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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Women's experiences on the use of Implanon as a contraceptive method in a selected primary healthcare facility in KwaZulu-Natal

Curationis | 8 November 2021

Lucky Mgobhozi, Pretty Mbeje, Gugu Mchunu

The South African department of health recently introduced subdermal Implanon contraceptive implant with the aim to reduce teenage pregnancy and maternal mortality. First used in all public healthcare facilities across the country since early 2014, this method of contraception has been described as highly effective. However, some women have reported unbearable side effects, forcing them to remove the contraceptive implant early before its expiry date. Negligible emphasis has been placed on staff training and development to equip the nurses with new protocol and policies on Implanon.

Anthropometric predictors for cardiovascular risk in Indigenous women in Mexico: an inexpensive alternative in rural clinical practice

Remote and Rural Health | 12 November 2021

María Del Carmen Guzmán Márquez, Ivonne Vizcarra-Bordí, TERESA OCHOA RIVERA, Alejandra Benitez-Arciniega

Cardiovascular diseases are one of the leading causes of death in Mexico. Although the use of anthropometric indicators facilitates the diagnosis of cardiovascular risk (CVR), their use is limited in rural communities with limited resources. This article evaluated and demonstrated predictive capacity of three anthropometric indexes for CVR in Indigenous women in Mexico from Matlatzinca ethnic group.

100 years of insulin: a technical success but an access failure

The Lancet | 13 November 2021

Editorial

The isolation of insulin in 1921 and its subsequent delivery to a 14-year-old boy in a diabetic coma in Toronto in 1922 was a ground-breaking scientific and clinical achievement that has transformed diabetes care and is celebrated in this themed issue of *The Lancet*. But despite the altruistic sentiments of the discoverers—Banting, Best, Collip, and Macleod—that “insulin belongs to the world”, the lack of access to insulin over the past 100 years reflects an appalling policy and implementation failure.

Obesity in young South African women living with HIV: A cross-sectional analysis of risk factors for cardiovascular disease

Plos One | 15 November 2021

Sherika Hanley, Dhayendre Moodley, Mergan Naidoo

Young South African women are faced with a dual epidemic of HIV and obesity, placing them at a high risk of developing atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (CVD). We sought to determine the prevalence of CVD risk factors in a cohort of reproductive-aged South African women living with HIV (WLHIV).

The influence of HIV infection and antiretroviral treatment on pulmonary function in individuals in an urban setting in sub-Saharan Africa

Southern African Journal of HIV Medicine | 15 November 2021

O van den Berg, E Shaddock, S Stacey, C Feldman, R Barth, et al

Background: With the roll-out of antiretroviral treatment (ART), the life expectancy of people with HIV and, hence, morbidity from non-communicable diseases, including pulmonary diseases, have increased.

Objectives: This research study aims to investigate whether HIV infection and ART use are associated with pulmonary function, given the high frequency of pulmonary infections, including tuberculosis (TB), associated with HIV. **Method:** Adults living with HIV (ART-naïve, on first- or second-line ART), and age and sex matched HIV-negative controls were included in a cross-sectional study in Johannesburg, South Africa. Spirometry was performed to determine lung function, measuring the forced expiratory volume in one second (FEV1), the forced vital capacity (FVC) and the FEV1/FVC ratio before (pre), and after (post), short-acting bronchodilator. The association of HIV infection and ART use with pulmonary function was analysed using linear regression models, adjusting for age, gender, body surface area (BSA), employment, education, smoking and TB.

Results: Overall, 548 participants (62% women) were included with a mean age of 38 (standard deviation [s.d.] 9.5) years. No effect of HIV or ART on post-FEV1 was observed in adjusted analysis. Additional adjustment for TB resulted in a higher post-FEV1 in participants on ART compared with HIV-negative participants, whereas TB was associated with a lower FEV1. No effect of HIV and ART on post-FEV1/FVC was observed. **Conclusion:** HIV infection and ART use were not associated with reduced pulmonary function in this urban African population. Tuberculosis showed a mediating effect on the association between HIV, ART and pulmonary function.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women's prospective acceptability of two biomedical HIV prevention approaches in Sub Saharan Africa: A multisite qualitative analysis using the Theoretical Framework of Acceptability

Plos One | 16 November 2021

Mandeep Sekhon, Ariane van der Straten

Across sub-Saharan Africa prevalence of HIV amongst women remains disproportionately high, with women and adolescent girls accounting for 59% of all new infections. Amongst pregnant and breastfeeding (P/BF) women in some settings, the incidence rate accounts for up to 30% of new HIV infections. Additionally, HIV infection during pregnancy and breastfeeding has implications for maternal health, increasing the risk of mother to child transmission. To address women's vulnerability to HIV during pregnancy and breastfeeding, evaluating HIV prevention methods that can be initiated and used by the women themselves are important. This includes daily oral Pre- Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and monthly vaginal rings.

Global red and processed meat trade and non-communicable diseases

BMJ Global Health | 16 November 2021

Min Gon Chung, Yingjie Li and Jianguo Liu

Since the world has begun to pursue sustainable diets for both human health and environmental sustainability, various guidelines consistently recommend a diet with fewer animal-based foods and more plant-based ones. However, it would still be hard to achieve such sustainable diets even if the increase in red and processed meat consumption by individual consumers were small. With continuous urbanization and income growth, global red and processed meat trade has exponentially increased to meet rising meat consumption. Red and processed meat trade plays a substantial role in balancing nutrition and meat availability across the world, but it causes unintended environmental and health consequences worldwide. Red meat production for export exerts significant pressures on land-use change and biodiversity loss in exporting countries. Furthermore, increases in red and processed meat consumption

via trade can exacerbate the spread of diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in importing countries. Thus, rapid increases in global red and processed meat trade complicate efforts to achieve sustainable diets.

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

How protein-based COVID vaccines could change the pandemic

Nature | 8 November 2021

Pamela Sherry is eager to become immunized against COVID-19. But she has put off getting a jab. “I believe vaccines work,” she says. “I want the protection.” Yet she is prone to acute immune reactions and has blood circulation problems, so she has concerns about the shots available in the United States, where she lives — those based on messenger RNA (mRNA) and viral-vector technologies. Although safe for most of the population, they have been linked to rare but potentially severe side effects, including heart inflammation and blood clots.

Press release: Bold, new commitments from around the world to put gender equality at the forefront of climate action at COP26

UN Women | 9 November 2021

Countries and non-state actors have come forward with new commitments and initiatives that will strengthen the resilience of women and girls in the face of climate-related impacts, while empowering them within climate action, at today's COP26 Gender Day in Glasgow. These new commitments build upon in excess of USD 139 million in pledges already made towards the UN Women-convened Action Coalition on Feminist Action for Climate Justice, launched at the Generation Equality Forum in Paris in July.

Family focus shows promise for TB prevention

Spotlight News | 14 November 2021

Tucked away outside Cape Town, Khayelitsha is a township that is home to about half a million people. Many families in the area share small corrugated zinc houses with limited access to basic services such as clean water and sanitation. It is in such areas that diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) spread rapidly. According to Dr Anja Reuter from Doctors without Borders (MSF), there are about 170 to 200 cases of rifampicin-resistant tuberculosis (RR-TB) per year in this area, with 70% co-infected with HIV. Rifampicin is a key drug in the treatment of drug-susceptible forms of TB.

Most South Africans do not know they have diabetes

Health-E News | 14 November 2021

Around 50 percent of South Africans living with diabetes are unaware they have the disease, and the public health system cannot afford to treat them. Today is World Diabetes Day. The Inaugural Diabetes Summit heard that South Africa should focus on preventing diabetes in the population as the country cannot afford to treat everyone. It cost an estimated R2.7-billion to treat those who were diagnosed with diabetes in 2018.

Mostly men: Why they die young

Bhekisisa | 15 November 2021

Boys and men are more likely than women to die as teenagers or young adults, according to new research that warns the gender gap in mortality rates for that age group is widening in many countries. In 2019, nearly two thirds (61%) of all deaths among 10- to 24-year-olds worldwide occurred in males, said the research published in *The Lancet* last week. Since 1950, mortality rates in males aged 10 to 24 have decreased by 15.3%, lagging behind improvements in female mortality rates, which decreased by 30% in this age group.

Vax Champs fight hesitancy

Health-e News | 15 November 2021

The health department said the widespread misinformation discourages South Africans from vaccinating. Campaign coordinator Pauline Maketa believes that speaking to vax champs people would encourage

those who are hesitant.

Don't hide children with hearing impairments

Health-e News | 15 November 2021

A teacher with extensive experience educating children with hearing impairments has urged parents to seek professional help for their kids sooner rather than later. Maria NemaKonde has taught at the Tshilidzini School for Special Education, just outside Thohoyandou in Limpopo, for 10 years. She said it is difficult for parents to accept and understand that their child might have a hearing or speech impairment. This often results in a delay in seeking professional help. NemaKonde said that it pains her to see children with special needs being denied their right to education. She said parents often choose to hide them at home.

The dark side of skin lighteners

Business Day | 15 November 2021

Women, and probably men, have been using remedies to lighten their skin for centuries. In her book, *Face Paint: The Story of Makeup*, Lisa Eldridge says that remains of the lead used to whiten skin were found in upper-class women's graves in Ancient Greece, and that in Tang Dynasty China, lead pigments were used in cosmetics. White lead is of course the basis of the mixture, known as "Venetian ceruse", that England's Queen Elizabeth I used to create her characteristic white mask. The toxic concoction, known to cause hair loss, is thought to have contributed to her death at 69.

Pfizer Will Allow Its Covid Pill to Be Made and Sold Cheaply in Poor Countries

New York Times | 16 November 2021

Pfizer announced a deal on Tuesday to allow its promising Covid-19 treatment to be made and sold inexpensively in 95 poorer nations that are home to more than half of the world's population. The agreement follows a similar arrangement negotiated by Merck last month, and together the deals have the potential to vastly expand global production of two simple antiviral pills that could alter the course of the pandemic by preventing severe illness from the coronavirus.

Barriers to decolonising educational partnerships in global health

BMJ Global Health | 17 November 2021

J Kulesa and N Afua Brantuo

The energy of the anti-racism movement has brought many countries to a strategic historical juncture, inspiring them to reevaluate the effects of colonialism on the rights, well-being and cultural integrity of peoples in the Global South. As an extension of that process, there has been a surge of interest in decolonising global health partnerships.

In educational global health partnerships, practitioners from high-income countries (HICs) work jointly with practitioners and community members from low/middle-income countries (LMICs) through bidirectional education. Together, partners engage community members and strengthen individual and institutional capacities to provide healthcare. Adopting a 'decolonised' perspective in these partnerships involves dismantling colonial educational structures, addressing western hegemony, and, for indigenous scholars such as Tamale, 'reclaiming our humanity; rebuilding our territorial and bodily integrity (and) reasserting our self-determination'.

Global leaders call for cervical cancer elimination on Day of Action

WHO | 17 November 2021

Today WHO joins advocates around the world to commemorate a landmark Day of Action for Cervical Cancer Elimination and welcome groundbreaking new initiatives to end this devastating disease, which claims the lives of over 300 000 women each year. As with COVID-19, access to lifesaving tools is constrained, with women and adolescent girls in the poorest countries deprived of clinical screening facilities, human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccines and treatments which those in affluent places take for granted.

Immigrants in Joburg claim they are being denied healthcare

News24 | 17 November 2021

Human rights organisations are concerned about policy changes affecting immigrants since the Gauteng health department gazetted it in June last year and issued a circular in May 2020. According to the

organisations, medical care is being denied to asylum seekers and refugees if they are undocumented or have expired permits, unless they can pay upfront fees. Hlengiwe Mtshatsha of Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) said: "The new fee structure is very high and foreign nationals end up being on the highest scale and are required to pay upfront.

Flu cases in summer season show a sharp increase, NICD warns

Times Live | 17 November 2021

There has been a steady increase in the number of influenza cases from the week starting August 23, with a sharp increase in the week beginning November 1 in a number of surveillance sites, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) said on Wednesday. In addition, private laboratories have reported an increase in influenza case detections and the NICD has received reports of clusters of cases in schools and workplaces.

The ABCs of DIY vaccines: Why tech transfer is a big thing

Bhekisisa | 18 November 2021

When it comes to making vaccines, local would be lekker. Yet Africa makes almost none of the jabs it needs locally, which means the continent continues to rely on imports from elsewhere to combat vaccine-preventable diseases. Africa's struggle to secure a steady supply of COVID-19 shots has made it strikingly clear how this dependence on only a few manufacturers is shooting us in the foot – when what we really need are shots in the arm: the World Health Organisation (WHO) projects that only five of the 54 countries in Africa will hit the organisation's target of fully vaccinating 40% of their populations by the end of the year. But Africa's relying on pharmaceutical companies outside of the continent to make its jabs can be turned around.

New modelling shows what to expect from fourth Covid-19 wave in South Africa

BusinessTech | 18 November 2021

South Africa, which has the most confirmed coronavirus cases on the continent, will likely be hit by a fourth wave of infections but its impact probably won't be as severe as during earlier surges, new modelling prepared for the government shows. Sero-prevalence surveys and other data indicate that an estimated 60% to 70% of the population has already contracted Covid-19, which together with vaccinations will provide protection from severe disease, the South African Covid-19 Modelling Consortium said in an online presentation on Wednesday.

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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.

WHO Update | Diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs either when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or

when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Insulin is a hormone that regulates blood sugar. Hyperglycaemia, or raised blood sugar, is a common effect of uncontrolled diabetes and over time leads to serious damage to many of the body's systems, especially the nerves and blood vessels.

Ritshidze State of Health KwaZulu-Natal Report

The KwaZulu-Natal Province State of Health Report has been developed using data from Ritshidze and outlines community priorities for improving HIV, TB and other health services in the province.

New | UNAIDS Survivors website

The inspirational journeys of people who are long-term survivors of HIV.

Introducing BMJ Medicine

Interested in knowing more about BMJ Medicine? You can now learn about the journal's scope in this short video with Dr Sophie Cook.

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PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

KwaZulu-Natal Province State of Health Report

This report has been developed using data from Ritshidze and outlines community priorities for improving HIV, TB and other health services in the province.

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

UN Women | 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

Date: 25 November 2021

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign that kicks off on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day. It was started by activists at the inaugural Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991 and continues to be coordinated each year by the Center for Women's Global Leadership. It is used as an organizing strategy by individuals and organizations around the world to call for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

Global Health Landscape Symposium

Date: 9 – 10 December 2021

Since 2015, Global Health Council has been convening members of its network in Washington, DC for an annual symposium to discuss current trends and calls to action in global health. Over the years, we have acknowledged a "new normal" in global health policy and our responsibility as a community to pursue communication, collaboration, or campaign practices that facilitate meaningful change and shared progress. Those events have led to calls for new narratives and partnerships for USG programs as well as commitments to integrated, country-based investments or plans, in pursuit of UHC and a broader 2030 agenda. Nothing has made these conversations more relevant than the game-changing events of 2020.

Countdown to International Universal Health Coverage Day

Date: 12 December 2021

Everyone, everywhere deserves access to quality essential health services without suffering financial hardship. Universal Health Coverage Day is the annual rallying point for advocates to raise their voices and share the stories of the millions of people still waiting for health, call on leaders to make smarter investments in health and remind the world about the imperative of universal health coverage (UHC).

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING UNIT: UB Clinical Advisor – Zululand District

Closing date: 22 November 2021

HEALTH SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING UNIT: 'Females Rising through Education Support and Health' (FRESH) – Clinical Research Assistant

Closing date: 1 December 2021

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