

HST Bulletin_17 November 2023

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CATEGORIES

[Academic and Peer Reviewed Articles](#)[Recent Public Health News](#)[Training and Resources](#)[Publications and Reports](#)[Conferences and Events](#)[Job Opportunities](#)

ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

How a menu of adherence support strategies facilitated high adherence to HIV prevention products among adolescent girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa: a mixed methods analysis

Journal of the International AIDS Society | 7 November 2023

Sarah T. Roberts, Noah Mancuso, Kristin Williams, Hadijah Kalule Nabunya, Hlengiwe Mposula, et al.

Effective use of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has been low among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in sub-Saharan Africa. The MTN-034/REACH trial offered AGYW a menu of adherence support strategies and achieved high adherence to both daily oral PrEP and the monthly dapivirine vaginal ring. Understanding how these strategies promoted product use could inform the design of adherence support systems in programmatic settings.

Impact of point-of-care HIV viral load and targeted drug resistance mutation testing on viral suppression among Kenyan pregnant and postpartum women: results from a prospective cohort study (Opt4Mamas)

Journal of the International AIDS Society | 8 November 2023

Rena C. Patel, Patrick Oyaro, Katherine K. Thomas, Garoma Wakjira Basha, et al.

Lack of viral suppression (VS) among pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV poses challenges for maternal and infant health, and viral load (VL) monitoring via centralized laboratory systems faces many barriers. We aimed to determine the impact of point-of-care (POC) VL and targeted drug resistance mutation (DRM) testing in improving VS among pregnant and postpartum women on antiretroviral therapy.

Efficacy and safety of therapies for COVID-19 in pregnancy: a systematic review and meta-analysis

BMC Infectious Diseases | 9 November 2023

Francesco Di Gennaro, Giacomo Guido, Luisa Frallonardo, Francesco Vladimiro Segala, Rosalba De et al.

Clinical evidence suggests that pregnant women are more vulnerable to COVID-19, since they are at increased risk for disease progression and for obstetric complications, such as premature labor, miscarriage, preeclampsia, cesarean delivery, fetal growth restriction and perinatal death. Despite this evidence, pregnant women are often excluded from clinical trials, resulting in limited knowledge on COVID-19 management. The aim of this systematic review and meta-analysis is to provide better evidence on the efficacy and safety of available COVID-19 treatment in pregnant women.

Factors for hesitancy towards vaccination against COVID-19 among the adult population in Puducherry, India – a cross sectional study

BMC Public Health | 10 November 2023

Raja Jeyapal Dinesh, Rajendran Dhanalakshmi, Priskilla Johnson Jency, Adinarayanan Srividya, Balakrishnan Vijayakumar et al.

accine hesitancy is a complex phenomenon that threatens global health. Present-day communication technology has paved the way for self-education but also contributed to the infodemic surrounding vaccination. This has resulted in pockets of people who are reluctant, refuse recommended vaccinations, or choose to delay being vaccinated. The present study was designed to estimate the magnitude of hesitancy towards the COVID-19 vaccination and determine its associated factors in the community.

Evaluation of multiple data sources for predicting increased need for HIV prevention among cisgender women: understanding missed opportunities for Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

BMC Infectious Diseases | 9 November 2023

Amy K. Johnson, Samantha Devlin, Sadia Haider, Cassandra Oehler, Juan Rivera, et al.

Ciswomen constitute a disproportionately low percentage of pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prevention (PrEP) users compared to men. Despite PrEP's effectiveness, women are 5.25 times less likely to take PrEP than men. Identifying women who have increased reasons for HIV prevention and educating and offering PrEP to these women is crucial to reducing HIV transmission and overall health equity. However, the best method of identifying women at highest risk of acquiring HIV remains unknown. This study aimed to identify common HIV risk factors and data sources for identifying these common factors (e.g., electronic medical record data, open source neighborhood data), as well as potential intervention points and missed opportunities for PrEP linkage.

Prevalence of risk factors for human immunodeficiency virus among sexually active women in Rwanda: a nationwide survey

BMC Public Health | 10 November 2023

Joseph Kawuki, Lilian Nuwabaine, Angella Namulema, John Baptist Asiimwe, Quraish Sserwanja, et al.

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) remains a global health burden, and despite the advancements in antiretroviral therapy and various strategies employed to curb HIV infections, the incidence of HIV remains disproportionately high among women. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the prevalence of the risk factors for the acquisition of HIV among sexually active women in Rwanda.

Association between psychological discomforts and sleep quality among people living with HIV/AIDS

Aids Research and Therapy | 11 November 2023

Mohammad Ebrahimzadeh Mousavi, Safieh Mohammad Nejad, Maryam Shafaati, Rosa Mykyta-Chomsky, Samaneh Akbarpour et al.

Psychological discomfort and sleep problems are considered separate disorders. Due to the high prevalence of both disorders among people living with HIV (PLWH), this study was designed to evaluate how those challenges are present among PLWH.

Readmission rates in HIV-associated burkitt lymphoma patients in the USA: a nationwide readmission database (NRD) analysis

Aids Research and Therapy | 11 November 2023

Ashley M. Tuin, Clare M. Wieland, Elizabeth J. Dort, Danielle B. Dilsaver & Manasa Velagapudi

People with human immunodeficiency virus have an increased risk of developing AIDS-defining malignancies including Burkitt lymphoma. Survival outcomes in HIV-associated Burkitt lymphoma remain worse than non-HIV-associated Burkitt lymphoma, despite widespread implementation of antiretroviral therapy. We aimed to determine the association between HIV status and risk for 30-day and 90-day readmission in the US after index hospitalization for Burkitt lymphoma.

Beyond the scars: a qualitative study on the experiences of mastectomy among young women with breast cancer in a country with crisis

BMC Women's Health | 13 November 2023

Shaza Hasan, Keng Sheng Chew, Rekaya Vincent Balang and Shirly Siew Ling Wong

As breast cancer incidence rises among younger women, there is a knowledge gap regarding the emotional, physical, and social effects of mastectomy, specifically in a crisis-affected country such as Syria. This study aimed to explore these effects on young women with breast cancer in Syria, taking into consideration the cultural significance of a woman's breast as part of her feminine identity.

Qualitative study of barriers and facilitators to HIV detection and treatment among women who inject drugs during the war against Ukraine

Aids Research and Therapy | 13 November 2023

Olena Karagodina, Oksana Kovtun, Myroslava Filippovych and Oleksandr Neduzhko

The Russian Federation's invasion in Ukraine has resulted [in] social hardship, millions of internally displaced persons, the destruction of medical infrastructure, and limited access to HIV services. There is no available information regarding the impact of the war on the HIV treatment cascade among women who inject drugs (WWID) in Ukraine. In this study, we examine the barriers and facilitators of HIV detection, initiation of treatment, and adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) among WWID.

Device-related infection and mortality in patients with chronic kidney disease receiving cardiac implantable electronic devices: a propensity score-matched cohort study

BMC Infectious Diseases | 13 November 2023

Po-Jui Wu, Huang-Chung Chen, Yen-Nan Fang, Shaur-Zheng Chong, Yung-Lung Chen, et al.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) was reported to be a risk factor of cardiac implantable electronic device (CIED) infection. The application of bundled skin antiseptic preparation before CIED implantation decreased the risk of CIED infection, even in patients undergoing complex procedures. However, the effect of bundled skin antiseptic preparation to prevent CIED infection in patients with CKD was not tested.

HIV Information Avoidance, HIV Stigma, and Medical Mistrust among Black Sexual Minority Men in the Southern United States: Associations with HIV Testing

AIDS and Behavior | 13 November 2023

Kay A. Simon, Redd Driver, Taylor Rathus, Ayeisha Cole, Jolaade Kalinowski, et al.

Uptake of HIV testing is a critical step in the HIV prevention and treatment care cascade. Barriers to HIV testing, however, remain and innovative research in this area is warranted to improve uptake of testing. As such, we investigated the role of HIV information avoidance - a novel construct potentially related to HIV testing. We analyzed this construct in relation to other factors known to impact HIV testing, namely HIV stigma and medical mistrust. Multiple linear regression analyses indicated that HIV information avoidance was negatively associated with HIV testing, while medical mistrust was positively associated with HIV testing.

Barriers and facilitators of people living with HIV receiving optimal care for

hypertension and diabetes in Tanzania: a qualitative study with healthcare professionals and people living with HIV

BMC Public Health | 13 November 2023

Tiffany E. Gooden, Mkhosi L. Mkhosi, Mwajuma Mdoe, Lusajo J. Mwalukunga, Elizabeth Senkoro et al.

People living with HIV (PLWH) are at a higher risk for developing diabetes and hypertension. Often services are separate for HIV and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), but how this impacts NCD care among PLWH is unknown. We aimed to understand the barriers and facilitators for prevention, early diagnosis and safe effective care for diabetes and hypertension among PLWH.

Demand creation and retention strategies for oral pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prevention among men who have sex with men and transgender women: a systematic review and meta-analysis

BMC Infectious Diseases | 14 November 2023

Nathalia Semizon Guimarães, Laio Magno, Gabriel Marinho Bahia Monteiro, Izabel Cristina Neves Ramos et al.

Men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women (TGW) have a disproportionately higher risk of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection than other groups. Oral HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is an effective prevention tool and should be offered to those at higher risk. Identifying demand creation strategies (DCS) and retention strategies (RS) to improve PrEP persistence is essential to control the HIV epidemic.

Prevalence and sociodemographic predictors of high-risk vaginal human papillomavirus infection: findings from a public cervical cancer screening registry

BMC Public Health | 14 November 2023

Anis-Syakira Jailani, Nur Zaherah Balqis-Ali, Kar Foong Tang, Weng Hong Fun, Shazimah Abdul Samad, et al.

High-risk human papillomavirus (HPV) screening is vital for early cervical cancer detection and treatment. With the introduction of the national cervical cancer screening programme and screening registry in Malaysia, there is a need to monitor population-based HPV screening uptake and high-risk HPV prevalence as part of cervical cancer surveillance.

Are people living with HIV have a low vulnerability to omicron variant infection: results from a cross-sectional study in China

BMC Infectious Diseases | 14 November 2023

Yuting Tan, Songjie Wu, Wei Guo, Jie Liu, Fangzhao Ming, et al.

A surge of more than 80 million Omicron variant infected cases was reported in China less than a month after the "zero COVID" strategy ended on December 7, 2022. In this circumstance, whether people living with HIV (PLWH) in China experience a similar risk is not clear.

“Sex without fear”: exploring the psychosocial impact of oral HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis on gay men in England

Aids Research and Therapy | 14 November 2023

Rosalie Hayes, Will Nutland, Michael Rayment, Sonali Wayal, Vanesa Apea, et al.

Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) experience a high prevalence of psychosocial health problems, such as harmful substance use and depression, as well as being disproportionately affected by HIV. HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) may provide psychosocial benefits beyond its intended purpose of reducing HIV infection. We explore the psychosocial impact of oral PrEP use on gay men in England using qualitative data from the PROUD study. From February 2014 to January 2016, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 40 gay men and one trans woman. Participants were purposively recruited based on trial arm allocation, adherence, and sexual risk behaviours.

Breast conserving surgery versus mastectomy: the effect of surgery on quality of life in breast cancer survivors in Malaysia

BMC Women's Health | 16 November 2023

Maznah Dahlui, Meram Azzani, Nur Aishah Taib, See Mee Hoong, Suniza Jamaris et al.

In the competitive health care environment, patient satisfaction and quality of life (QoL) have become the subject of interest to evaluate the efficacy of therapeutic interventions as we experience improved breast cancer survival in modern times. The knowledge of the long-term effects of surgery on the QoL in breast cancer patients is currently limited in the Asian setting. The purpose of this longitudinal study is to evaluate the QoL of early-stage breast cancer patients undergoing mastectomy and breast-conserving surgery (BCS).

Use of a digital contact tracing system in Singapore to mitigate COVID-19 spread

BMC Public Health | 16 November 2023

Bryan W. K. Chow, Yi Ding Lim, Richard C. H. Poh, Amy Ko, Guo Hao Hong, et al.

Contact tracing has been essential to reducing spread of COVID-19. Singapore leveraged technology to assist with contact tracing efforts using a Bluetooth-based app and token platform called 'TraceTogether'.

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

RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Researchers Call for Incident Pregnancy Planning in HIV Clinical Trials

ThebodyPro | 7 November 2023

Pregnancies occur even when contraceptive use is required for participation in clinical trials involving HIV treatment, especially among younger women in sub-Saharan Africa, a multinational study has found. Planning for this eventuality could allow the collection of data that might not otherwise be available, the study authors state.

Gender-neutral HPV vaccination best at preventing cervical cancer

News from Karolinska Institutet | 8 November 2023

The most effective way to prevent cervical cancer is to give HPV vaccines to both boys and girls, reports a collaborative study involving researchers from Karolinska Institutet published in *Cell, Host and Microbe*. Beside personal immunity, such use of the vaccine also induces a herd immunity that will help to eradicate the carcinogenic virus types more quickly. The human papillomavirus (HPV) comprises over 200 virus types. A viral infection usually clears up on its own, but some HPV types can eventually, after years, give rise to different kinds of cancer, of which cervical cancer is the most common.

Nearly 13% of participants in an African cohort maintain HIV control off treatment

Aidsmap | 9 November 2023

Of over four thousand South African and Zambian participants with HIV who provided samples, nearly a quarter were off treatment and 13% of the latter were found to control the virus. Women were twice as likely to be controllers, while other demographic characteristics did not influence viral control. In the paper published in the *Journal of the International AIDS Society*, the authors also highlight that all controllers were tested for the presence of HIV drugs in their blood to exclude false results.

More evidence that integrase inhibitors don't raise heart disease risk

Aidsmap | 10 November 2023

Integrase inhibitors do not increase the risk of major cardiovascular events such as a heart attack or stroke compared to other types of antiretroviral drug over four years of follow-up, a large multinational study reports in *Lancet HIV*.

CHILDREN ARE A BLIND SPOT IN SOUTH AFRICA'S HIV RESPONSE

Health-e News | 10 November 2023

Only two-thirds of children in South Africa getting treatment for HIV are virally suppressed. Viral suppression is a measure of how well antiretroviral (ARVs) drugs reduce HIV viral load. A high HIV viral load suggests that the person is not taking their treatment constantly, or that the treatment isn't working. Delays in sourcing long-acting, palatable oral ARVs for South Africa's infants and children have been cited as a reason for the low viral load suppression. And, children need an adult caregiver to help them take the medication on a daily basis. This routine gets disrupted every time there's a change in adult caregiving. This, in turn, leads to lower drug adherence.

Government leaders reaffirm their commitment to accelerate HIV prevention efforts to reduce new HIV infections

UNAIDS | 10 November 2023

With just two years left to attain the 2025 HIV prevention target of fewer than 370 000 new HIV infections annually, the world is not on track. In 2022, 1.3 million people became infected with HIV – the urgency to accelerate progress cannot be overemphasized. The Global HIV Prevention Coalition co-convened by UNAIDS and UNFPA ensures a strengthened and sustained political commitment for primary prevention across key policy makers and programme implementers. It includes countries such as Botswana, Cameroon, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda South Africa, and Zimbabwe – which have reduced new HIV infections by more than 70% since 2010.

[LISTEN] The anti-HIV jab is coming to SA. Find out when and how

Bhekisisa | 10 November 2023

In 2022, ViiV Healthcare, the company that makes a revolutionary but expensive HIV prevention injection, announced it was working on a non-profit price for countries such as South Africa. The jab, called CAB-LA (short for long-acting cabotegravir), has to be taken every two months and can lower someone's chances of contracting HIV through sex to virtually zero. It is sold in the US at \$3 700 (close to R70 000) a pop. ViiV, which is based in the United Kingdom, told Bhekisisa it will sell CAB-LA at a non-profit price of £24.70 per jab in 2023 and £23.50 in 2024 (so at between R540 and R570 per shot — you need six per year). The price tag however, excludes distribution costs. Cheaper, generic versions of CAB-LA will only be available in three to seven years.

Call to Action Issued for Education on Lesser-Known Breast Cancer Symptoms

AJMC | 13 November 2023

Nipple discharge was recognized as a symptom of breast cancer by just over half (51%) of respondents—women and men—to a survey administered by The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center/Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute (OSUCCC – James). This and other findings highlight the need for more comprehensive education surrounding breast health and breast cancer, experts emphasize. Other lesser-known symptoms, or subtle changes, indicating breast cancer include pitting/thickening of the breast skin (45% are aware this is a symptom of breast cancer), loss of feeling in the breast (41% are aware), breast indentation when raising an arm (39%), and a retracted, inverted, or downward-pointing nipple (31%). In stark contrast, 93% of adults know that a lump is often a sign of breast cancer—although most breast cancers present with an undetectable lump.

Becoming an HIV Advocate

Poz | 13 November 2023

Over the years, Michelle Lopez, a bisexual woman living with HIV, has shown how resilient, empowered

individuals and communities can serve as agents for positive change. She would know. The daughter of a Black mother and a Latino father, the long-term survivor has overcome racial and ethnic health disparities. Lopez moved to New York City from her native Trinidad in 1979, when she was 16 years old. In 1990, she gave birth to a daughter; soon thereafter, she began to feel sick. When she took her baby to a hospital, a doctor advised Lopez to get tested for HIV. She was taken aback, since at the time, she thought only men who had sex with other men could get the virus. She and her daughter both tested HIV positive.

France on its way to drastically reduce new HIV infections

Aidsmap | 13 November 2023

Drastic decreases in the time it takes people to move through the HIV cascade of care in France are reported in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*. Median time from diagnosis to viral control has been reduced from around eight months to two months, thus shortening the period during which people can pass the virus to others.

DIABETES IS SOUTH AFRICA'S SECOND BIGGEST KILLER DISEASE: HIKING THE SUGAR TAX WOULD HELP

Health-e News | 13 November 2023

Death rates in South Africa have declined slightly during the past few years. But the country faces a steady rise in both death and disability caused by increases in non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and cancer.

Do Weight-Loss Drugs Work for People With HIV?

Poz | 13 November 2023

Popular weight-loss medications, including glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) receptor agonists such as semaglutide (Wegovy) and tirzepatide (Zepbound), look like a promising option for people with HIV who gain weight while taking antiretroviral therapy, according to studies presented at recent conferences. "GLP-1 agonists are revolutionizing the treatment of obesity in the general population, and I have no doubt they will do the same in people with HIV," Rajesh Gandhi, MD, of Harvard Medical School, commented in a *New England Journal of Medicine* conference update.

Scientists invent single rapid test for both HIV and TB

Poz | 14 November 2023

Researchers at Tulane have developed a new and rapid test that can detect both HIV and tuberculosis at the same time with just a small amount of blood. In a paper published in *Clinical Chemistry*, researchers led by Tony Hu, Weatherhead Presidential Chair in Biotechnology Innovation and director of the Center for Cellular and Molecular Diagnostics at Tulane University School of Medicine, describe the new blood-based test that can not only detect the two diseases but also measure their viral and bacterial loads in patients.

Emergency care adapted for pregnant women shows promise

Medical Express | 14 November 2023

Increased vigilance for high blood pressure and diffuse stomach pain. These are some of the characteristics of emergency care adapted for pregnant women and new mothers. The model, which could become clinical routine throughout Sweden, is described in a thesis at the University of Gothenburg.

Delaying cord clamping could save lives of premature babies

News Medical Life Science | 14 November 2023

Delayed cord clamping is now recommended routine practice for babies born at full term. However, whilst previous research, including trials led by University of Sydney, showed potential benefit for premature babies, best practice for this vulnerable group remained uncertain. Until recently, clinicians generally cut the cord of preterm babies immediately so urgent medical care could be given.

In-depth: How do long-acting HIV treatments work?

Spotlight | 14 November 2023

Researchers have been trying to develop antiretroviral medicines that can last for weeks, months or even years per dose. It is thought that such long-acting therapies may eventually end up replacing the daily pills taken by most people living with HIV today.

Study reveals mechanisms underlying non-suppressible HIV viremia

News Medical Life Science | 14 November 2023

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) works by entering specific immune cells and replicating inside them. People with HIV are treated with antiretroviral therapy (ART), which prevents viral replication, but some individuals taking ART continue to have low levels of viral presence in the bloodstream, or viremia. This condition is usually attributed to drug resistance or ineffectiveness of ART, but recent studies have found that low-level viremia can occur even without these driving forces, a condition known as non-suppressible HIV viremia (NSV).

HIV IN KZN: NEW REPORT SHOWS THE MOST VULNERABLE STILL FACE STIGMA AND HOSTILE SERVICES

Health-e News | 14 November 2023

Public health facilities in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) face a shortage of health workers; there are limited pick-up points for HIV treatment; and key populations continue to face hostile attitudes from healthcare workers and a lack of privacy. These are just some of the findings of a new report compiled by Ritshidze, a coalition of non-profit HIV advocacy organisations. The report was launched on Tuesday.

HIV Infection Could Affect Individual's IQ Score

AJMC | 14 November 2023

HIV infection could have a negative influence on an individual's IQ score and gut microbiome based on differences in a patient's neurons, according to a review published in *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience*. HIV infections, although efficiently suppressed through antiretroviral therapy (ART), are still spreading without a cure throughout the world. HIV is known to affect the brain, which could include cognitive, motor, and/or mood problems after being diagnosed. Given these neurological effects, this review aimed to assess how HIV could influence human intelligence interactions through measurements of IQ as well as how HIV could influence the gut microbiome.

Apretude Is an Effective PrEP Option for Transgender Women

Poz | 14 November 2023

Apretude (long-acting cabotegravir) injections administered every two months are a safe and effective pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) option for transgender women, according to an analysis from the HPTN 083 trial published in *The Lancet HIV*. However, the study authors concluded, HIV prevention can't be addressed separately from trans women's social and structural vulnerabilities. Transgender women are at much greater risk for HIV compared with the population at large. Transgender people, who are thought to make up less than 1% of the U.S. population, accounted for 2% of new HIV diagnoses in 2019, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

HIV AMONG TRANS WOMEN IS AT CRISIS LEVELS. DISCRIMINATION IS FUELLING THE FIRE

Health-e News | 15 November 2023

With HIV positivity among urban transgender women in South Africa estimated at 46%, it is becoming increasingly urgent for healthcare workers to undergo sensitivity training. A transgender woman is a person who was assigned the male sex at birth but identifies and lives as woman.

“Zero chance” of meeting goal of ending HIV transmission among UK gay and bisexual men by 2030

Aidsmap | 16 November 2023

Using a computer model, researchers at University College London have found that there is no realistic chance in the UK of reaching the 'Ending AIDS' goal for 2030 that was first set by the United Nations and has since been endorsed by the UK government. The model was able to determine that PrEP and treatment as prevention have contributed equally to reducing HIV infections in gay and bisexual men over the past decade. Condoms made a similar contribution, especially between 2012 and 2016 when PrEP was not easily available. In their paper, published in *The Lancet HIV* this month, Dr Valentina Cambiano and colleagues conclude that if even one of the three methods had not been used as it was, there would have been over twice as many HIV infections last year. If neither PrEP nor treatment as prevention had been scaled up, there would have been three times as many.

Slash the price by three-quarters — government on anti-HIV jab

Bhekisisa | 16 November 2023

The health department says the drug company ViiV Healthcare's non-profit price for their anti-HIV jab, CAB-LA, is four times what it can afford to pay. ViiV says it can sell the jab for between R540 and R570 per shot to donors and low- and middle-income countries. The injection needs to be taken every two months and essentially wipes out someone's chances of contracting HIV through sex. Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia will receive their first US government-sponsored shipments in late November. But South Africa's national health department has not yet decided whether it would be prepared to accept CAB-LA donations.

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

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 NDoH and CSIR Call for Book Chapters

The Emerging South African National Digital Health System: Strategies, Approaches and Experiences

About

The book, a collaboration between NDoH and CSIR, aims to showcase strategies and experiences in developing a National Health Information System that facilitates efficient, personalized healthcare information transfer across various boundaries. Undergoing a double-blind peer review and editing, it serves as a detailed guide to the evolving South African National Digital Health System, reflecting on the substantial research and strategies that have influenced its formation, with a focus on the scholarly depth and validity of the results.

Each chapter, contributing to an enriched discussion, will dissect a specific facet of the system, assisting readers in understanding its integral components and the ensuing challenges and opportunities within the South African Health Ecosystem. Contributions from several authors are encouraged, bringing in diverse perspectives and firsthand experiences to foster a comprehensive narrative on the system's ongoing improvements in the context of South African Digital Health. Opinion pieces in line with the NHI, Digital Health Strategy, and efforts to strengthen the Health System are welcome. Further details can be found in the Submission Guidelines.

IMPORTANT DATES

- SEPTEMBER, 2023: Presentations
- 22 OCTOBER, 2023: Abstract submissions
- 20 NOVEMBER, 2023: Abstract feedback
- 8 FEBRUARY, 2024: Submission of full paper for review
- 15 MARCH, 2024: Final corrected paper submission

SUBMISSION LINK - <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=sadhs24>

Any queries and abstract submissions to: digitalhealth@health.gov.za

Subject: SA National Digital Health System Book

ABSTRACT FORMAT

- Title of the Chapter
- Purpose
- Study design/methodology/approach
- Findings
- Originality/value
- Keywords Author/s

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!

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- 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.

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

PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

The 2022 South African Health Review is available!

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

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the world, and the health sector has been at the forefront of the response. Curated as a supplement to the 2021 edition, which addressed the response of government and the broader health sector to COVID-19, the 2022 South African Health Review provides a platform for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to share their experiences and insights on how they navigated this crisis and build more robust health systems for the future.

The journal encompasses a diverse array of subjects, including reflections on the work of the Ministerial Advisory Committee during COVID-19 and the knowledge gained and lessons learned from these processes. Additionally, it explores the ramifications of COVID-19 on maternal, women, and child health and highlights the gendered implications of the pandemic, revealing that women experienced more pronounced effects of stress, fear, and depression during the lockdown period compared to men.

Commenting on its release, CEO and co-editor of the Review Dr Themba Moeti said that "This edition of the South African Health Review offers promising examples of COVID-19 response, mitigation and recovery strategies for us to use the emerging lessons to enhance our health system resilience and better prepare for future pandemics."

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

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

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

For more information on the journal and to access the latest edition, visit

<https://www.hst.org.za/publications/Pages/SAHR2022.aspx>

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

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

“BREAKING BARRIERS: REPOSITIONING AFRICA IN THE GLOBAL HEALTH ARCHITECTURE”

When: 27-30 November 2023

Where: Lusaka, Zambia

For more information, go to: https://cphia2023.com/?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=PaidSearch&utm_campaign=CPHIA_Registration_PaidSearch&gclid=CjwKCAjwkY2qBhBDEiwAoQXK5VBuAUtzfnxAso8-24EYikJqvfWPbmtDrngfvHMXf5EOGa23ZE7YRoClpMQAvD_BwE

18th International Congress of Immunology

When: 27 November - 2 December 2023

Where: Cape Town

For more information go to: <https://iuis2023.org/south-africa/>

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

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Research and Implementation Science (RIS) Unit Data Scientist

Closing date: 20 November 2023

[https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Research-and-Implementation-Science-\(RIS\)-Unit--DATA-SCIENTIST.aspx](https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Research-and-Implementation-Science-(RIS)-Unit--DATA-SCIENTIST.aspx)

Corporate Services Unit Finance Manager - Durban

Closing date: 21 November 2023

<https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Corporate-Services-Unit--FINANCE-MANAGER-DURBAN.aspx>

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



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