

HST Bulletin



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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Development and validation of a novel scale for antiretroviral therapy readiness among pregnant women in urban Zambia with newly diagnosed HIV infection

BMC | 6 April 2023

Mwangelwa Mubiana-Mbewe, Samuel Bosomprah, Rakesh Kumar Saroj, Jillian Kadota, Aybuke Koyuncu, et al.

Women who are newly diagnosed with HIV infection during pregnancy may not be ready to immediately initiate lifelong antiretroviral therapy (ART; called Option B+) as is recommended. Lack of “readiness” drives early disengagement from care and undermines prevention of HIV transmission to infants. Several studies have shown high early attrition of women initiating ART in pregnancy. Although poor ART uptake and adherence have been attributed to various factors including stigma, disclosure issues and structural issues, there is no standard way of determining which pregnant woman will face challenges and therefore need additional support. We developed and validated a novel ART readiness tool in Lusaka, Zambia.

Flexibly funding WHO? An analysis of its donors’ voluntary contributions

BMJ Global Health | 6 April 2023

Obichukwu Iwunna, Jonathan Kennedy and Andrew Harmer

Since the 1970s, voluntary contributions have become an increasingly important component of WHO’s budget. As voluntary contributions tend to be earmarked for donor-specified programmes and projects, there are concerns that this trend has diverted focus away from WHO’s strategic priorities, made coordination and attaining coherence more difficult, undermined WHO’s democratic structures and given undue power to a handful of wealthy donors. In the past few years, the WHO Secretariat has pushed for donors to increase the amount of flexible funding they provide.

Tanapox, South Africa, 2022

BMC Women’s Health | 6 April 2023

Monica Birkhead, Wayne Grayson, Antoinette Grobbelaar, Veerle Msimang, Naazneen Moolla, et al.

Tanapox is a rarely diagnosed zoonosis known to be endemic to equatorial Africa. All previously reported

human cases were acquired within 10° north or south of the Equator, most recently 19 years ago. We describe a human case of tanapox in South Africa (24° south of the Equator). Expanded surveillance for this pathogen is warranted.

Changes in Performance Measures and Service Volume at US Federally Qualified Health Centers During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Jama network | 7 April 2023

Megan B. Cole; Eun Kyung Lee, Bianca K. Frogner, et al

Stay-at-home orders, site closures, staffing shortages, and competing COVID-19 testing and treatment needs all potentially decreased primary care access and quality during the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges may have especially affected federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), which serve patients with low income nationwide.

Incomplete HPV Vaccination among Individuals Aged 27–45 Years in the United States: A Mixed-Effect Analysis of Individual and Contextual Factors

Victor Adekanmbi, Fangjian Guo, Christine D. Hsu, Yong Shan, Yong-Fang Kuo

MDPI Vaccines | 10 April 2023

In the United States, the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is approved for use in individuals up to age 45. Individuals 15 years and older require three doses of the vaccine to complete the recommended dosing series. Incomplete HPV vaccination rates (i.e., one or two doses) among those over age 26, however, remain high. This study examined the independent effects of individual- and neighborhood-level factors on incomplete HPV vaccination rates in the United States (U.S.) among those aged 27–45 years.

Trends and factors associated with HIV testing among women aged 15–49 years in Belize: an analysis using the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006, 2011, and 2015–2016

BMC Women's Health | 11 April 2023

Naudia Leonardo and Li-Yin Chien

Belize has one of the highest human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome prevalence rates in Central America, with women of reproductive age being particularly vulnerable to HIV. Therefore, this study examined the factors associated with HIV testing among women of reproductive age in Belize and trends in HIV testing in 2006, 2011, and 2015–2016.

Understanding coping strategies of mothers living with HIV who care for children living with HIV: a qualitative study in Indonesia

BCM Women's Health | 11 April 2023

Nelsensius Klau Fauk, Hailay Abrha Gesesew, Lillian Mwanri, Karen Hawke, Maria Silvia Merry, et al.

HIV infection and its sequelae continue to be a significant challenge among women and their families in developing countries despite the progress that has been made in the prevention and treatment of HIV. This paper describes the strategies employed by mothers with HIV to cope with the various challenges experienced following their own and their children's HIV diagnosis. This paper uses previously unpublished data collected for a study that sought to explore the mental health challenges and coping strategies of mothers living with HIV (MLHIV) (n=23) who have children living with HIV (CLHIV). Data collection was conducted using in-depth interviews, and participants were recruited using the snowball sampling technique. The concept of meaning-making was used to guide the conceptualisation, analysis, and discussion of the findings.

Process of developing a cervical cancer education program for female university students in a Health and Physical Education teacher training course: an action research

BCM Women's Health | 11 April 2023

Hiroko Yako-Suketomo, Kayoko Katayama, Atsushi Ogihara & Mikiko Asai-Sato

The purpose of this study was to develop a cervical cancer education program for students and evaluate the process for female students of an HPE teacher education university who were training to become Japanese Health and Physical Education teachers.

Intention to take COVID-19 vaccine and associated factors among pregnant women

attending antenatal care at public health facilities in Bahir Dar city, Northwest Ethiopia

BCM Women's Health | 11 April 2023

Begizew Yimenu Mekuriaw, Dabere Nigatu, Anteneh Mengist Dessie & Melash Belachew Asresie

Pregnant mothers are a risky population group for COVID-19 and pregnant mothers with COVID-19 are at increased risk of hospitalization, intensive-care unit admission, invasive ventilation support, and maternal mortality. Vaccination is an essential tool in stopping the effect of the pandemic on maternal and child health. However, there are only limited studies in Ethiopia on the intention to take the COVID-19 vaccine among pregnant women. Thus, this study aimed to assess intention to take the COVID-19 vaccine and associated factors among pregnant women in Bahir Dar city, Northwest Ethiopia.

The burden of RSV-associated illness in children aged < 5 years, South Africa, 2011 to 2016

BMC Medicine | 11 April 2023

Jocelyn Moyes, Stefano Tempia, Sibongile Walaza, Meredith McMorro, Florette Treurnicht, et al.

Vaccines and monoclonal antibodies to protect the very young infant against the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)-associated illness are effective for limited time periods. We aimed to estimate age-specific burden to guide implementation strategies and cost-effectiveness analyses.

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Mixed-Race Woman Potentially Cured of HIV Using Stem Cell Transplant

Poz | 5 April 2023

Three cases of HIV being cured have been reported to date. All three involved men with HIV and either leukemia or lymphoma. The men received transplants of stem cells from adult donors to treat their cancers. The stem cell donors all carried two copies of a mutation, CCR5-delta32, that confers resistance to HIV. CCR5 is a receptor that HIV uses to infect cells. But very few people carry two copies of CCR5-delta32, limiting the chances of finding a compatible donor, particularly for non-White patients. A team led by Drs. Jingmei Hsu at Weill Cornell Medicine, Yvonne Bryson of the University of California, Los Angeles, and Deborah Persaud of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine used a modified approach to try to cure HIV.

The part we often forget: Care for children and teens with Advanced HIV Disease

The Clinton Health Access Initiative | 6 April 2023

A new article in the Journal of the International AIDS Society highlights the urgent need for a clear strategy to prevent and treat advanced HIV disease in children and teens. Many children and teens living with HIV still present with severe immunosuppression. They do not start antiretroviral therapy (ART) until they are hospitalized—when it is often too late. The major causes of morbidity and mortality in children living with advanced HIV are pneumonia, tuberculosis, bloodstream infections, diarrhea, and severe acute malnutrition. This article discusses the common clinical presentations of children and teens with advanced HIV disease with a focus on diagnosis, prevention, and treatment. The article also highlights some of the challenges implementing the existing package of care and emphasizes the need for further research to provide quality care for these groups.

Internal Conflict Is Displacing the Women of Mozambique and Exposing Them to HIV

The Body | 6 April 2023

Despite attaining independence from Portugal in 1975, Mozambique continues to struggle with internal conflicts. Its current insurgent crisis is centralized in the Cabo Delgado province, which was once the cradle of Mozambique's war of liberation from colonial occupation, but is today beset by constant warfare. The consequences have interrupted access to HIV medications and prevention options—and contributed to an estimated 11.4% HIV prevalence among adults in the area.

PrEP Advocates Convene Virtual Town Hall Responding to Braidwood v. Becerra

Avac | 6 April 2023

Hundreds of HIV prevention advocates nationwide convened on Tuesday to discuss the implications of Judge Reed O'Connor's ruling in the Texas *Braidwood v. Becerra* case that could impact access to PrEP and other preventive health interventions for millions of Americans. The ruling states private insurers are no longer required to cover certain preventive care services under the Affordable Care Act, including PrEP. Advocates called on public and private insurers to maintain coverage to prevent HIV and other conditions no matter the ultimate outcome of the case. Experts from Lambda Legal, the Center for HIV Law and Policy, and the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation provided preliminary analyses and shared their thoughts on strategies moving forward, including steps in the appeal process. Attendees vowed to take action to raise awareness of this threat to PrEP access, connect with other affected healthcare communities, and get organized for what will likely be a prolonged process to try and undermine preventive health services.

The WHO Turns 75

Health Policy Watch | 6 April 2023

Seventy-five years ago on Friday – World Health Day – the World Health Organization's (WHO) founding constitution became the first document to formally recognize health as a human right. Three-quarters of a century later, a WHO battered by the COVID-19 pandemic is juggling how to adapt to new health threats with achieving its most basic mission: public health for all. "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity," reads the opening passage of the 1948 constitution, still in effect to this day.

SAHPRA Withdraws Pholcodine-Containing Medicines From SA Market

SAHPRA | 6 April 2023

The South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) has made the decision to withdraw pholcodine-containing medicines from the South African (SA) market due to the increased risk of sudden, severe, and life-threatening allergic reactions occurring during surgery. There is a link between the use of pholcodine-containing medicines and the risk of a sudden, severe, and life-threatening allergic (anaphylactic) reaction when neuromuscular blocking agents (NMBAs) are administered during general anaesthesia. NMBAs are used as muscle relaxants during surgery. The use of pholcodine-containing medicines, up to 12 months prior to surgery, increases the risk of anaphylactic reaction in patients who receive NMBAs.

New vaccine will save thousands of children from dying of pneumonia

GroundUp | 6 April 2023

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a dangerous early childhood viral infection, but results of a vaccine promise to change things radically. A new study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the world's most prestigious medical journal, on 5 April that examined the effect of an RSV vaccine on pregnant women found that it reduced the risk of severe lower respiratory tract infections in newborns by 82%.

Countries set out way forward for negotiations on global agreement to protect world from future pandemic emergencies

WHO | 7 April 2023

Countries of the World Health Organization have mapped out how negotiations on a global accord on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response will move forward with a view to presenting a draft accord for approval by the World Health Assembly in May 2024. Ending Thursday, discussions on the draft pandemic accord took place during the fifth meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB), which includes WHO's 194 countries. Ms Precious Matsoso, Co-Chair of the INB Bureau, from South Africa, said: "Countries from all parts of the world were able to discuss their ideas, concerns and suggestions in a forum for all countries to hear and consider."

The emergence of tanapox in South Africa, 2022

News Medical Life Science | 10 April 2023

Tanapox is a zoonotic disease that is endemic to equatorial Africa. The last human case was reported almost two decades ago, with only four cases ever being exported via humans or nonhuman primates (NHPs). A new case of this rare disease was diagnosed outside the equatorial belt, where all previous

human cases had been identified. Expanded surveillance on this disease is necessary.

Cervical cancer can be beaten - the key is vaccinating young girls

The Conversation | 10 April 2023

In 2020 the World Health Organization introduced a plan to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health threat by 2030. The first step towards this goal is to have 90% of girls fully vaccinated against human papillomavirus (HPV) by the age of 15 years. Gynaecological oncologist Lynette Denny spells out how much progress still needs to be made, and what hurdles need to be overcome. Cervical cancer is one of the most common cancers in women. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest cervical cancer diagnoses worldwide. Cervical cancer mortality rates in the region are three times higher than the global average. The burden of HIV in sub-Saharan Africa contributes to the disparity. In 2021, in southern Africa, 63.8% of women with cervical cancer were living with HIV, as were 27.4% of women in eastern Africa.

Insights From an OB/GYN and Cardiologist on Hormonal Contraceptive Selection

Contemporary OB/GYN | 10 April 2023

When I'm talking about hormonal methods of contraception, I first want to educate patients about what kind of hormones we're talking about and what each of these hormones do, meaning that a lot of patients don't understand that it's the progestin component of birth control that prevents them from getting pregnant. Estrogen is sometimes added to birth control for better cycle control. The 2 methods do work well together, but the progestin component is the most important, which is why we can have methods that just have progestin in it. Over time, formulations of birth control have changed a lot. The progestins that we use have changed in their doses. The amount of estrogen we use has been lowered, which is safer for everyone, but there are still different risk profiles for using both of these hormones.

Adolescent girls, teenage mothers in Katwe tipped on reproductive health

New Vision | 10 April 2023

Adolescent girls and teenage mothers residing in Kampala's Katwe slum have been empowered with knowledge on sexual reproductive health and rights and how to prevent themselves from contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day (#NYHAAD) 2023

Poz | 10 April 2023

Monday, April 10, marks the annual National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day (#NYHAAD) 2023. An opportunity to educate the public about the impact of HIV on youth, NYHAAD is spearheaded by a collective that's part of Advocates for Youth, a national nonprofit that works to ensure young people have the tools and power to protect themselves against HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancy. According to federal data from 2021, young people under age 24 accounted for 19% of new HIV diagnoses, or about one in five new cases.

Gender Differences of the Effect of Vaccination on Perceptions of COVID-19 and Mental Health in Japan

MDPI Vaccines | 10 April 2023

Eiji Yamamura, Youki Kohsaka, Yoshiro Tsutsui and Fumio Ohtake

Vaccination has been promoted to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Vaccination is expected to reduce the probability of and alleviate the seriousness of COVID-19 infection. Accordingly, this might significantly change an individual's subjective well-being and mental health. We observed the same individuals on a monthly basis from March 2020 to September 2021 in all parts of Japan. Then, large sample panel data (N = 54,007) were independently constructed. Using the data, we compared the individuals' perceptions of COVID-19, subjective well-being, and mental health before and after vaccination. Furthermore, we compared the effect of vaccination on the perceptions of COVID-19 and mental health for females and males. We used the fixed-effects model to control for individual time-invariant characteristics. The major findings were as follows: First, the vaccinated people perceived the probability of getting infected and the seriousness of COVID-19 to be lower than before vaccination.

Parental knowledge and attitudes toward HIV preventive treatment for their adolescent children

Medical express | 11 April 2023

HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), a daily regimen of two medications in a single pill, could prevent many new HIV infections, especially in at-risk populations. For example, research shows PrEP could prevent around 70 percent of new HIV infections in adolescent cisgender sexual minority males (ASMM) and transgender and gender diverse adolescents (TGDA), populations that are disproportionately affected by the disease. However, despite growing awareness of PrEP among ASMM/TGDA, uptake of the treatment is still less than 5 percent.

Digital breast tomosynthesis improves cancer screening performance in community practice

News medical life science | 11 April

Researchers have found that digital breast tomosynthesis (DBT) has improved breast cancer screening performance in community practice and identifies more invasive cancers, compared to digital mammography. In addition, radiologists' interpretive performance improved with DBT. The results of the study were published today in *Radiology*, a journal of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA). "Our study demonstrated that more radiologists in U.S. community practice are meeting recommended performance standards with digital breast tomosynthesis than they did with digital mammography," said lead author Christoph I. Lee, M.D., professor of radiology at the University of Washington (UW) School of Medicine in Seattle, director of the Northwest Screening and Cancer Outcomes Research Enterprise at UW, and adjunct professor of health systems and population health at the UW School of Public Health. "This is good news for women and breast cancer screening, as digital breast tomosynthesis has quickly become the most popular breast cancer screening modality in the U.S."

The blind women detecting early stage breast cancer in India

BBC News | 11 April 2023

Only 1% of women in India have ever attended a breast-cancer screening programme. A team of blind and partially sighted women are working to change that, one highly sensitive examination at a time. In a bare room in a remote government-run primary health centre in Vapi, a city in the south-west Indian state of Gujarat, Meenakshi Gupta holds a diagram of a woman's breast with five Braille-marked orientation tapes pasted on it. Speaking to the woman sitting on the bed, she says: "I'll paste these skin-friendly tapes on your breast and use my fingertips to check it for any abnormalities."

FOOD SAFETY: HOW LOADSHEDDING CAN HURT YOUR HEALTH

Health-e News | 11 April 2023

As South Africa experiences stage five load shedding once again today, the potential health risks associated with power cuts are at the forefront of people's minds. With concerns about food safety mounting, experts are warning that consuming food stored in the fridge during extended periods of load shedding could lead to foodborne illnesses. In an interview with Health-e News, Epidemiologist Phuthi Sekwadi from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) explains that foodborne diseases can be caused by a variety of germs, including bacteria, viruses, and parasites, as well as chemicals. However, cold temperatures can slow the growth of harmful bacteria. Therefore, storing food at a consistent temperature of five degrees celsius is crucial to minimise the risk of foodborne illnesses.

Meet Andy Gray, the 'insider's insider' of SA drug policy

Bhekisisa | 11 April 2023

Finding Andrew Gray was not easy. We had planned to meet at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Nelson R. Mandela School of Medicine off Berea's Umbilo Road, but my phone died en route and the screen of the newish digital directory in the medical building gave me an Eskom-lobotomised blank stare. I pleadingly asked a well-groomed young man in turquoise scrubs if he knew Gray. "He's the pharmacist, isn't he? Very highly regarded. Follow me," he said, and we walked together into the Main building, arriving outside a double door below the words THERAPEUTICS AND MEDICINES MANAGEMENT.

'Morning After' Antibiotics Lower Risks for Prevalent STIs

Health News | 11 April 2023

A recent clinical study suggests that a "morning after" antibiotic could diminish the risk of common STIs for high-risk individuals. Taking the antibiotic, called doxycycline, within 72 hours of having unprotected intercourse could lower the risk of three common STIs — gonorrhoea, chlamydia, and syphilis — by two-thirds among high-risk people, including gay and bisexual men and transgender women who were

diagnosed with HIV or are on medication to prevent HIV.

WHO Needs to Explore Incentives for Flexible Donations

Health Policy Watch | 11 April 2023

Encouraging donors that make voluntary contributions to the World Health Organization's (WHO) budget to enable these to be flexibly allocated rather than ringfenced for specific programmes might be more effective to "resolve the structural defect of WHO's funding model than periodically calling for more assessed contributions from member states". This is according to a new paper published in the BMJ, which reveals that 88% of WHO's biennial programme budget comes from "voluntary contributions" – almost 10% higher than the four-fifths that the organisation claims on its website.

[LISTEN] The world's biggest HIV & TB programme has a new goal: Happiness

Bhekisisa | 11 April 2023

The health department wants to improve South Africans' quality of life, including making it easier to get medicines that treat anxiety, depression and substance use disorders. This is according to the government's new five-year (2023-2028) action plan for HIV, tuberculosis (TB) and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Mental health, HIV and TB operate in an endless loop. Anxious and depressed people are more likely to become infected with HIV or TB than others, because they have a higher chance of engaging in risky behaviours such as unprotected sex or smoking. People with HIV and TB are also more likely to battle with their mental health, which can make it more harder for them to get the treatment they need, or to keep taking their medication daily.

Currently, professional nurses cannot legally prescribe psychiatric medicines in South Africa, so the country's nursing laws must change before this plan can become a reality, even though the HIV plan is short of more than R7.2-billion to achieve its goals by 2028.

Proliferation, not replication: HIV is lifelong because infected cells divide, not only because they infect others

Aidsmap | 11 April 2023

A poster and a talk both presented at the recent Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI 2023) dampened down expectations that a cure for HIV may soon be possible using less risky and expensive methods than the stem-cell transplants that have so far cured five people (see this report for the latest). Dr Natalie McMyn of Johns Hopkins University has found that, although during the first few years on antiretroviral therapy (ART) the number of cells capable of producing viable HIV (if ART is stopped) shrinks, in people taking ART continuously for a longer time, the size of this reservoir of virally-productive cells declines no more and may even slowly start to increase.

Namibia: New HIV Medicine for Children Saves More Lives

Zawya | 11 April 2023

John* plays quietly on the floor as his caregiver looks proudly on. Healthy and growing, John is the perfect example of a thriving 3-year-old. However, this was not always the case. John was infected with HIV at birth, and despite being put on the HIV treatment available at the time, the virus was not suppressed in his body. "Every time we visited the clinic for a check-up, I would cry" his caregiver explains. "I was giving him his medicine, but it wasn't working. I didn't know what I was doing wrong." Some of the older HIV medicines are less pleasant to take, as well as being less effective than newer medicines at controlling HIV, meaning that even with medication, children are not able to fight and suppress the virus in their body.

England's health service hit by 'catastrophic' doctors' strike

News24 | 11 April 2023

The public health service in England was on Tuesday braced for "the most disruptive industrial action" in its history as junior doctors walk out over pay and working conditions. The National Health Service (NHS) has been hit by waves of strikes in recent months as soaring inflation eats into wages and pandemic backlogs coupled with staff shortages increase workloads.

Prevalence, Awareness, Treatment, Control of Hypertension, and Availability of

Hypertension Services for Patients Living With Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA): A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

Cureus | 11 April 2023

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is faced with a dual burden of hypertension and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). In this review we sought to determine the prevalence, awareness, and control of hypertension among persons living with HIV (PLHIV), and the availability of hypertension services at the HIV care points in SSA. We searched the PubMed, Embase, Scopus, Cochrane library, Global index Medicus, African Journal online, and WHO Institutional Repository for Information Sharing (IRIS) for studies on the epidemiology of hypertension, and hypertension services for PLHIV in SSA.

New STI prevention findings are out – we unpack what they mean for South Africa

Daily Maverick | 12 April 2023

In 2022, Spotlight reported that taking a widely available antibiotic after condomless sex can reduce the risk of contracting three different sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The antibiotic, doxycycline, was found to significantly reduce the risk of men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women developing chlamydia, gonorrhoea, and syphilis in a study conducted in San Francisco and Seattle in the US. (Spotlight previously reported on the state of gonorrhoea and syphilis in South Africa.)

WHO reports first death from H3N8 bird flu virus

IOL | 12 April 2023

China has recorded the first death due to avian influenza A(H3N8) virus, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Wednesday. China, on March 27, notified the WHO of an H3N8 virus infection in a 56-year-old woman. The woman from Guangdong province fell ill due to the virus on February 22 and was admitted to hospital for severe pneumonia on March 3. She subsequently died on March 16, the global health body said in a statement.

FULLY FUNDING HIV RESPONSE KEY TO SAVING LIVES

Health-e News | 13 April 2023

Fully financing the HIV response in Africa to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 will save millions of lives and improve economic outcomes. But governments must act immediately. That's the message from new research and analysis conducted by Economist Impact in 13 African countries, including South Africa. The report titled A triple dividend: The health, social, and economic gains from financing the HIV response in Africa, compiled by UNAIDS reveals that fully financing the HIV response will not only save lives but also produce substantial health, social, and economic gains.

STI Infections on the rise – experts warn of impending public health crisis

IOL | 13 April 2023

In recent years, the number of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) has been on the rise, and the Covid-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the problem. New data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has revealed that more than 2.5 million cases of STIs were reported in 2021 alone, representing a 7% increase from the previous year.

Ghana first to approve 'world-changer' malaria vaccine

BBC News | 13 April 2023

Ghana is the first country to approve a new malaria vaccine that has been described as a "world-changer" by the scientists who developed it. The vaccine - called R21 - appears to be hugely effective, in stark contrast to previous ventures in the same field. Ghana's drug regulators have assessed the final trial data on the vaccine's safety and effectiveness, which is not yet public, and have decided to use it. The World Health Organization is also considering approving the vaccine.

Is a bigger cholera outbreak coming for Gauteng's townships?

Bhekisisa | 13 April 2023

In late March, three people who participated in a baptism ceremony in the part of the Jukskei River that runs through the Gauteng townships of Diepsloot and Alexandra, fell ill with a disease that residents in South Africa's leafy middle-class suburbs are mostly unfamiliar with. Cholera causes a runny stool, and is spread when people drink water or eat food contaminated with a type of bacteria from the faeces of an

infected person.

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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.

USAID High Potential Grants for NGO-led Development Projects in 2023

Deadline: 11 May 2023

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has launched new grant opportunities to support organizations, individuals, and communities worldwide. Check out the list below and start applying!

Sub-Saharan Africa Women in Science - Call for Application 2023

To submit applications/nominations for this program, you must be logged in to your account. If you are unable to access the form once you are logged in, please refer to the "How do I apply for a program?" section of the FAQ.

Call for Application: Africa CDC – Pathogen Genomics and Bioinformatics Fellowship Program

The Africa CDC – Pathogen Genomics and Bioinformatics Fellowship Program is a continental workforce development program targeting national public health institutions and laboratories in the African Union Member States to improve the use of pathogen genomic data for outbreak detection and disease surveillance. The fellowship program is implemented in partnership with the African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM), and regional centers of excellence.

Who should apply:

The program is open to National public health institutes (NPHIs) and National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) personnel who wish to gain experience in NGS sequencing or analyzing pathogen genomic sequence data. Applicants should have a minimum of BSc degree and be a citizen of the African Union Member States.

Fellowship Program:

- The fellowship has two tracks – i) a wet-lab track focusing of end-to-end protocols for next-generation sequencing of pathogens; and ii) a dry-lab track with a focus on public health bioinformatics data analytics, interpretation, and reporting.
- The fellowship program aims to support technical experts and future leaders in public health pathogen genomics and bioinformatics in Africa.
- Training led by continent-based educational and professional subject matter experts
- Training at State-of-the-art facilities across the continent
- Multilingual fellowship program

The fellowship program has the following objectives:

- To train pathogen genomics and bioinformatics workforce to improve outbreak detection, investigation & disease surveillance in Africa
- To contribute to strengthening the prevention, preparedness, surveillance, and control of infectious diseases while supporting the implementation of Africa's New Public Health Order
- To contribute to knowledge and technology transfers and capacity building within and between African Union Member States

Potential candidates and host institutions:

- We are anticipating at least 25 fellows for the 2023 cohort
- 15 host institutions across Africa. Applicants should provide evidence of the host institution's agreement to accept the fellow for the duration of the fellowship period. Africa CDC and ASLM will support fellows to identify host institutions.
- Only complete applications shall be evaluated by an independent selection committee and the outcome communicated to the applicants

Before applying read the documents below:

More details on the fellowship program

- **Information Booklet – Arabic**
- **Information Booklet – English**
- **Information Booklet – French**
- **Information Booklet – Portuguese**

How to apply:

- All interested participants should fill in the online application form based on the selected languages:
- Application form – English – <https://bit.ly/3KrHk9P>
- Application form – French – <https://bit.ly/3Mi6sRJ>

Application deadline: Friday, April 28, 2023, 5:00 PM (EAT)

Start of the fellowship: June 2023

Contact Information: For all inquiries, please contact: **Africa CDC – Africa PGI Help Desk**

**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.

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Reaching the 95-95-95 targets: How can industry contribute?

Learning from both the success and failures towards reaching the 2020 targets is essential to increase the chance of ending AIDS as a global public health threat by 2030. Success will require commitment from all stakeholders in the HIV response. The Industry Liaison Forum at IAS – the International AIDS Society – is organizing a series of online roundtables to explore important gaps and how the biomedical industry can actively contribute to achieving the 95-95-95 target by 2025.

The series will have three events, each focusing on one of the specific 95-95-95 targets:

Session 1: "HIV testing strategies to reach key populations"

Session 2: "Ensuring linkage to and retention in care"

Session 3: "Overcoming global challenges: Achieving and sustaining viral suppression"

Time:

Apr 18, 2023 04:00 PM

May 4, 2023 04:00 PM

May 23, 2023 04:00 PM

Time shows in Zurich

The 5th Paediatric and Adolescent HIV Learning Collaborative for Africa (PAHLCA) Meeting in Maputo Mozambique

Dates: 7 - 8 May 2023

Time: 9:00pm - 5:00pm

The Paediatric and Adolescent HIV Learning Collaborative for Africa (PAHLCA) is hosting its first face-to-face event in Maputo from 7-8 May 2023. With the theme "Prevention of Vertical Transmission of HIV: A Key Pivot in Ending Paediatric HIV and AIDS," PAHLCA aims to:

1. Fostering learning, innovation, and collaboration among MOH programming teams and partners in African countries.
2. Providing a platform for sharing guidelines, implementation frameworks, curricula, toolkits, job aids, and client/caregiver information/education/communication materials that can be used to improve paediatric and adolescent HIV programs.
3. Maintaining an updated directory of Ministry of Health paediatric and adolescent HIV focal persons to facilitate communication, coordination, and sharing across countries.
4. Facilitating networking among country teams to form research collaborations for multi-country studies to improve paediatric and adolescent HIV services.

South African Nursing Council Indaba

Date: 18–19 May 2023

The South African Nursing Council (SANC) is pleased to welcome you to this key event where we will

focus on The Future of Nursing. The SANC is a statutory body entrusted to set and maintain standards of Nursing Education and Practice in the Republic of South Africa, to protect the public. It is an autonomous, financially independent, statutory body operating under the Nursing Act, 2005 (Act No. 33 of 2005). The Council of the SANC is constituted in terms of the Nursing Act, 2005 (Act No. 33 of 2005). The tenure of the current and 16th Council of the SANC is from 2018 – 2023 and will end in August 2023. The Indaba program thus contains a focus on the milestones achieved by the 16th Council, and in addition, provides a wide variety of topics that affect Nursing as a whole.

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Health System Strengthening (HSS) Unit: Facility Team Leader

Closing Date: 2023-04-18 16:30

Health System Strengthening (HSS) Unit: Driver Mobilisers (x12): GlobalVAX Project

Closing Date: 2023-04-19 16:30

Health System Strengthening (HSS) Unit: Professional Nurse: GlobalVAX Project

Closing Date: 2023-04-19 16:30

CALLING ON COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS TO IMPLEMENT COMMUNITY MOBILISATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR THE PREVENTION, ACTION AND CONTROL OF CERVICAL CANCER IN ZULULAND

Closing Date: 2023-04-28 16:30

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hst@hst.org.za

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