

HST Bulletin_ 20 September 2024

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CATEGORIES

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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

A decline in tuberculosis diagnosis, treatment initiation and success during the COVID-19 pandemic, using routine health data in Cape Town, South Africa

Plos One | 11 September 2024

Karen Jennings, Martina Lembani, Anneke C. Hesselning, Nyameka Mbula, Erika Mohr-Holland, et al.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) negatively impacted tuberculosis (TB) programs which were already struggling to meet End-TB targets globally. We aimed to quantify and compare diagnosis, treatment initiation, treatment success, and losses along this TB care cascade for drug-susceptible TB in Cape Town, South Africa, prior to and during COVID-19.

IRELAND: Drivers and Facilitators of HIV-Related Stigma in Healthcare Settings in Ireland

AIDS and Behavior | 11 September 2024

Elena Vaughan & András Költő

People living with HIV who experience stigma in healthcare settings are at increased risk for engaging in health avoidance behaviours, suboptimal adherence to antiretroviral therapy, and viral non-suppression. HIV-related stigma erodes trust between patients and healthcare providers, thereby undermining both individual and public health. This study aimed to identify predictors of stigmatising attitudes, stigma practices, and fear of occupational transmission among healthcare workers in the Republic of Ireland. Data were collected from 295 healthcare workers using a standardised tool designed to measure HIV-related stigma.

BOTSWANA: Alcohol misuse within different socio-ecologies in rural communities of Botswana

Plos One | 13 September 2024

Refilwe P. Jeremiah, Masego Katisi and Odireleng M. Shehu

Alcohol-related research in Botswana has rarely used a socio-ecological approach. This article presents a

phenomenological in-depth analysis drawn from community mapping interviews (n = 23) collected among community leaders and service providers in one village in Botswana. The socio-ecological approach guided our research and analysis. This paper explored the influence of alcohol misuse within the cultural, familial, practices and legal frameworks in Botswana. Findings revealed patterns in alcohol misuse over time, the influence of alcohol misuse within different ecological systems, and their response to alcohol patterns as three global themes are discussed. The findings showed that alcohol misuse remains a major public health problem that trickles down from the community, and family systems to an individual, when there are with limited resources to address the alcohol misuse that exists.

Mhealth-based interventions to improving liver cancer screening among high-risk populations: a study protocol for a randomized controlled trial

BMC Public Health | 13 September 2024

Ge-hui Feng, Ke-hao Zhao, Yi-fei Wang, Qian-qian Yue, Yun-shan Chen, et al

Liver cancer (LC) screening, such as AFP test and abdominal ultrasound, is an effective way to prevent LC, one of the most common cancers worldwide. Despite the proven screening benefits, screening participation among high-risk populations for LC remains low. This suggests that targeted, systematic, and effective interventions should be provided to improve knowledge and awareness related to LC screening, enhance screening intentions, and thereby promote screening behaviors. Telephone is people's main medium of daily communication and mHealth-based programs offer a potential and effective solution for promoting health behaviors.

UNITED STATES: HPV self-collection for cervical cancer screening among survivors of sexual trauma: a qualitative study

BMC Women's Health | 13 September 2024

Rachel A. Madding, Jessica J. Currier, Keenan Yanit, Madeline Hedges & Amanda Bruegl

Intimate partner violence affects 20–30% of women in the United States. Disparities in routine cervical cancer surveillance have been demonstrated in certain populations, including victims of intimate partner violence (IPV). This study examined and assessed the acceptability of high-risk HPV (hrHPV) self-collection among individuals who have experienced IPV. We conducted an observational study using qualitative data collection and analysis. We interviewed individuals with a history of IPV and who currently reside in Oregon. This study identified key themes describing knowledge and attitudes towards cervical cancer screening for individuals who have experienced IPV.

Age-related differences in the number of chronic diseases in association with trajectories of depressive symptoms: a population-based cohort study

BMC Public Health | 16 September 2024

Jinghong Huang, Tianwei Xu, Yue Dai, Yueping Li & Raoping Tu

The number of chronic diseases has been associated with changes in depressive symptoms over time among middle-aged and older adults. This study aimed to explore the association between the number of chronic diseases and trajectories of depressive symptoms and the role of age in this association.

BURKINA FASO: HIV testing among female sex workers and associated factors in Burkina Faso: findings from a respondent-driven sampling survey

BMC Public Health | 16 September 2024

Kadari Cisse, Henri Gautier Ouedraogo, Odette Ky-zerbo, Dinanibè Kambire, Sylvie Zida, ET AL.

In Burkina Faso, only 70% of people living with HIV knew their status in 2018, while the first 95 target of the UNAIDS suggests that by 2025 at least 95% of people living with HIV (PLHIV) know their HIV status. Female sex workers (FSW) are one of the most HIV-vulnerable groups, making it crucial to estimate the rate and associated factors of HIV testing among FSW.

Children's and adolescents' views of health and mental health concepts - A qualitative group interview study

BMC Public Health | 16 September 2024

Sven Hassler, Siri Jakobsson Støre, Louise Persson & Linda Beckman

Definitions and perceptions of health and mental health have not remained static over time. This is also true for statistics over Swedish children's and adolescents' health and mental health status. The majority of Swedish school-aged children and adolescents report good physical health and good life satisfaction.

However, there are some warning signs when it comes to children's and adolescents' health and mental health status, for instance, an increased overweight or obesity in children and adolescents, as well as a higher proportion reporting psychological problems and stress.

Long-acting antiretroviral therapy effectiveness and patient satisfaction using patient questionnaires: data from a real-world setting

BMC Infectious Diseases | 16 September 2024

Keiji Konishi, Daisuke Onozuka, Moeka Okubo, Yu Kasamatsu, Satoshi Kutsuna & Michinori Shirano

Antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV infection has evolved substantially. The development of long-acting drugs, such as cabotegravir (CAB) and rilpivirine (RPV) might improve treatment satisfaction among people living with HIV (PLWH). The real-world effectiveness of long-acting ART and its effect on patient satisfaction needs to be assessed. This study investigated antiviral effectiveness and treatment satisfaction in PLWH who switched from conventional to long-acting ART (CAB + RPV).

Association between non-injection drug use and hepatitis C infection among HIV-negative men who have sex with men

BMC Infectious Diseases | 17 September 2024

Jing Zhao, Charles Green, Christine Markham, Kayo Fujimoto, Alan G. Nyitray & Lu-Yu Hwang

Prior research predominantly examined the association between HIV-positive men who have sex with men (MSM) or those using injection drugs and hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection. However, limited attention has been given to understanding the association among HIV-negative MSM who do not inject drugs. This gap leaves a portion of the population unexamined, potentially overlooking an important factor that may contribute to the transmission and prevalence of HCV. This study aims to investigate the relationship between non-injection drug use and HCV infection in this population.

A PrEP decision aid for women survivors of intimate partner violence: Task-shifting implementation to domestic violence service settings

Plos One | 17 September 2024

Jaimie P. Meyer, Elizabeth Lazarus, Karlye Phillips, Z. Thomasina Watts, Brenice Duroseau, et al.

Women exposed to intimate partner violence (IPV) experience multiple social and structural barriers to accessing HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), despite being at increased risk for HIV. In addition, few existing HIV prevention interventions address IPV. A recently developed PrEP decision aid for women has the potential to reach IPV survivors at risk for HIV if it could be integrated into existing domestic violence agencies that prioritize trust and rapport with female IPV survivors. Leveraging non-traditional service delivery mechanisms in the community could expand reach to women who are IPV survivors for PrEP.

Identification of antibody targets associated with lower HIV viral load and viremic control

Plos One | 17 September 2024

Wendy Grant-McAuley, William R. Morgenlander, Ingo Ruczinski, Kai Kammers, Oliver Laeyendecker, et al.

High HIV viral loads (VL) are associated with increased morbidity, mortality, and on-going transmission. HIV controllers maintain low VLs in the absence of antiretroviral therapy (ART). We previously used a massively multiplexed antibody profiling assay (VirScan) to compare antibody profiles in HIV controllers and persons living with HIV (PLWH) who were virally suppressed on ART. In this report, we used VirScan to evaluate whether antibody reactivity to specific HIV targets and broad reactivity across the HIV genome was associated with VL and controller status 1–2 years after infection.

Factors associated with cervical cancer screening among women of reproductive age in Ghana

BMC Women's Health | 18 September 2024

Sulemana Ansumah Saaka & Mohammed-Gazali Hambali

Cervical cancer remains a leading cause of cancer-related deaths among women in Ghana and other Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries. Despite the importance of early diagnosis for timely treatment and death prevention, cervical cancer screening among women in developing countries remains very low. Nonetheless, there is a paucity of research examining the factors associated with screening uptake among women of reproductive age in Ghana. Thus, this study fills the scholarly void and contributes to the

existing literature by examining the determinants of cervical cancer screening in Ghana.

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Critical vacancy rates for doctors, nurses and managers

Juta Medical Brief | 11 September 2024

Vacancy rates for doctors range from 22.4% in the Free State to 5.5% in the Western Cape, and for nurses, from 28% in the Free State to 5% in the Eastern Cape, placing huge strain on staff and increasing patient waiting times, and with no relief in sight. The figures were revealed in a written response from Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi to ActionSA MP Kgosi Lelape, in which he said the the budget cuts implemented by the Treasury had hobbled provincial Health Departments' ability to fill posts, with all provinces battling to deliver services with fewer doctors, nurses and senior managers.

Pesticides may have a role in Gauteng 'food poisonings'

Juta Medical Brief | 11 September 2024

The surge in food poisoning among Gauteng children – more than 200 cases this year, with 10 of them fatal – could have been triggered by chemicals found in insecticides and pesticides, say authorities. In many of the cases, there was no food left to test, according to Gauteng Department of Health spokesperson Motalatale Modiba, but in the little that was found and taken for laboratory investigation, traces of organophosphate were identified and in other cases, Rattex pellets.

South Africa is failing its youngest children – report flags critical gaps in early learning, social protection and health care

Health-e News | 13 September 2024

Wiedaad Slemming, University of Cape Town; Linda Biersteker, University of Cape Town, and Lori Lake, University of Cape Town. Nearly 10 years ago South Africa outlined its commitment to invest in the health and development of young children. The National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy of 2015 detailed government's intention to provide a comprehensive set of services to pregnant women, young children and their families by 2030. This includes healthcare, nutrition support, social protection, parent support and early learning programmes. Early investments in the care of young children provide a critical foundation for lifelong health and development. The developing brain is highly plastic and moulded by young children's exposure to care or adversity in ways that can be difficult to change later in life. It is therefore vital to build a strong foundation for lifelong health and development starting before the baby is born.

Perimenopausal Women with HIV Experience Worse COVID-19 Symptoms

Managed Healthcare Executive | 13 September 2024

Women living with HIV experience the worst COVID-19 symptoms during perimenopause, when compared with premenopause and postmenopause, the results of a recent survey show. This may be due to an increased state of inflammation caused by a combination of HIV, COVID-19 and menopause.

Endometriosis pain leads to missed school and work in two-thirds of women with the condition, new study finds

The Conversation | 13 September 2024

More than two-thirds of women with endometriosis missed school or work due to pain from the condition, in a study of more than 17,000 women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the U.S. That is a key finding of new research published in the Journal of Endometriosis and Uterine Disorders. Our study also found that Black and Hispanic women were less likely to be diagnosed with endometriosis compared with white women. Interestingly, women who identified as part of the LGBTQ community had a higher likelihood of receiving an endometriosis diagnosis than heterosexual women.

Navigating autism: the need for awareness and early intervention in South Africa

Health-e News | 16 September 2024

'Can I have a cup of tea?' At the age of eight, these were Joshua Keshi's first spoken words, to the immense delight of his father. With a smile on his face the soft spoken Keshi tells Health-e News that, on that day, his father proudly exclaimed, 'My son has just spoken!' The now 25-year-old's father had every reason to be excited. Keshi was diagnosed with autism at the age of three, and was non-verbal. Autism is related to development of the brain. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) autism spectrum disorders are characterised by difficulty with social interaction and communications. The organisation estimates that, globally, one in 100 children have autism. It's estimated that around 1.2 million South Africans have been diagnosed with autism. Exact numbers are hard to come by but experts agree that autism prevalence is increasing.

How investing in maternal and child health fuels prosperity for women, young people and children in Africa

World Economic Forum | 16 September 2024

Sub-Saharan Africa faces the highest rates of maternal and child mortality globally, with around 70% of maternal deaths occurring in the region. Investments in maternal and child health yield substantial economic returns, as well as saving lives, with estimates suggesting that every dollar invested can generate \$20 in economic benefits. Technological advancements and innovative health interventions, such as community health worker training and targeted treatments, have significantly reduced maternal and child mortality.

Glenda Gray's fierce fight for science, the COVID-19 ruckus, and the bathroom row about HIV drugs

Spotlight | 16 September 2024

After a decade at the helm of the country's primary health research funder, Professor Glenda Gray will focus again on doing the science. She tells Spotlight's Biënne Huisman about her childhood, her passion for research, administering multi-million dollar grants, and a heated argument in the bathroom with an ANC bigwig. Professor Glenda Gray, the first woman president and chief executive of South Africa's Medical Research Council (SAMRC), has among others been described as outspoken, credible and tenacious. After a decade at the helm of the SAMRC, Gray retains her reputation for fearlessly speaking truth to power.

Health Department to outline plans to tackle non-communicable diseases

SANews | 16 September 2024

Deputy Minister of Health, Dr Joe Phaahla, will today outline government's plans to address the burden of the emerging non-communicable diseases (NCDs) pandemic. "The NCDs, otherwise known as lifestyle diseases, have emerged as a major global health challenge, affecting millions of individuals globally, and are among the leading causes of death in South Africa today," the Department of Health said. Diabetes, according to the department, remained the second leading underlying cause of death in 2020 at 6.6% of all deaths, following COVID-19 which was first detected the same year and became the leading cause of death.

SANBS responds after viral tweet on blood donations being a 'scam'

IOL | 16 September 2024

Blood donation is often portrayed as one of the most selfless acts a person can do, potentially saving multiple lives with just a single pint of blood. Recently, a viral tweet has sparked questions about how the blood donation system actually works, leading to confusion and frustration among the public. In a tweet that has garnered significant attention, South African Twitter user @PaulMhlongo questioned the blood donation process, calling it a "scam".

'Non-communicable diseases the leading cause of death in SA'

SABC News | 16 September 2024

Non-communicable diseases like diabetes, hypertension and cancer, have surpassed the Covid-19 pandemic as the leading cause of death in South Africa. That's according to Deputy Health Minister Dr Joe Phaahla, who was speaking in Pretoria, on the urgent need to avert deaths from preventable diseases. Phaahla was joined by the World Health Organization (WHO) during a dialogue intended to find lasting measures to curb the looming pandemic of non-communicable diseases.

Mpumalanga Department of Health deploys 400 malaria spray operators

Mpumalanga News | 16 September 2024

The Mpumalanga Department of Health is winning the fight against malaria. This was announced during the launch of the malaria indoor residual campaign in KaMaqhekeza on September 5. The health MEC, Sasekani Manzini, welcomed 400 appointed malaria spray operators from Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge and Mbombela. These operators will be conducting integrated malaria interventions, including indoor residual spraying, to ensure that malaria outbreaks and mortalities are prevented.

Superbug crisis could get worse, killing nearly 40 million people by 2050, study estimates

CNN | 16 September 2024

The number of lives lost around the world due to infections that are resistant to the medications intended to treat them could increase nearly 70% by 2050, a new study projects, further showing the burden of the ongoing superbug crisis. Cumulatively, from 2025 to 2050, the world could see more than 39 million deaths that are directly attributable to antimicrobial resistance or AMR, according to the study, which was published Monday in the journal *The Lancet*. The World Health Organization has called AMR “one of the top global public health and development threats,” driven by the misuse and overuse of antimicrobial medications in humans, animals and plants, which can help pathogens develop a resistance to them.

Stubborn number of HIV and hepatitis infections could affect the 2025 goal

IOL | 17 September 2024

eThekweni continues to rank among the top three problem major cities with regards to HIV and hepatitis prevalence, despite concerted campaigns to fight these diseases. TB HIV Care’s Bio-Behavioural Survey (BBS) found that hepatitis C prevalence was the highest in Mbombela (90.5%), followed by Tshwane (89.0%) and eThekweni (75.2%).

Beyond HPV vaccination: Why we need a comprehensive approach to eliminate cervical cancer

World Economic Forum | 17 September 2024

While significant progress has been made to prevent cervical cancer, scaling of vaccination, screening, early detection and treatment efforts are needed to reach elimination goals. Vaccination and screening among eligible girls, women and individuals with a cervix are still well below World Health Organization targets, with significant variation in coverage across regions. Despite increased funding for vaccination, screening and treatment, programmes remain underfunded and few countries have implemented national screening programmes.

WHO grants first mpox vaccine approval to ramp up response to disease in African countries hit the hardest

IOL | 17 September 2024

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced on Friday that it had officially granted its first approval for the use of a vaccine against mpox (formerly known as monkeypox) in adults. The organization hailed this as a significant step towards controlling the disease, particularly in Africa where the virus has been more widespread. The vaccine, developed by Danish manufacturer Bavarian Nordic A/S, received WHO’s authorization, allowing global health agencies such as Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and UNICEF to purchase and distribute it. However, WHO cautioned that supplies remain limited, as Bavarian Nordic is currently the sole producer of the vaccine.

How to save more mothers from dying during childbirth

Spotlight | 18 September 2024

COVID-19 temporarily reversed South Africa’s hard-won reduction in maternal mortality, but the death rate has now stabilised, and hopes are high that the downward trend will resume. However, if experts are right, we’re missing some crucial interventions that would further prevent what are avoidable deaths. Chris Bateman talks to some of the leading lights in the field.

Navigating the healthcare system: challenges for cancer patients in South Africa

Health-e News | 18 September 2024

Navigating the healthcare system can be a daunting task for anyone, but for cancer patients, this challenge is often exacerbated by the physical, emotional, and financial burdens of their diagnosis. These challenges are even more pronounced in South Africa, where disparities between public and private systems mark the healthcare landscape. The complexity of medical schemes, the bureaucracy of public hospitals, and the uncertainty surrounding treatment plans can leave patients feeling overwhelmed and unsupported.

Vaccine alliance secures deal for 500,000 mpox jabs for Africa

Eye Witness News | 18 September 2024

The Gavi vaccine alliance announced Wednesday a deal with Danish drugmaker Bavarian Nordic to secure 500,000 jabs against mpox for use in African countries facing an epidemic of the virus. The announcement came after the World Health Organization last week prequalified an mpox vaccine, MVA-BN, for the first time, paving the way for the United Nations and other international agencies to procure them.

WHO updates influenza care guidelines, includes recommendations for viruses with pandemic potential

WHO | 18 September 2024

WHO has updated its guidelines for the care of patients with influenza. The guidelines are designed primarily for health care providers who manage patients with influenza virus infection, and will also serve as a reference source for policymakers and others in efforts towards epidemic and pandemic preparedness. Influenza is a viral disease. Seasonal influenza is common in all parts of the world. It is estimated that there are around a billion cases of seasonal influenza annually, including 3–5 million cases of severe respiratory illness.

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TRAINING AND RESOURCES

FORMER GOLD MINeworkERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ENCOURGED TO LODGE COMPENSATION CLAIMS FOR SILICOSIS AND TB

The Tshiamiso Trust is on a drive to ensure that all potentially eligible former gold mineworkers and their families, know about their right to lodge a claim for compensation, and are given the opportunity to do so. The Tshiamiso Trust was established in 2020 to give effect to the settlement agreement reached between six mining companies and claimant attorneys in the historic silicosis and TB class action. The companies are African Rainbow Minerals, Anglo American South Africa, AngloGold Ashanti, Harmony Gold, Sibanye Stillwater and Gold Fields. To date, the Trust has compensated over 18,000 beneficiaries, to the value of R1.67 billion. The Trust is committed to ensuring that all eligible ex-mineworkers and their families get the compensation they deserve, and appeals for your assistance in reaching potential claimants.

To lodge a claim:

- Mineworkers must have carried out risk work at one of the qualifying gold mines during the qualifying periods between 12 March 1965 and 10 December 2019, as indicated in schedule F of the Trust Deed.
- Living mineworkers must have permanent lung impairment from silicosis or TB that they contracted while doing risk work at these mines.
- For deceased mineworkers, there must either be evidence that they DIED FROM work-related TB within a year of leaving the mine if it's a TB claim, OR evidence that they had silicosis or died from silicosis if it's a silicosis claim.

For more information and to check eligibility, contact the Trust in one of the following ways:

- Phone the call centre - 080 100 0240
- Send a "Please call me" to 072 557 8077

- Chat on WhatsApp - 00 27 78 504 9004 (select option 12 from the menu)
- Send us a message on Facebook (@silicosissettlement)
- Email info@tshiamisotrust.com

Claimants can also self-check to see if they are eligible to lodge a claim using an online tool found at <https://www.tshiamisotrust.com/information/status-check/>.

Claimants are reminded to be careful of people impersonating the Trust or promising to help speed up their claims. Only the Tshiamiso Trust can process claims, and this is a FREE service. Claimants must only share their documents with the officials at the lodgement offices and should not pay anyone to help them with their claims.

Ethics in the SA Healthcare Environment

Enhance your understanding of ethics in healthcare with our 10-hour course on Ethics in the South African Healthcare Environment. This course aims to provide healthcare professionals with a comprehensive understanding of ethical principles and their application in everyday practice.

You'll explore the meaning of "ethics" both in general and within the healthcare context, focusing on the principled underpinnings of ethics in healthcare, with a particular emphasis on the complexities in South Africa. The course delves into the relationship between ethics and law, and the vital role of human rights values in healthcare ethics. You will learn how to recognise and address ethical dilemmas, systematically approach ethical issues in healthcare management, and understand the importance of obtaining informed consent and maintaining confidentiality. Practical skills such as drafting basic consent forms and applying ethical rules in professional relationships are also covered. Participants are assessed through multiple-choice questions, ensuring a thorough grasp of the material. Accredited for 9 CPD points with the HPCSA, this course equips you with the knowledge and tools to navigate ethical challenges in healthcare. Enrol now to deepen your ethical expertise and enhance your professional practice.

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!

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PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

PHAKAMA DIGEST August 2024: Teenage and childhood pregnancy

Phakama Digest | August 2024

With early childbearing and adolescent birth rates in South Africa increasing every year, the media announced last week that KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) has the highest numbers of childhood and teenage pregnancies in the country.

According to the National Department of Health, in just 12 months (from 2023 to 2024), 30 478 of the almost 120 000 15- to 19-year-old girls who gave birth in public health facilities were in KZN. Among younger girls (aged 10 to 14 years), 610 of the 2 700 girls across South Africa who became mothers were in KZN. These sobering figures show that teenage and childhood pregnancy is devastating our society, by "trapping young girls in a vicious circle of poverty, lack of educational prospects, and dependency on government for survival", and offering a bleak future for their children.

Addressing gender inequalities in national action plans on antimicrobial resistance

WHO | 16 September 2024

National action plans on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) often overlook the critical intersection of gender, despite evidence that exposure and susceptibility to infection, health-seeking behaviours, as well as antimicrobial prescribing and use patterns are all influenced by gender.

This publication provides a summary of the evidence on AMR and gender and proposes 20 recommendations for policy-makers to consider when developing, revising, implementing or monitoring their national action plans on AMR. Each recommendation should be tailored to individual country contexts and needs. Complementing the WHO's people-centred core package of AMR interventions, the recommendations aim to support countries in addressing AMR through a more comprehensive, people-centred and gender-responsive approach.

Call for the paper -HIV and TB co-infection - Submission Deadline: 20 December 2024

BMC Infectious Diseases is calling for submissions to our Collection on HIV and TB co-infection. This collection seeks to explore the complex relationship between tuberculosis (TB) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), two prominent pathogens within the domain of infectious diseases. We invite submissions on co-infection research, interventions, and perspectives from various stakeholders aiming to advance understanding and improve outcomes in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and control of HIV and TB co-infection, covering topics such as epidemiology, pathogenesis, clinical management, drug interactions, public health approaches, socioeconomic determinants, therapeutics innovation, community engagement, and health systems strengthening.

Call for papers - Sexually transmitted infections- Submission Deadline: 3 February 2025

BMC Infectious Diseases is calling for submissions to our Collection on Sexually transmitted infections. Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) remain a major global health issue, causing significant harm. Effective management of STIs requires a multidisciplinary approach encompassing epidemiology, prevention, diagnosis, and control strategies. The topics of interest include diverse aspects of STIs but are not limited to: prevalence trends of various STIs, diagnostic approaches including molecular techniques and point-of-care testing, prevention strategies at different levels, HIV/STI co-infections, disparities in STI burden and access to services, and emerging challenges in the field

Call for papers - Mental health of adolescents – closing date 7 March 2025

BMC Public Health is calling for submissions to our Collection on mental health of adolescents. Adolescence is a critical developmental stage marked by significant physical and emotional changes, with mental health being heavily influenced by societal pressures, academic demands, and technology. Rising rates of anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders among adolescents pose a global concern, affecting both immediate quality of life and long-term well-being. Addressing these issues is essential for fostering healthy development and preventing future psychosocial challenges. This Collection seeks submissions that explore factors influencing adolescent mental health, such as trends in mental health disorders, risk and protective factors, the impact of digital platforms, school environments, family relationships, barriers to accessing mental health services, and effective intervention strategies.

Gender Equity in Reproduction Health Service Access

Reproductive Health is calling for submissions to our Collection on Gender Equity in Reproductive Health Service Access. Healthcare access is important in ensuring the attainment of the Third Sustainable Goal (SDG3) by 2030. Access to reproductive healthcare services, which enables persons to live their lives to the fullest and enjoy safe and satisfying sex lives is a vital component of total health. However, access to these services differs by gender, with men and women across the globe having unequal access to the necessary information and services they require to enjoy total wellbeing, satisfactory sex lives, protection from sexually transmitted infections, prevention of unwanted pregnancies, and the treatment of infertility. The known reasons behind this unequal access range from social and cultural to economic reasons. For instance, lessened decision-making and financial autonomy for women may restrict their access to timely and effective reproductive healthcare services necessary for treatment and prevention of adverse health outcomes. On the other hand, even men may have restricted access to services due to cultural and time constraints. This collection will provide an avenue to researchers with interest in the intersection between gender and reproductive health access, as well as reproductive health and rights to present their research for maximum visibility. The collection is welcoming contributions such as original research articles using quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method designs, scoping and systematic reviews, policy analyses, case studies, meta-analyses, and commentaries. Contributors are encouraged

to present policy-relevant recommendations and points of action for program implementers.

Call for papers - Humanization of healthcare in the era of AI

BMC Digital Health is calling for submissions to our Collection, Humanization of healthcare in the era of AI. This Collection seeks to gather innovative research on the humanization of healthcare in the era of AI, exploring the impact of AI on patient experiences, personalized medicine, and patient engagement. We invite submissions that investigate the intersection of digital health technologies, AI-driven diagnostics, and human-centered design in healthcare innovation, with the aim of fostering a balanced approach that prioritizes the human touch in medicine alongside technological advancements.

Contraceptive Decision-Making: Enhancing Family Planning Education and Accessibility - Submission Deadline: 28 February 2025

Contraception and Reproductive Medicine is calling for submissions to our Collection on Contraceptive Decision-Making: Enhancing Family Planning Education and Accessibility. Target 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) calls on countries to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs by 2030. However, the unmet need for family planning remains the bottleneck in realizing these goals. The prevalence of unmet needs is high globally and more concerning in low-middle-income countries, calling for implementing better strategies.

DISTRICT HEALTH BAROMETER 2022/2023

The 16th edition of the DHB provides information across a wide range of district health services, covers over 30 indicators and continues to provide policy-makers, health workers, planners, researchers, academics and stakeholders a unique overview of the performance of public health services in South Africa. By providing a detailed analysis of health indicators, trends, and challenges at the district level, the DHB equips district managers and other stakeholders with the data necessary to identify priorities, plan and implement targeted interventions, and monitor progress. This year's Barometer also includes a chapter on air quality and health as we introduce environmental drivers of health in the publication in response to the effects of climate change on health.

As an innovation for the publication, an online interactive dashboard has been developed. This dashboard will include all the indicators that have been compiled in the publication along with accompanying narratives on the key findings for the most recent year of data. It provides user-led navigation, with the ability to drill down geographically from provincial to district level. Users will be able to decide what indicators to focus on, over what time window, and at the level of aggregation they choose. There are also timesliders available to navigate the most recent 5 years of data.

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

World Congress of Epidemiology

When: 24 – 27 September 2024

Where: Cape Town, South Africa

International Conference on Public Health, Malnutrition and Impact on Cognitive Development - (ICPHMICD-24)

We are thrilled to invite you to attend the International Conference on Public Health, Malnutrition and Impact on Cognitive Development - (ICPHMICD-24) conference, taking place on 10th - 11th October 2024 at Port Elizabeth, South Africa. The event will bring together leading experts, thought-provoking

discussions, and a diverse group of attendees from around the world. With over 500 participants expected, the conference will provide ample opportunities for networking and professional growth. The conference will feature a wide range of sessions, including keynote lectures, oral presentations, poster sessions, symposia, and workshops. Our panel of speakers includes academics, students, researchers, and industry professionals, making for a dynamic and engaging environment. Attendees will have the opportunity to actively participate in discussions, connect with others in their field, learn about the latest research and discoveries, and explore solutions to ongoing challenges.

In addition, the conference will bridge the gap between theoretical studies and practical applications, providing attendees with valuable insights and knowledge. Join us for the (ICPHMICD-24) and take the next step in your professional journey. Don't miss out on this opportunity to expand your knowledge, make meaningful connections, and explore new areas of the field.

When: 10 – 11 October 2024

Venue: Port Elizabeth

7th Public Health Conference

Theme: Population Health and Preventive Medicine

Discover the latest insights and advancements in public health at the 7th Public Health in Africa Conference. Join experts and professionals as we delve into critical topics such as non-communicable diseases, maternal women and child health, communicable diseases, and public health medicine discourse. Explore innovative strategies to tackle diseases like cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases while focusing on improving maternal and child health outcomes.

Learn about successful interventions for infectious diseases while engaging in stimulating discussions on health policy, systems strengthening, promotion, and shaping a healthier future for African communities.

Don't miss this opportunity to network, gain knowledge, and contribute to advancing public health initiatives across the continent.

When: 17 October 2024

Where: Gallagher Convention Centre

20th SASMA Congress

We are excited to announce the 20th SASMA Congress 2024. The largest multidiscipline professional and scientific sports medicine and science conference on the continent. As a showcase of our multidisciplinary strength – the theme of the conference is “Breaking Boundaries in Sport Medicine and Science”. The conference will include highly acclaimed international and local speakers and include sessions on injury and illness prevention and management, concussion, physical activity, exercise and health promotion, sports nutrition, paediatrics and exercise, the female athlete, long-term athlete welfare, olympic and paralympic medicine, clinical case and more.

When: 17 - 19 October 2024

Venue: Protea Hotel by Marriott, Stellenbosch

Hacking healthcare: African solutions for a global stage

For the first time, we are curating our content to bring you more flexibility, ample learning opportunities and real value for your time and money. The new deconstructed congress schedule offers a dynamic mix of both CPD-accredited and non-CPD content covering a wider range of topics over 3 days.

When: 22 – 24 October 2024

Where: Cape Town International Convention Centre, South Africa

The South African Association of Hospital and Institutional Pharmacists (SAHIP)

37 Annual Conference and 68th Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Presents Future Ready 5.0

Empowering Hospital Pharmacist for Tomorrow 's Health Care Revolution

When: 10 – 13 April 2025

Venue: Champagne Sports Resort, Drakensberg – Registration details to follow

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Senior Lecturer - The Health Policy and Systems Division in the School of Public Health

Closing date for Application: 30 September 2024

Go to: <https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Senior-Lecturer.aspx>

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