaning.

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

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Webinar: Clinical Guidance on Long COVID-19

Date: 7 May 2021

Time: 11:00

Webinar: Inspiring Change, Putting People First: Shaping Responsive Health Systems for people living with NCDs in the COVID-19 era

The multistakeholder dialogue will convene representatives across different sectors including development agencies, governments, multilaterals, people living with NCDs, NCDA member organisations including national and regional NCD alliances, NCDA supporters and other key regional stakeholders to take stock of the current status of progress on NCDs and UHC in the African Region, discuss region-specific gaps and opportunities, and identify good practice to accelerate efforts.

Date: 10 May 2021

Time: 15:00 – 17:00 CEST

UKZN College of Health Science: Long COVID and Determinants of Clinical Outcomes

With more than 138 million documented infections and 2.97 million deaths worldwide, the COVID-19 pandemic continues unabated. The clinical spectrum of SARS-CoV2 infection ranges from asymptomatic infection to life-threatening and fatal disease. Current estimates are that approximately 78.8 million people globally have “recovered”; however, clinicians are observing and reading reports of patients with persistent severe symptoms and even substantial end-organ dysfunction after SARS-CoV-2 infection. Since COVID-19 is a new disease, much about the clinical course remains uncertain—in particular, the possible long-term health consequences, if any. This webinar will shed some light on the possible long term effects.

Date: 13 May 2021

Time: 15:00 – 16:00

Live stream the event: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBxYStNRUP_vC38qO0E3ukg

A Promising Sexual Violence Intervention for Post School Education and Training (PSET) Female Students in South Africa

The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) has developed the Policy Framework to Address Gender-Based Violence in the Post-School Education and Training System (2020) which prioritizes research, prevention, response and support for survivors within the sector. Comprehensive literature reviews conducted to inform the development of the GBV Policy Framework highlighted that there is a lack of evidence-informed, campus-based, sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) interventions in the country. Therefore, research was needed to understand the prevalence and context in which female students experience SGBV in PSET institutions and to inform the development of evidence-informed, campus-based SGBV interventions which address its underlying drivers. To fill this critical gap in knowledge and practice, the SAMRC Gender and Health Research Unit (SAMRC GHRU) conducted formative research, developed and piloted the Ntombi Vimbela! sexual violence intervention in selected TVET and University campuses. In collaboration with DHET, the SAMRC GHRU will disseminate the findings of the study in a webinar on 19 May 2021 from 10.00am-12.00pm. The webinar is targeting wider stakeholders including practitioners, programmers, and management in post-school education and training (PSET) institutions, policymakers, researchers and other interested parties working in the GBV field. The advert, which has a link for registration to attend the webinar, is attached.

Date: 19 May 2021

Time: 10:00 – 12:00

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

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The Health Systems Trust currently has no available jobs.

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



Copyright © 2019 HEALTH SYSTEMS TRUST, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

hst@hst.org.za

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

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

