

HST Bulletin



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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Working from home and intimate partner violence among cis-women during the COVID-19 pandemic: evidence from a global, cross-sectional study

BMC Public Health | 26 May 2023

Naomi Miall, Suzanna C. Francis, Heidi Stöckl and Joseph D. Tucker

One third of all women will experience physical or sexual abuse by a partner or sexual violence by a non-partner in their lifetime. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “any act or omission by a current or former intimate partner which negatively effects the well-being, physical or psychological integrity, freedom, or right to full development” of the survivor. IPV is a critical public health issue causing physical injury, lingering mental health problems, and emotional trauma. An understanding of the risk factors for IPV can help to inform prevention, management, and structural responses.

HIV community index testing reaches proportionally more males than facility-based testing and is cost-effective: A study from Gaza province, Mozambique

Plos One | 26 May 2023

Mário Songane, Célia C. Magaia, Aleny Couto, Nataniel Dengo, Abdul R. Cassamo et al.

In Mozambique, 38.7% of women and 60.4% of men ages 15–59 years old living with HIV do not know their HIV status. A pilot home-based HIV counseling and testing program based on index cases in the community was implemented in eight districts in Gaza province (Mozambique). The pilot targeted the sexual partners, biological children under 14 years old living in the same household, and parents (for pediatric cases) of people living with HIV. The study aimed to estimate the cost-efficiency and effectiveness of community index testing and compare the HIV testing outputs with facility-based testing.

An audit of adherence to cervical cancer screening guidelines in a tertiary-level HIV clinic

Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine | 26 May 2023

Jeffrey Bolon, Amy Samson, Natalie Irwin, Lyle Murray, Langanani Mbodi, et al.

Cervical cancer is the most common malignancy affecting South African women aged 15–44 years, with a higher prevalence among women living with HIV (WLWH). Despite recommendations for a screening target of 70%, the reported rate of cervical cancer screening in South Africa is 19.3%.

Objectives: To investigate the adherence of healthcare workers to cervical cancer screening guidelines in a tertiary-level HIV clinic. **Method:** A retrospective cross-sectional record audit of women attending the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital HIV Clinic over a 1-month period.

Engaging transgender women in HIV research in South Africa

BMC Public Health | 29 May 2023

L. Leigh Ann van der Merwe, Allanise Cloete, Helen Savva, Donald Skinner, Gita November and Zsa-Zsa Fisher

The *Botshelo Ba Trans* study was the first HIV bio-behavioral survey conducted with transgender women in South Africa. Engaging research with marginalized communities requires clear points of entry, reference points for understanding the internal culture, and establishing trust and understanding. The community-based participatory research approach guided the development and implementation of this study. We conducted a rapid qualitative and pre-surveillance formative assessment between August 2017 to January 2018 and a bio-behavioral survey between July 2018 and March 2019. At the start, a Steering Committee, comprising primarily of transgender women, was established and subsequently provided substantial input into the mixed methods study conducted in Buffalo City, Cape Town, and Johannesburg. Key to the study's success was building trust and establishing ownership of the survey by transgender women recognized as expert knowledge holders.

Unusual Presentation and Difficult to Diagnose: A Case of Malaria With Negative Thick and Thin Giemsa Stain Smear Tests

Cureus | 29 May 2023

Oshna Pandey, Elisha Hona, Elina Shrestha, Varsha Khadka and Tsewang Ghising

Malaria is a parasitic disease that is spread by the bite of an *Anopheles* mosquito carrying the infection. Microscopic analysis of thick and thin Giemsa-stained smears is the gold standard for diagnosis. If the initial test is negative, but clinical suspicion is high, further smears are required. A 25-year-old man presented with abdominal distension, cough, and a seven-day fever. In addition, the patient developed pleural effusions and ascites. The thick and thin smear tests for malaria and all other fever testing came out negative. *Plasmodium vivax* was later identified by reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR). There was a considerable improvement once the anti-malarial medicine was started. It was difficult to diagnose him because pleural effusion and ascites are unusual for someone with malaria. Furthermore, several Giemsa stain smears and malaria quick diagnostic tests were negative, and only a few labs in our country performed RT-PCR.

Lifetime prevalence and adherence rate of cervical cancer screening among women living with HIV: a systematic review and meta-analysis

Journal of the International AIDS Society | 29 May 2023

Xiangrong Gao, Wanting Zhang, Jingyi Sun, Davies Adeloye, Huyi Jin, et al.

Women living with HIV (WLWH) are more likely to develop cervical cancer. Screening and available healthcare can effectively reduce its incidence and mortality rates. We aimed to summarize the lifetime prevalence and adherence rate of cervical cancer screening among WLWH across low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), and high-income countries (HICs).

Outcomes of a model for re-testing HIV-negative index contacts in Sedibeng, South Africa

Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine | 29 May 2023

Ditebogo L Phiri, Kate Rees & Natasha Davis

Index contact testing is an HIV case-finding approach that elicits sexual or needle-sharing partners, as well as biological children, of people living with HIV (PLHIV) and offers them HIV testing services. We aim to describe the results of an innovative project in Sedibeng District that expanded index testing by retesting previously negative contacts and incorporating status-neutral testing. We used registers to identify people who previously tested HIV-negative through index testing from March 2019 to September 2021. The individuals were telephonically traced and offered HIV retesting. Data were collected on a

weekly basis using REDCap[®]. We monitored the number of individuals called, those who came back for retest, and their HIV results.

Prevalence and variability of HIV/AIDS-associated neurocognitive impairments in Africa: a systematic review and meta-analysis

BMC Public Health | 30 May 2023

Birhanie Mekuriaw, Zelalem Belayneh, Worku Teshome and Yonas Akalu

HIV/AIDS-associated neurocognitive impairments negatively affect treatment adherence, viral load suppression, CD4 count, functionality, and the overall quality of life of people with seropositive status. However, huge variability is observed across primary studies regarding the prevalence and determinants of neurocognitive impairment in people with HIV/AIDS. This systematic review and meta-analysis sought to determine the pooled prevalence of neurocognitive impairment and identify factors contributing to variations in its estimate among people living with HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Superspreading, overdispersion and their implications in the SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic: a systematic review and meta-analysis of the literature

BMC Public Health | 30 May 2023

Oliver Wegehaupt, Akira Endo and Anna Vassall

A recurrent feature of infectious diseases is the observation that different individuals show different levels of secondary transmission. This inter-individual variation in transmission potential is often quantified by the dispersion parameter k . Low values of k indicate a high degree of variability and a greater probability of superspreading events. Understanding k for COVID-19 across contexts can assist policy makers prepare for future pandemics.

Integration of human papillomavirus associated anal cancer screening into HIV care and treatment program in Pakistan: perceptions of policymakers, managers, and care providers

BMC Public Health | 31 May 2023

Muslima Ejaz, Anna Mia Ekström, Tazeen Saeed Ali, Mariano Salazar, Alyan Ahmed, et al.

The incidence of anal cancer, largely associated with anal human papillomavirus (HPV) infection, is increasing among men who have sex with men (MSM), and transgender women living with or without HIV. Screening for anal cancer to detect anal precancerous lesions in high-risk groups is an important opportunity for prevention but still lacking in many low-and-middle-income countries. The aim of this study was to explore the readiness of Pakistan's healthcare system to integrate anal cancer and HPV screening into a national HIV program, as perceived by policymakers, health managers, and healthcare providers.

Healthcare Provider Perspectives on HIV Cure Research in Ghana

Hindawi AIDS Research and Treatment | 31 May 2023

Helena Lamptey, Benjamin Newcomb, Evelyn Y Bonney James O Aboagye, Peter Puplampu, et al.

Antiretroviral therapy (ART) has reduced mortality and improved life expectancy among HIV patients but does not provide a cure. Patients must remain on lifelong medications and deal with drug resistance and side effects. This underscores the need for HIV cure research. However, participation in HIV cure research has risks without guaranteed benefits. We determined what HIV healthcare providers know about HIV cure research trials, the risks involved, and what kind of cure interventions they are likely to recommend for their patients.

Failing to learn the lessons: the U.S. response on global health security ignores 20 years of PEPFAR

Journal of the International AIDS Society | 1 June 2023

Brian Honermann, Emily Bass & Greg Millett

Sometimes compared to the post-war U.S. aid package for Europe, the Marshall Plan, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is among the most successful U.S. foreign aid investments in the twenty-first century. PEPFAR's well-documented successes include more than 20 million people currently receiving antiretroviral treatment, decreases in new HIV acquisition and AIDS deaths, as well as indirect impacts: increased economic growth, health workforce capacity, and enhanced laboratory and supply chain infrastructure, and several countries supported by PEPFAR already meeting UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets.

RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Cholera toll in SA rises amid calls for swift action and less finger-pointing

Daily Maverick | 25 May 2023

Government officials on Thursday visited Jubilee District Hospital in Hammanskraal to monitor the effectiveness of current interventions to curb the spread of cholera and save lives. The visit came after more deaths were recorded in Hammanskraal. There are now more than 170 people at the hospital with symptoms of the disease. The government has established a command centre to combat the outbreak in collaboration with the City of Tshwane and the departments of health, water and sanitation, social development and others.

African countries are making the transition from donor-funded HIV programmes to government-led initiatives

Aidsmap | 25 May 2023

"We, as Africans, are the agenda and have the capacity to lead the HIV response. We need to create our own funding bill. Africans and its leaders have a role to play in conceptualising ideas and solutions," Yvette Raphael from the Advocates for the Prevention of HIV in Africa told the recent INTEREST conference in Maputo, Mozambique. Raphael urged governments and scientists to reduce their reliance on donor funding for HIV initiatives to achieve ownership and sustainable programmes.

International Day of Action for Women's Health: NGO drives action in rural South Africa

IOL | 26 May 2023

As International Day of Action for Women's Health approaches, the Tshemba Foundation is urging obstetric and gynaecological specialists to increase their efforts to improve female healthcare in South Africa, especially in rural areas. Despite the existence of clinics and primary healthcare facilities in these communities, specialist services are often absent or insufficiently equipped to meet the needs of women in the area. Even when women are aware of the available services, limited community-based knowledge and trust in doctors make it challenging for them to seek treatment when they need it.

HAMMANSKRAAL: FORCED TO DRINK TAP WATER DESPITE CHOLERA RISK

Health-e News | 26 May 2023

For years, residents of Hammanskraal, north of Pretoria, have complained about poor quality water and an unreliable water supply. For years, nothing has been done. This week, amidst a cholera outbreak that's claimed the lives of 22 people, the Department of Water and Sanitation announced that it would investigate the cause of the water issues in Hammanskraal. The City of Tswane has urged residents not to drink the water. It says it provides potable (drinking) water through 52 water tankers to informal settlements three times a week, and 40 water trucks to formal areas daily in Region 2.

Brace for severe flu season and outbreaks, health experts warn

IOL | 27 May 2023

With load shedding a permanent feature, and as temperatures plummet in winter, health experts are warning South Africans to brace for a severe cold and flu season, as well as several potential disease outbreaks. "Colds and flu are more common in the winter," said National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) Professor Cheryl Cohen. "The influenza season has not started yet but we are seeing an increase in influenza circulation currently and we expect it to start soon."

Air Pollution Advocates Say Time to Act Is Now

Health Policy Watch | 27 May 2023

When Elvis Ndikum Achiri, a long-time veteran of tobacco control campaigns, began collecting data on air pollution in his community in Cameroon, he was surprised to discover how many people around him, both young and old, suffered from related illnesses even though they had never smoked – including a beloved high school teacher who had recently died from asthma. Since then, Achiri has become a national

advocate in the air pollution space as the coordinator for the Global Youth 4 Clean Air and Climate Health Action in Cameroon.

Immunologist Akiko Iwasaki: 'We are not done with Covid, not even close'

The Guardian | 27 May 2023

According to the most recent estimates, more than 65 million people worldwide may be living with some form of long Covid, a startling number that will only continue to increase, given the lack of available treatment options. One of the scientists leading the race to try to unravel the complexities of long Covid is Akiko Iwasaki, an immunology professor at Yale School of Medicine.

Digital Health – Big WHO Ambitions but Progress Lags

Health Policy Watch | 29 May 2023

On Saturday at the World Health Assembly, the World Health Organization (WHO) laid out the current realities of its digital health agenda as contained in the 2020-2025 global strategy on digital health. WHO member states see digital health as an important vehicle for accelerating progress towards WHO's 'triple billion' targets of universal health coverage, health emergencies response and healthier populations.

Nigeria: UNICEF Vaccinates 30 Million Nigerian Children in Five Years - Official

allAfrica | 29 May 2023

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on Monday said it has vaccinated 30 million children in Nigeria in the last five years. UNICEF's Communication Specialist, Geoffrey Njoku, disclosed this while speaking during a two-day media dialogue in Kano State. The dialogue was tagged "The New Country Programme 2023-2027 and the Status of Implementation of the Child Rights Law (2023) in States."

PERIOD POVERTY: 7 MILLION WOMEN AND GIRLS CAN'T AFFORD SANITARY PRODUCTS

Health-e News | 29 May 2023

When Phumzile Mayiza, 33, started her menstrual cycle at 14, she was bewildered. Growing up in rural Kwa-Zulu Natal in kwaHlabisa, she was not exposed to information about what was happening to her body. "I felt very ashamed when my period started. It took me a while before I told anyone. Nothing was taught to us about it at school but my older sisters and other elders in my family made me understand that my period meant I was of child bearing age, that I would now risk getting pregnant if I became intimate with a boy."

Real-world data confirm the efficacy of dolutegravir-based dual therapy

Aidsmap | 29 May 2023

Over six years' worth of real-world data gathered from people with HIV switching to dolutegravir-based two-drug regimens confirm efficacy comparable to three-drug regimens, aligning with previous findings from clinical trials. Dr Conor Bowman and colleagues at the Royal Free Hospital published these findings in the journal *AIDS*.

A pediatric screening tool helps identify children living with HIV more efficiently

Clinton Health Access Initiative | 29 May 2023

Despite a 2017 policy of universal HIV testing for all children presenting at public health facilities in Zambia, testing coverage remains low in high-volume wards. Targeted screening approaches can improve testing efficiencies and increase case findings. HIV screening tools provide a quick and easy way to identify children at-risk. Many implementing partners in Zambia still use question-based tools to target HIV screening in children; however, there is currently no nationally harmonized or validated pediatric HIV screening tool. Yet, a growing body of evidence is proving HIV screening tools to be efficient in identifying children living with HIV, especially in settings where universal HIV testing may not be possible or consistently implemented.

New Study: Even Mild COVID-19 Can Have Long-Term Detrimental Effects on Heart Health

SciTechDaily | 29 May 2023

A recent study has found that even mild cases of COVID-19 can have lasting negative effects on cardiovascular health. A groundbreaking study conducted a comparison of arterial stiffness between

participants before and after contracting COVID-19. New research indicates that even mild instances of COVID-19 can lead to lasting harm to cardiovascular health. The study is the first comparison of levels of arterial stiffness before and after a COVID-19 infection, a parameter closely tied to the aging process and performance of our arteries. The lingering effects of a COVID-19 infection, often referred to as long COVID, are connected with a heightened risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, and in severe scenarios, death.

More Research, Understanding Needed For Women With HIV

Infectious Diseases Special Edition | 30 May 2023

In 2020, there were 37.7 million women with HIV, comprising approximately half of the global population with HIV. Women with HIV have a high burden of comorbidities, leading to AIDS-related illnesses being the leading cause of death globally among women of reproductive age. There is a well-recognized sexual dimorphism in people with HIV, and sex differences in HIV acquisition. There is a known association between sex and immune activation in people with HIV, with many other sex differences. While some of these differences are influenced by social, behavioral, and societal factors, there are important biological factors, including anatomic, physiologic, hormonal, and genetic differences.

[Watch] Health Beat #8 | ‘They looked at me like I’m an animal’: Why discrimination spreads HIV

Bhekisisa | 30 May 2023

People who need health services the most are often driven away from clinics and hospitals because doctors and nurses refuse to help them or make them feel uncomfortable. Researchers from Ritshidze found that people with a higher chance of getting HIV frequently don’t get helped at government health facilities. Their report asked men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender people, injecting drug users and prisoners about the services they got at state clinics and hospitals. In this episode of our monthly television show Health Beat, we speak to two transgender women about their experiences, we ask a Ritshidze researcher why people feel unwelcome and our Mia Malan takes the health department to task about health worker attitudes.

How Well Do Mpox Vaccines Work?

Poz | 31 May 2023

New clusters of mpox (formerly known as monkeypox) cases have been reported as summer arrives, leading health officials to reemphasize that gay and bisexual men, transgender people and others in their sexual networks should get vaccinated—or receive their second shot if they’ve had only one. “Without renewed prevention efforts, especially vaccination, we are definitely at risk of a resurgence—in fact, a substantial risk of resurgence—of mpox,” Demetre Daskalakis, MD, MPH, the White House national mpox response deputy coordinator, said during a May 18 media briefing.

Mpumalanga reports its first cholera case — and death

Bhekisisa | 31 May 2023

A 73-year old Mpumalanga woman has died of cholera. It’s the province’s first cholera case, increasing the number of provinces in South Africa with confirmed cholera infections to four (Gauteng, Free State, Limpopo and Mpumalanga). Twenty six people in South Africa have so far died of cholera. But Health Minister Joe Phaahla says South Africa’s cholera cases have decreased significantly over the past week, particularly in Hammanskraal near Tshwane, where **23 people have died of cholera**. Between 17 and 23 May **163 patients** with cholera-like symptoms such as diarrhoea, vomiting and abdominal pain, were seen by health workers at Jubilee Hospital in Hammanskraal, and 17 people died. That number has now decreased to 30 such patients between 24 and 30 May with two people dying.

Half of new HIV cases in African women could have been prevented had more programmes targeted men

Aidsmap | 1 June 2023

Had there been additional efforts to reach and maintain men in treatment services with HIV suppression at levels equal to that of their female counterparts between 2016 and 2018, half of the new infections in adolescent girls and women could have been averted, bringing gender equality in the HIV burden. An international team of researchers recently published these findings as a pre-print, which means they have not yet been reviewed by other scientists. The investigators found that the contribution of men to

transmission is growing, mainly due to low viral load suppression rates. In 2018, although the majority of people with HIV in rural Uganda were women, half of the people with unsuppressed viral load were men and they accounted for 63% of all HIV transmissions.

OPINION: Part of child protection is allowing kids to be themselves when it comes to gender

Spotlight | 1 June 2023

South Africa is observing Child Protection Week from 29 May to 5 June to shine a spotlight on the rights of children as enshrined in the Constitution and the Children's Act. The campaign aims to ensure the rights, safety, and well-being of children – aiming to foster a safer environment. To foster a safe environment, however, children must not only feel physically safe but also emotionally safe. Yet teenagers often do not have a safe space to speak to trusted people about the confusion they face around their gender.

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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.

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!

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.

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2024: ALBERTINA SISULU EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM IN HEALTH (ASELPH) FELLOWSHIP
A UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN HEALTH SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT IN EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP**

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 30th June 2023

The Albertina Sisulu Executive Leadership Program in Health (ASELPH) is a unique collaborative program through the University of Pretoria that was jointly developed and initially implemented with contributions from the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, and the National and Provincial Departments of Health in South Africa. A key aim is to improve the South African health system through the training of health workers to become exceptional executive leaders, who are better able to drive local health system strengthening and performance.

The Program is focussed on developing Executives (middle and senior health system managers or clinicians) for the unique environment and challenges of the South African health system; this 120 credit (1200 learning hours) postgraduate diploma covers modules in Leadership, Ethics, Strategic Planning, Health sector Transformation, Decentralization & health service re-engineering; Complex Problem Solving, Financial Management, Human Resources For Health, Quality Improvement, Strategic Marketing and Communication and Monitoring and Evaluation. Innovative teaching and learning approaches include peer learning, case study methodology, reflective learning and mentorship. Each Fellow completes a research project and 12 core and elective modules. These are provided through a hybrid learning approach which includes pre-module online work, a 3-day contact class per module at the University of Pretoria and post module assignments. In all, there are approximately 35 contact class days in 6 blocks (Mon-Sat) over a calendar year.

This is a call for applications for the 6th cohort of the Albertina Sisulu Executive Leadership Program in Health starting in January 2024 at the University of Pretoria. This is a part-time Postgraduate Diploma in Health Systems Management in Executive Leadership.

Target Group: Those in middle and senior management and leadership positions, including clinicians, in the health system are encouraged to apply. Applicants from NGOs, technical agencies and the private health sector are also welcome to apply for the training programme. Preference is for current public health sector employees.

Minimum Requirements for Admission are a three-year University Bachelor's Degree (NQF 7 or above) and a minimum of four years management experience in the health sector.

Partial or Full Tuition Bursaries may be available for public health sector employees, while it is anticipated that relevant Departments of Health will cover travel and accommodation costs. This includes applicants from provincial health services as well as municipal health services.

Preference is for current South African public health sector employees and will be for those who have not had any previous post graduate training in public health, management or leadership programs and/or those who have not benefited from any prior health sector financial support for any form of training.

Application and Selection Process: All SA public health sector officials eligible for consideration will be subjected to a joint Provincial DOH / ASELPH Recruitment, Interview and Selection process. Applications, together with supporting documents (ID, CV, motivation letter and copy of qualifications labelled with prospective applicant's student number) must be submitted online at: https://upnet.up.ac.za/psc/upapply/EMPLOYEE/SA/c/UP_OAP_MENU.UP_OAP_LOGIN.GBL

For further information contact Mr Lesiba Mpati at lesiba.mpati@up.ac.za

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PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

South African Health Review 2021

Health Systems Trust | 2021

When it comes to service delivery and access in both the public and private health sectors, COVID-19 has put everything to the test. It has demonstrated how central public health security is to health and livelihoods, and how pandemic health emergencies expose the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of health systems, costing lives and causing immeasurable damage to economies. Few could have imagined the impact of COVID-19 when this pandemic reached our shores in March 2020.

This edition considers the government's and broader health sector's response to COVID-19, explores the current challenges facing the health system at this unprecedented time, and reflects on lessons learnt for future for public health emergencies. The chapters offer information on, inter alia, the challenges of balancing lives with livelihoods, and the impact of COVID-19 on different cadres of healthcare workers, especially Community Health Workers who found themselves at the forefront of our COVID-19 response. Other areas covered include the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations like children, persons with disabilities, farmworkers, migrants, and the poorest in our society.

FOOD INFLATION BRIEF

This Brief provides an overview of food inflation dynamics, its associated causes, and the cost of basic healthy eating for March 2023

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

South African Health Review 2023 Call for Abstracts: STRENGTHENING CANCER SERVICES

The National Cancer Strategic Framework 2017 – 2022 reflects the country's commitment to reduce the burden of cancer amongst all its citizens. South Africa has struggled to provide services for effective cancer prevention, treatment, and care. Children and adults alike often present at advanced stages of disease. Hence, increasing cancer incidence, high mortality rates, severe morbidity among cancer survivors, and unequal access to cancer prevention, treatment, and care remain critical challenges in South Africa. This burden is exacerbated among communities who are also faced with poverty, disadvantage and inequitable access to health services more generally. The COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated pre-existing inequities in cancer care.

The editors of the 2023 South African Health Review (SAHR) invite the submission of abstracts that investigate the successes, challenges and gaps in cancer treatment and care within the South African healthcare system.

This first issue devoted exclusively to cancer will focus on acquiring a deeper understanding of the systemic cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment challenges in South Africa. It seeks to also enable the sharing of innovations, strategies and lessons that may increase community engagement, health literacy, timely presentation, and improve treatment completion and wellness.

Abstracts that focus on cancer prevention, screening, and early diagnosis at community level, access to quality surgery and oncology therapies, and rehabilitation, community re-integration, and palliative care systems are encouraged.

Preference will be given to abstracts that:

- examine the successes, challenges, and shortfalls of the 2017-2022 National Cancer Strategic Framework;
- examine innovations and learnings emerging from the current management of cancer services within the public and private health sector that will improve access and lead to better outcomes;
- explore lessons learned and recommendations on how to integrate cancer interventions with other key public health programmes;
- share patient-relevant measures, approaches and innovations in cancer care that strengthen community level services that lead to increased patient satisfaction, reduced inequalities and better treatment completion.

Please take note of the following:

- The body of the abstract may not exceed 300 words.
- To submit an abstract, please use our **online template** (<https://forms.gle/9tVKZtHYdaoFxnj26>)
- Submission of an abstract for the SAHR does not guarantee acceptance. All abstracts will undergo a systematic selection process.

Closing Date: Monday, 19 June 2023

For more information visit: www.hst.org.za or contact sahr@hst.org.za

The Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) – call for abstracts extended until 12 June!!!

Welcome to PHASA 2023

The Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) hosts an annual conference, with the aim of engaging public health practitioners from around the country, region and world to share their experiences and research, discuss topical public health issues, and mentor public health students and young researchers.

This year's theme: 'Transforming research translation- reimagining public health evidence, policies, and practice'

Public health practitioners, programmes, and systems work to create more effective and sustainable solutions to public health challenges, based on the best available evidence and focusing on equity, social justice, and community engagement. Recent experiences, including during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted the need for a fundamental shift in how research evidence is generated and translated into public health policies and practice. This calls for new and innovative approaches to bridge the gap between research and action, and highlights the importance of partnerships between researchers, policymakers, and communities.

The 2023 Public Health Association of South Africa's (PHASA) Conference will provide an opportune setting for engaging with the most recent public health research and evidence, for rethinking current models of research translation, for identifying barriers and opportunities for change, and for exploring new strategies for knowledge exchange and dissemination.

Join fellow public health experts, academics, researchers, students, non-governmental organisations, and civil society members at this year's annual PHASA Conference; as we transform the ways we think about and approach priority areas of public health research, policy, and practice, to ultimately improve health outcomes for all.

For more information go to the PHASA Conference 2023 website - <https://phasa.samrc.ac.za/>

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.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

There are currently no vacancies at the Health Systems Trust

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