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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Association of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder With Accelerated Cognitive Decline in Middle-aged Women

JAMA Open Network | 30 June 2022

Andrea Roberts, Jiaxuan Liu, Rebecca Lawn, et al.

Question: Is posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) associated with cognitive decline in middle-aged women?

Findings: In this cohort study of 12 270 trauma-exposed middle-aged women, individuals with high levels of PTSD symptoms experienced significantly worse cognitive decline in learning and working memory as well as psychomotor speed and attention compared with those with no PTSD symptoms. These findings were not fully explained by demographic characteristics, behavioral factors, or health conditions, including comorbid depression.

Meaning: This study's findings highlight the importance of PTSD prevention and treatment to promote healthy cognitive aging and suggest that earlier cognitive screening among women with PTSD should be considered.

Prevalence and factors associated with self-reported HIV testing among adolescent girls and young women in Rwanda: evidence from 2019/20 Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey

BMC Public Health | 1 July 2022

According to the 2021 UNAIDS report, there were 37.7 million people globally living with HIV (PLHIV) globally in 2020, 36.0 million of whom were adults and 1.7 million children aged 0–14 years, while 53% of all PLHIV were women and girls. Globally, adolescent girls and young women (AGYW), aged 15–24 years, have 60% higher HIV infection compared to adolescent boys and young men of the same age. Furthermore, around 1.5 million people were newly infected with HIV and women and girls accounted for 50% of these new infections. Every week, around 5,000 AGYW become infected with HIV. In Sub-Saharan Africa, AGYW represent 10% of the total population but accounts for about 25% of all HIV infections. Additionally, six in seven new HIV infections among adolescents aged 15–19 years are among girls. In Eastern and Southern Africa, there were 2.4 HIV infections among AGYW for every one infection among boys and young men of the same age. Adolescent girls and young women remain at a higher risk

of HIV infection.

Prospective study of oral pre-exposure prophylaxis initiation and adherence among young women in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Journal of the International AIDS Society | 3 July 2022

Leila E. Mansoor, Lara Lewis, Cherise Naicker, Ishana Harkoo, Halima Dawood, et al.

Oral tenofovir disoproxil fumarate/emtricitabine pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), introduced into South Africa (SA) in 2016, has increasingly become part of HIV prevention standard of care. Given the urgent need for increased HIV prevention efforts for young women in SA, we conducted an implementation study to explore oral PrEP initiation and adherence, and the impact of oral PrEP on HIV incidence in this group. This prospective cohort study (CAPRISA 082) was conducted at two sites (urban and rural) in KwaZulu-Natal, between March 2016 and February 2018. HIV-negative, sexually active women, aged 18–30 years, were enrolled and followed for approximately 10 months. Oral PrEP was offered as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention package. Adherence to oral PrEP was measured using pill counts and tenofovir-diphosphate (TFV-DP) levels.

'Most nurses in the rural or remote health clinics run away from their job due to no remote allowances and poor working equipment and environment'. Health professional leaders' perception of shortages in the nursing workforce in underserved areas in Vanuatu

Remote and Rural Health | 4 July 2022

Adel Tamata and Masoud Mohammadnezhad

Introduction: Health professional leaders are key informants working at senior levels in various health facilities in the areas of policies and planning processes, and human resources. This study explores the factors affecting the nursing shortage in Vanuatu and recommends measures and interventions to resolve the shortage.

Methods: A qualitative study was used to collect data from 12 health professional leaders using focus group discussion in three randomly selected hospitals in Vanuatu. The qualitative data were collected using a semi-structured, open-ended questionnaire and were audio-recorded. The data were translated and transcribed, and then analysed using thematic analysis.

Drug-susceptible tuberculosis treatment outcomes and its associated factors among inmates in prison settings in Bauchi State, Nigeria, 2014–2018

PLOS One | 3 July 2022

Peter Amede, Elizabeth Adedire, Aishat Usman, Celestine Ameh, Faruk Umar, et al.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a preventable and curable disease with effective drugs, despite this it remain a major killer with over 4,500 dying daily from the infection globally. In 2020, TB was reported worldwide as the 13th leading cause of death; with 10 million cases and 1.5 million deaths attributed to the disease including 214,000 deaths from TB among those co-infected with HIV. The high global prevalence of TB is driven by HIV infection, lack of TB diagnostic laboratories, poverty and weak healthcare systems. Nigeria ranked 6th in the world and 1st in Africa among the 30 countries with the highest burden of TB, in 2020. In Nigeria, TB deaths including HIV/TB co-infection was 155,000 in 2017; which was second only to India.

Immune response and safety to inactivated COVID-19 vaccine: a comparison between people living with HIV and HIV-naive individuals

AIDS Research and Therapy | 5 July 2022

Shi Zou, Mengmeng Wu, Fangzhao Ming, Songjie Wu, Wei Guo, et al

Multi-types COVID-19 vaccines have shown safety and efficacy against COVID-19 in adults. Although current guidelines encourage people living with HIV (PLWH) to take COVID-19 vaccines, whether their immune response to COVID-19 vaccines is distinct from HIV-free individuals is still unclear.

Breakthrough SARS-Cov-2 infections during periods of delta and omicron predominance, South Africa

The Lancet | 6 July 2022

Ameena Goga, Linda-Gail Bekker, Nigel Garrett, Tarylee Reddy, Nonhlanhla Yende-Zuma, et al.

The omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2 (B.1.1.529) was first detected in South Africa in November, 2021.

Declared a variant of concern on Nov 26, 2021, omicron spread exponentially, replacing the delta variant

(B.1.617.2) and driving rapid increases in COVID-19 cases. In-vitro experiments show that the omicron variant escapes antibody neutralisation in people who have previously been infected with or vaccinated against SARS-CoV-2. Epidemiological data suggest that vaccine effectiveness is reduced, and reinfection rates are higher for omicron than for the beta (B.1.351) and delta variants. Here we describe breakthrough infections—positive SARS-CoV-2 PCR or antigen tests 28 days or more after vaccination—in the South African Sisonke phase 3B Ad26.COVS vaccine trial (**NCT04838795**) during periods of time when delta and omicron variants were in circulation. The trial enrolled health-care workers in 360 vaccination centres across South Africa's nine provinces.

Associations of gender identity with sexual behaviours, social stigma and sexually transmitted infections among adults who have sex with men in Abuja and Lagos, Nigeria

Journal of the International AIDS Society | 6 July 2022

Elyse LeeVan, Fengming Hu, Andrew B. Mitchell, Afoke Kokogho, Sylvia Adebajo, et al.

Sexual and gender minority populations are disproportionately affected by the global syndemic of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). We hypothesized that transgender women (TGW) and non-binary individuals in Nigeria have more STIs than cis-gender men who have sex with men (cis-MSM), and that experiences of stigma and sexual practices differ between these three groups.

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

UNAIDS and Africa CDC tackle misinformation around COVID-19 and HIV in Africa

UNAIDS | 30 June 2022

Two years into the COVID-19 pandemic and there is still much misinformation around the disease. This is fuelling vaccine hesitancy and undermining efforts to respond effectively and protect the most vulnerable. To respond to misinformation around COVID-19 and HIV, UNAIDS and the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), with support from the German Ministry of Health, are organizing a series of training sessions to strengthen the capacities of African Ministries of Health and National Public Health Institutes. The sessions cover key areas of risk communication and community engagement on COVID-19 and HIV such as strategic communication planning, media engagement, familiarization with continental and regional guidelines, social media and rumour management.

World Bank Board Approves New Fund for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPR)

World Health Organization | 30 June 2022

The devastating human, economic, and social cost of COVID-19 has highlighted the urgent need for coordinated action to build stronger health systems and mobilize additional resources for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR). The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors today approved the establishment of a financial intermediary fund (FIF) that will finance critical investments to strengthen pandemic PPR capacities at national, regional, and global levels, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries. The fund will bring additional, dedicated resources for PPR, incentivize countries to increase investments, enhance coordination among partners, and serve as a platform for advocacy. The FIF will complement the financing and technical support provided by the World Bank, leverage the strong technical expertise of WHO, and engage other key organizations.

New political declaration to halve road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030 is a milestone achievement

World Health Organization | 30 June 2022

The World Health Organization (WHO) welcomes the political declaration to be adopted by Member States during the High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on Global Road Safety. It commits to cut road traffic deaths and injuries by 50% by 2030, a milestone for road safety and sustainable mobility. The meeting takes place on 30 June – 1 July 2022 under the theme “The 2030 horizon for road safety: securing a decade of action and delivery”.

'A cost SA cannot afford': Child mental health crisis at tipping point, shows report

Parent24 | 1 July 2022

Child and adolescent mental health has reached a crisis point, shows the 2021-'22 South African Child Gauge report. The report was compiled by UCT's Children's Institute, in collaboration with Unicef South Africa; the DSI-NRF Centre for Excellence in Human Development, University of the Witwatersrand; the Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation; and the LEGO Foundation. It sheds light on the ever-increasing societal factors burdening children and their long-term effects on mental health. "These social determinants interact with genetic and biological risk factors across the life course – meaning that early exposure to adversity or deprivation in childhood has a significant impact on subsequent life-long mental health," the report reads.

Lack of youth-friendly clinics in KZN a major turnoff

Health-e News | 1 July 2022

The lack of basic healthcare services that are youth-friendly frustrates young people from Hammarsdale in eThekweni. They claim they often face discrimination that threatens their fundamental rights. "Our clinics aren't youth-friendly. We are trying to take responsibility for our health, but when we visit clinics, they ambush us," said one of the young people. South Africa marked the 46th anniversary of the 1974 Soweto students' uprising a few weeks ago. These youngsters stood up for their education rights. It's now important to highlight the barriers preventing young people from using community healthcare services. Section 27 of the South African Constitution says everyone has a right to health care services, including reproductive healthcare services. Section 27 also says medical treatment should be available to everyone.

New Covid rules for workplaces in South Africa – and what it means for masks

BusinessTech | 1 July 2022

At the end of June, Employment and Labour minister Thulas Nxesi published the Code of Practice: Managing Exposure to SARS-CoV-2 in the workplace. The new code effectively replaces the old code dealing with similar issues published on 15 March 2022. "While the old and the new code are not substantially different, employers and employees should note the following provisions contained in the new code when developing a risk assessment and plan in the workplace in terms of the new Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)," says legal firm Werksmans.

The shadow of Covid-19 remains a concern for South Africans, say experts

IOL | 3 July 2022

While many South Africans may be excited to finally walk around without a mask in public, a panel of experts say the legacy of Covid-19 will remain with us for a long time. During a webinar, hosted by Higher Education Media Services, a panel of experts which included academics and scientists explored the effects of the pandemic and its impact on the country's HIV/AIDS programme.

4 Ways Period Poverty Affects Africa's Women and Girls, According to Activists

Global Citizen | 3 July 2022

For many girls across Africa, getting their period means staying home from school, exposure to negative social stigma, and the risk of significant health issues all because they don't have access to safe sanitary products. Period poverty is a global issue, which affects menstruators who don't have access to safe, hygienic period products or who can't manage their periods with dignity — because of stigma, or a lack of menstrual education, or proper hygiene facilities. And, as highlighted by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), period poverty can have lasting consequences on a menstruator's education and economic opportunities, as well as exacerbating existing vulnerabilities.

Public attitudes on HIV stuck in 1980s, according to new data released on 40th anniversary of Terrence Higgins death

WalesOnline | 4 July 2022

Forty years since Terrence Higgins became the UK's first named person to die of an AIDS-related illness on the 4 July 1982, new data shows that the public's attitudes to the virus remain stuck in the past. The data also highlighted that a **Government AIDS awareness advert from 1987** was particularly harmful, with almost half of those surveyed remembering it four decades after it aired. The data has been released by Terrence Higgins Trust, the charity established in Terry's name to save lives during the darkest days of the epidemic.

Are youth-only clinics the answer to better healthcare for young people?

Spotlight | 4 July 2022

Getting young people to access healthcare services in the public sector is often an uphill battle. One solution is to have special clinics catering just for the youth. Pumeza Runeyi, a health officer at Doctors without Borders (MSF), was involved in setting up two such clinics in Khayelitsha in Cape Town. She says there is a myriad of reasons why young people don't want to go to general clinics – she highlights the fact that some young people fear bumping into neighbours or relatives at the clinic. “At times, it is just the fear of being judged. They will see you taking condoms or [other] contraceptives then you are judged for being sexually active,” she says.

New head of U.S aid program for HIV/AIDS vows to refocus attention on the other, 'silent' pandemic

Science.org | 5 July 2022

On 13 June, John Nkengasong, 58, was appointed the first African-born head of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), a program that helps more than 50 countries respond to their HIV/AIDS epidemics. Nkengasong, who grew up in Cameroon and became a U.S. citizen in 2007, previously ran the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

'World is failing adolescent girls' warns UNFPA chief, as report shows third of women in developing countries give birth in teen years

United Nations | 5 July 2022

While total fertility across the globe has fallen, the UNFPA report shows that women who began childbearing in adolescence, had almost five births by the time they reached 40, during the period examined in the report, between 2015 and 2019. Gender-based and income inequalities are highlighted as key in fuelling teen pregnancies by increasing child marriage rates, keeping girls out of school, restricting their career aspirations, and limiting healthcare and information on safe, consensual sex. Entrenching these inequalities are climate disasters, COVID-19 and conflict, which are all upending lives around the world, obliterating livelihoods and making it more difficult for girls to afford or even physically reach school and health services. This leaves tens of millions yet more vulnerable to child marriage and early pregnancy.

Long COVID in children: Most common symptoms experienced by different age groups, as per study

The Times of India | 5 July 2022

Children in this group were more likely to experience mood swings, trouble in concentrating, and also had rashes. With long COVID, many kids struggle to keep up with their schoolwork or sports. Signs and symptoms of mood swings experienced by kids, and even adults, include suddenly getting angry, sad, frustrated, and getting panicky and worrying too often. Mood swings also include feelings of hopelessness, low self-esteem and tiredness all the time.

DA concerned that fire at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital is the third fire at Gauteng public hospitals this year

IOL | 5 July 2022

The Democratic Alliance (DA) has raised concerns that the fire at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital in Soweto on Wednesday is the first fire to occur at Gauteng public hospitals in 2022 and the eighth fire in seven years. The Gauteng Department of Health confirmed on Wednesday that there was a blaze at the hospital that started at the open space near the Covid-19 tents at the hospital.

People Who Start HIV Treatment With High CD4s Have a Smaller Viral Reservoir

POZ Science News | 6 July 2022

The study findings underscore the importance of starting antiretroviral therapy as soon as possible. People with HIV who started antiretroviral treatment early, before their **CD4 T-cell count** fell below 800, had a substantially smaller viral reservoir, according to study findings published in **Clinical Infectious Diseases**. Having a smaller reservoir of latently infected CD4 cells improves the prospects for long-term remission.

South Africans feel the new NHI will not improve healthcare – and worry about the

end of private medical aids

BusinessTech | 6 July 2022

Professional services firm PwC has conducted a deep dive into how Covid-19 impacted South Africa's healthcare industry and how the incoming National Healthcare Insurance (NHI) will change its landscape. The objective of the NHI is to provide universal access to quality health care for all South Africans as enshrined in the constitution. PwC said its healthcare consulting team assessed the state and future prospects of South Africa's healthcare industry while it underwent this period of immense transformation. The group said it surveyed 31 C-suite leaders of South African healthcare public, private and donor organisations by conducting in-depth interviews and online digital surveys.

SA's moonlight sonata: The illegal cash cow draining specialist care at state hospitals

News24 | 6 July 2022

There were 20 babies screaming for attention in the dilapidated paediatric ward of a state hospital in a small South African town. Just down the road, at a buzzing taxi rank next to a school, children were getting out of white minibuses to start their day of learning. Emily Benson, not her real name, was growing anxious inside the children's ward. It was 08:45 on an icy Monday morning, her first rotation in that department. One of the infants was having a seizure. Blood tests showed at least two of his organs were failing. Benson knew she had to treat this baby first — but didn't know how. She was a second-year intern doctor. That means she had graduated from medical school, but still needed to complete her last internship year and a year of community service before she could work without supervision.

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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!

HSTi offers accredited and non-accredited short courses and full programmes

The Health Systems Training Institute (HSTi) is the training arm of the Health Systems Trust (HST), a leading force in the South African public health sector. HST was established in 1992, on the brink of democracy in South Africa, and has since played a significant role in strengthening the national primary health system through health research, informatics, clinical support, capacity-building and training.

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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.

2022 Progress report on the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All

World Health Organization

As COVID-19 continued to dominate global health over the last year, the direct and indirect impact of the pandemic has led progress against the health-related SDGs to fall even further behind. At the same time, crises such as armed conflict, increasing food insecurity, political and economic instability and the growing impact of climate change threaten to derail recovery from the pandemic. A key way to respond to and ensure an equitable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 is for multilateral agencies to collaborate even more closely in providing effective and efficient joint support to countries, which is the foundation of the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All (SDG3 GAP). SDG3 GAP is helping to promote synergies among its signatory agencies' pandemic-specific responses and longer-term work to accelerate progress towards the SDGs by creating an improvement platform for collaboration on health among key actors in the multilateral system.

South African Child Gauge Report - Child and adolescent mental health

University of Cape Town | July 2022

This 16th annual review of the situation of the country's children is published by the Children's Institute (CI), University of Cape Town, in partnership with UNICEF South Africa; the DSI-NRF Centre for Excellence in Human Development, University of the Witwatersrand; the Standard Bank Tutuwa Community Foundation; and The LEGO Foundation. This sixteenth issue of the South African Child Gauge focuses attention on child and adolescent mental health and how early experiences of adversity ripple out across the life course and generations at great cost to individuals and society. It calls on South African society to put children at the centre of all policies in order to protect children from harm, build their capacity to cope with stress and adversity, and provide them with opportunities to thrive.

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

WEBINAR: Launch of WHO's new Handbook: Critical considerations and actions for achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in the context of universal health coverage (UHC) through a primary health care (PHC) approach

Date: 12 July 2022

Time: 13:30 – 14:30 UTC Time

Learn more about WHO's new handbook which includes critical considerations and actions for achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health in the context of universal health coverage through a primary health care approach. The handbook is designed for decision-makers, researchers, specialists, civil society organizations and anyone working towards universal access to SRH services in the context of universal health coverage. In addition to sharing lessons applicable to all contexts, the handbook addresses specific economic, social and cultural contexts that influence access to SRH services. These are reinforced by country case studies, showcasing innovative ways in which SRH services have been integrated in PHC strategies at national level.

PHASA (Public Health Association of South Africa) 17th annual public health conference

Date: 11 – 14 September

Location: Durban

Late Registration: 16 July – 26 Aug 2022

The Public Health Association of South (PHASA) invites you to attend their annual conference in Durban (eThekweni), on the east coast of South Africa. PHASA hosts an annual conferences, with the aim of engaging public health practitioners and interested people from around the country and world to share their experiences and research, discuss topical public health issues, and mentor public health students and young researchers. Hosting the national PHASA conference in Durban aims to add stimulus to the local economy, and contribute to enhanced awareness and widespread advocacy, for health, the social determinants of health, and healthcare in the region.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Professional Nurse Clinician: Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) Unit

Closing Date: 2022-07-14

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