

HST Bulletin_ 6 September 2024

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CATEGORIES

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ACADEMIC AND PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES

Immunologic, virologic and drug resistance outcomes in an HIV-infected prospective cohort on treatment in South Africa

Plos One | 26 August 2024

Bixa Ogola, Nontoko D. Matume, Denis M. Tebit, Lufuno G. Mavhandu-Ramarumo and Pascal Obong Bessong

In September 2016, South Africa introduced the Universal Test and Treat (UTT) programme to manage HIV infection. However, the development of drug resistance and sustaining viral suppression are challenges to the success of treatment programmes. This prospective observational study describes virologic, immunologic, and drug resistance profiles in a test and treat cohort in north-eastern South Africa.

We choose: Adolescent girls and young women's choice for an HIV prevention product in a cross-over randomized clinical trial conducted in South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe

Plos One | 29 August 2024

Millicent Atujuna, Kristin Williams, Sarah T. Roberts, Alinda Young, Erica N. Browne, et al.

With new pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) modalities for HIV prevention becoming available, understanding how adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) navigate through PrEP options is essential, including factors underlying their choice. Through 16 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 52 in-depth interviews (IDIs) from REACH, an open-label crossover study in which AGYW were allocated 1:1 (between 06 February 2019 and 18 March 2020) to receive oral PrEP for six months and the dapivirine ring for six months, in a randomized sequence, followed by a 6-month period where either product (or neither) could be chosen, we explored decision-making process and product choice, using a mixed inductive-deductive analytical approach. Key themes included the desire to remain HIV-negative and weighing product attributes through experiential learning.

The impact of GeneXpert cerebrospinal fluid testing on tuberculous meningitis diagnosis in routine care in Botswana

Oxford Academic | 29 August 2024

James Milburn, Ookeditse Ntwayagae, Kebatshabile Ngoni, Rachita Suresh, Neo Lemme, et al.

Tuberculous meningitis (TBM) disproportionately impacts high-HIV prevalence, resource-limited settings where diagnosis is challenging. The GeneXpert platform has utility in TBM diagnosis but uptake remains limited. In Botswana, prior to the introduction of GeneXpert, TB testing was only available through mycobacterial culture at the National TB Reference Laboratory. Data describing routine use of Xpert MTB/RIF for CSF testing in resource-limited settings are scarce.

Facilitators and barriers to initiating and completing tuberculosis preventive treatment among children and adolescents living with HIV in Uganda: a qualitative study of adolescents, caretakers and health workers

AIDS and Research Therapy | 29 August 2024

Pauline Mary Amuge, Denis Ndekezi, Moses Mugerwa, Dickson Bbuye, Diana Antonia Rutebarika, et al.

People living with HIV (PLHIV) have a 20-fold risk of tuberculosis (TB) disease compared to HIV-negative people. In 2021, the uptake of TB preventive treatment among the children and adolescents living with HIV at the Baylor-Uganda HIV clinic was 45%, which was below the national target of 90%. Minimal evidence documents the enablers and barriers to TB preventive treatment (TPT) initiation and completion among children and adolescents living with HIV (CALHIV). We explored the facilitators and barriers to TPT initiation and completion among CALHIV among adolescents aged 10-19 years and caretakers of children below 18 years.

Treatment of secondary uterine malignancy following radiotherapy for cervical cancer: a study based on the SEER database

BMC Public Health | 29 August 2024

Xiaojing Tong, Yunyun Xiao, Haozhen Li, Hang Zhang & Jiawen Li

Radiotherapy is one of the main treatments for cervical cancer. Long-term complications of radiation exposure include the emergence of secondary tumors. This is a retrospective study based on an American population. We discuss the optimal treatment modality for patients with radiation-induced secondary uterine malignancy based on the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results database.

Explaining the burden of cultural factors on MS disease: a qualitative study of the experiences of women with multiple sclerosis

BMC Women's Health | 30 August 2024

Fahimeh Pourhaji, Mousa Mahdizadeh Taraghdar, Nooshin Peyman, Jamshid Jamali & Hadi Tehrani

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a debilitating, non-traumatic disease that is common among young adults. Cultural factors, as background factors, can affect how patients adapt and their quality of life. This study aimed to explain the burden of cultural factors on Multiple sclerosis.

Hepatitis B prevalence and risk factors among adults living with HIV in South Africa: a clinic-based cohort study

BMC Infectious Diseases | 31 August 2024

Megana Shivakumar, Caitlin A. Moe, Ashley Bardon, Meighan Krows, Sabina Govere, Mahomed Yunus S. Moosa, Connie Celum & Paul K. Drain

People living with HIV (PLHIV) may have concurrent Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) infection, and certain antiretroviral therapies are recommended for HBV-HIV co-infected individuals. Routine screening for Hepatitis B virus may influence management of antiretroviral therapy for PLHIV, but risk factors for co-infection have not been well defined. The objective of this study was to identify risk factors for HBV infection among PLHIV in South Africa.

Sexually transmitted infections and bacterial vaginosis among adolescent girls and young women in the early postpartum period: a cross-sectional study

BMC Infectious Diseases | 2 September 2024

Vani Govender, Megeshinee Naidoo and Dhayendre Moodley

Universal antiretroviral treatment (ART) for pregnant women has reduced mother-to-child transmission risk significantly. However, not all women on ART are virally suppressed during pregnancy and lactation.

In addition to poor adherence to ART, co-infections particularly other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are known to increase the risk of HIV acquisition and HIV transmission. While the prevalence of STIs during pregnancy has been well studied, the prevalence of STIs in the postpartum period and its association with HIV viral suppression are underreported.

The impact of COVID-19 restrictions on HIV prevention and treatment services for key populations in South Africa: an interrupted time series analysis

BMC Public Health | 2 September 2024

Danwei Yao, Naomi Hill, Ben Brown, Dorian Gule, Matshidiso Chabane, et al.

Key populations (KP), including men who have sex with men (MSM), female sex workers (FSW), and transgender women (TGW), experience a disproportionate burden of HIV, even in generalized epidemics like South Africa. Given this disproportionate burden and unique barriers to accessing health services, sustained provision of care is particularly relevant. It is unclear how the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated restrictions may have impacted this delivery. In this study, we aimed to describe patterns of engagement in HIV prevention and treatment services among KP in South Africa and assess the impact of different COVID-19 restriction levels on service delivery.

Disease burden of AIDS in last 30-year period and its predicted level in next 25-years based on the global burden disease 2019

BMC Public Health | 2 September 2024

Teng-Yu Gao, Lin-Kang Zhao, Xin Liu, Hao-Yang Li, Yu-Tong Ma, et al.

This study examines global trends in acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) incidence, mortality, and disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) from 1990 to 2019, focusing on regional disparities in AIDS incidence, mortality, and DALYs across various levels of socio-demographic index (SDI). It also investigates variations in AIDS incidence, mortality, and DALYs across different age groups, and projects specific trends for the next 25 years.

Lessons Learned from a Community-led, Pilot Teletherapy Group for Older Women Living with Depression and HIV

AIDS and Behavior | 2 September 2024

Aaron S. Breslow, Michelle Lopez, Barbara Warren, Jules Levin, Anjali Sharma, et al.

Older women with HIV face challenges to their quality of life, including neurocognitive decline, early-onset menopause, and chronic health issues. Chief among these concerns is depression, the most common psychiatric comorbidity among people living with HIV, with rates twice as high among women as men. However, tailored interventions among older women living with HIV and depression are lacking. Following the ADAPT-ITT framework to adapt existing interventions for cultural relevance among groups of people living with HIV, the study team revised an evidence-based intervention, the 'Stress Management and Relaxation Training/Expressive Supportive Therapy Women's Project (SMART/EST),' for online implementation.

Usability of a smartphone-compatible, confocal micro-endoscope for cervical cancer screening in resource-limited settings

BMC Women's Health | 30 August 2024

Philippa Kadama-Makanga, Aggrey Semeere, Miriam Laker-Oketta, Musa Mubiru, Robert Lukande, Megan Huchko, Esther Freeman, Nachiket Kulkarni, Jeffrey Martin, Dongkyun Kang & Miriam Nakalembe

More efficient methods to detect and treat precancerous lesions of the cervix at a single visit, such as low-cost confocal microscopy, could improve early diagnosis and hence outcomes. We piloted a prototype smartphone-compatible confocal micro-endoscope (SCME) among women presenting to a public cervical cancer screening clinic in Kampala, Uganda. We describe the piloting of the SCME device at an urban clinic used by lower cadre staff.

The management of community-acquired pneumonia in adults at a rural regional hospital in KwaZulu Natal

BMC Infectious Diseases | 02 September 2024

Gabriel Bondo & Mergan Naidoo

Pneumonia stands as a significant global contributor to mortality, particularly in South Africa, where it ranks as the second leading cause of death. The country's high prevalence of HIV infection compounds

this issue, significantly increasing mortality rates associated with community-acquired pneumonia (CAP).

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RECENT PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Germany, Japan, offer Africa mpox vaccine doses

Juta Medical Brief | 28 August 2024

Germany is to donate 100 000 mpox vaccine doses from its military stocks to help contain the outbreak in Africa, its government announced this week, while Japan is also planning to send over a batch – the only jabs suitable for children – to the DRC. Reuters reports that Germany will provide the World Health Organisation with “flexible financial resources via various instruments to combat mpox and also support its partners in Africa through the Gavi vaccination alliance”.

Tembisa corruption losses balloon to R3bn

Juta Medical Brief | 28 August 2024

Taxpayer losses to Tembisa Hospital corruption networks, first identified by whistle-blower Babita Deokaran, have risen to as much as R3bn, says the Special Investigating Unit (SIU), a 250% escalation from the R850m transactions she had flagged three weeks before her assassination. Although the SIU probe is advancing, three years after her death the police investigation into who ordered her murder has gone cold, and with no leads, has now been downgraded to an inquiry.

SA’s under-fives hungry, neglected and dying – Child Gauge 2024

Juta Medical Brief | 28 August 2024

One out of every 25 babies born in South Africa dies before turning five, with most under-fives facing hunger, neglect and developmental issues, according to the annual Child Gauge report. Children in this country are in “deep crisis”, and urgent action was vital, said experts, pleading with the government to ensure a concerted and united stance was taken to tackle the raft of challenges on the issue.

The New COVID Vaccine Is Out. Why You Might Not Want To Rush To Get It.

Poz | 29 August 2024

The FDA has approved an updated COVID shot for everyone six months old and up, which renews a now-annual quandary for Americans: Get the shot now, with the latest COVID outbreak sweeping the country, or hold it in reserve for the winter wave? The new vaccine should provide some protection to everyone. But many healthy people who have already been vaccinated or have immunity because they’ve been exposed to COVID enough times may want to wait a few months.

Report on the causes of contraceptive stockouts and shortages

Doctors Without Borders | 30 August 2024

As Women’s Month 2024 draws to a close, the Stop Stockouts Project (SSP), in partnership with Ritshize, releases its most recent report, ‘Contraceptive Supply Chain: Stockouts and their Causes’, on the availability and accessibility of medicines at public health facilities including contraceptive stockouts in South Africa.

Groote Schuur Hospital hosts specialist robotic surgeries for women

IOL | 30 August 2024

This week, Groote Schuur Hospital (GSH) hosted special robotic surgeries with an emphasis on women’s health in honour of Women’s Month. Robotic Surgery Week kicked off on Monday and runs until tomorrow, with the cutting-edge Da Vinci surgical robot being utilised.

HIV/Aids fight: Need for targeted intervention

AIDS Monitor | 30 August 2024

We have put up a spirited and commendable fight against HIV/Aids and stigma before, we should be able to do it again of course cognizant of the changing times and wavering societal value systems and general

global disruptions, innovations and interventions.

Mpox in the DRC: children are at high risk – health expert explains why

The Conversation | 30 August 2024

The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that children, pregnant women and people with weak immune systems are at higher risk from the mpox outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Reports confirm that children under five account for 39% of all cases in the country, and babies as young as two weeks are being diagnosed with this viral illness. Nadia Adjoa Sam-Agudu, an expert in paediatric infectious diseases, explains how mpox can be dangerous for children and what must be done to protect them.

Over 75,000 young people with HIV in Gauteng not on treatment, HSRC study finds

IOL News | 30 August 2024

A new Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) study has found that more than 70,000 young people in Gauteng living with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) are not receiving any treatment. This comes after the HSRC unveiled the key provincial findings of the Sixth South African National HIV, Prevalence, Incidence, and Behaviour Survey (SABSSM VI) for Gauteng.

Watch: New TB treatment influences global health policy

ENCA | 30 August 2024

A ground-breaking study has made headlines by revolutionising the treatment of drug-resistant tuberculosis, especially for children and pregnant women. This research, known as BEAT Tuberculosis, has now influenced global health policies and received endorsement from the World Health Organization. Dr. Francesca Conradie, the study's principal investigator, joined eNCA to discuss this achievement.

In South Africa's richest area, mother-to-baby HIV transmission is a concern despite free prevention

ABC News | 31 August 2024

It's a worrying question for health officials in one of the richest and most developed areas of the African continent: Why are babies being born with HIV when free medication is available to prevent mother-to-child transmission? In the first half of this year, 232 babies were born with HIV in South Africa's Gauteng region, which includes Johannesburg and the capital of Pretoria and is home to at least 15 million people.

Pregnancy-Related CV Risks: Urgent Need for Tailored Care

AJMC | 31 August 2024

In posters presented on day 1 of the 2024 European Society of Cardiology Congress, international research was delivered on pregnant and postpartum women in 3 important areas of specialized care for cardiovascular diseases: care guidelines, inherited cardiomyopathies, and short-term disease outcomes. These patients are considered high risk and they require specialized care from a multidisciplinary team because of the physiological changes introduced during pregnancy that can not only impact current cardiovascular disease states but bring on potential new disease-related complications.

UNICEF launches tenders for mpox vaccines

ENCA News | 1 September 2024

GENEVA - UNICEF said that it has launched an emergency tender for Mpox vaccines to help countries hardest hit by the recent outbreak of the disease. "The emergency tender is designed to secure immediate access to available mpox vaccines as well as to expand production," UNICEF said in a statement issued along with the World Health Organization, the Gavi vaccine alliance and Africa CDC (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention).

Breakthrough in blood stem cell development offers hope for leukemia and bone marrow failure

News Medical Life Science | 2 September 2024

Melbourne researchers have made a world first breakthrough into creating blood stem cells that closely resemble those in the human body. And the discovery could soon lead to personalized treatments for children with leukemia and bone marrow failure disorders. The research, led by Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) and published in Nature Biotechnology, has overcome a major hurdle for

producing human blood stem cells, which can create red cells, white blood cells and platelets, that closely match those in the human embryo.

Gauteng's struggle: why are babies still being born with HIV?

Africanews | 2 September 2024

Pregnant women in South Africa have access to HIV testing and antiretroviral therapy at health facilities. However, health officials in Gauteng are concerned that babies are still being born with HIV, despite the availability of free medication aimed at preventing mother-to-child transmission. During the first half of this year, Gauteng, South Africa, which encompasses Johannesburg and Pretoria and has a population of over 15 million, saw the birth of 232 babies diagnosed with HIV.

PINs and pills: Are vending machines the answer to contraceptive stockouts at clinics?

Bhekisisa News | 2 September 2024

Government clinics often run out of contraceptive medicines, which has been the case since 2015. The latest Stop Stockouts and Ritshidze report shows that planning problems, small budgets and poor record systems are part of the reason. Could getting birth control pills or emergency contraception from a vending machine help, especially when young girls face frosty attitudes at clinics when asking for contraception in the first place? Although “there are certainly barriers to accessing modern contraceptives that need urgent attention”, experts say a self-help system may not necessarily be the answer. Here’s why.

Competition law has again worked to fight a bad drug patent, but we need other solutions

Poz | 2 September 2024

A Competition Commission probe recently resulted in a patent on an important tuberculosis medicine being dropped in South Africa. Twenty years ago, a similar Competition Commission case resulted in a settlement that helped drive down the prices of several antiretrovirals, thereby helping to set the stage for the country’s HIV treatment programme. Fatima Hassan and Leena Menghaney connect the dots between the two landmark cases and map out what has and has not changed over the last two decades. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, South Africa faced a major uncontrolled AIDS epidemic, worsened by state sponsored AIDS denialism. South Africa was at the epicentre of a global epidemic, with hundreds of thousands of people getting sick and dying, needlessly, because lifesaving antiretroviral medicines were out of reach.

Mpox could spread into conflict zones in east Africa—how to manage the response

Med Xpress | 2 September 2024

Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda are some of the east African countries that have reported cases of mpox—a viral infectious disease—in the latest outbreak which started in the Democratic Republic of Congo in January 2023. The outbreak was declared a public health emergency of international concern by Africa Centres for Disease Control and the World Health Organization in August 2024.

#InTheSpotlight | Beyond the hype, what might AI actually mean for healthcare in SA?

Spotlight | 3 September 2024

With varying degrees of success, artificial intelligence has begun to play the role of research assistant, radiologist, health educator, and even therapist. In this Spotlight special briefing, Jesse Copelyn tries to see past the hype and pin-points the most immediate implications of these new technologies for healthcare in South Africa.

Department of Health issues rubella warning

Durban Local | 3 September 2024

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) has alerted the Department of Health to the notable rising number of rubella cases in various parts of KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Western Cape and Eastern Cape. Rubella, otherwise known as German measles, is an infectious disease caused by the rubella virus. The Department of Health has urged parents and caregivers to ensure children are up to date with vaccination schedules against serious diseases that are prevented by vaccines as the country

experiences an increase in rubella cases.

Learning programme launched at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital for young cancer patients

Soweto Urban | 3 September 2024

The leading distributor of Apple, DJI and Nintendo in South Africa launched an iSchool Africa iPad Learning Programme at Baragwanath hospital to observe International Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. This initiative which has been introduced to other hospitals like Steve Biko Academic Hospital aims to enhance the educational experience of paediatric oncology patients, by giving them access to technology and educational resources during their treatment and hospital stay.

New groundbreaking drug-resistant TB regimen to be available next year

Health-e News | 3 September 2024

A new drug-resistant tuberculosis (DR-TB) treatment regimen will be available to pregnant women and children as early as next year. This follows the results of the BEAT Tuberculosis study which evaluated the effectiveness and safety of a new and shorter treatment regimen for DR-TB of four to five drugs over a six month period. Speaking to Health-e News Professor Norbert Ndjeka, chief director TB Control and Management of the National Department of Health says this study is groundbreaking, partly because it's the world's first clinical trial for DR-TB that included children and pregnant women.

SA's HIV burden a concern as new mpox strain spreads in DRC – but much still unknown

Spotlight | 4 September 2024

The African Centre for Disease Control and World Health Organization have raised the alarm following a drastic uptick in mpox cases. This surge is being driven by a new strain of the virus. Elri Voigt reports about what we know so far and potential implications for South Africa.

Report: New HIV cases rise outside Sub-Saharan Africa for the first time

Observer | 4 September 2024

An estimated 1.3 million people acquired HIV in 2023, according to the 2024 "AIDS at a Crossroads" report by the joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). This increase brings the total number of people living with HIV globally to 39.9 million. Notably, the report highlights a significant shift: for the first time, more new infections are occurring outside sub-Saharan Africa than within it. This shift reflects the success of prevention efforts in sub-Saharan Africa and the lack of comparable progress in other regions.

How HIV/AIDS got its name – the words Americans used for the crisis were steeped in science, stigma and religious language

The Conversation | 4 September 2024

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention first used the term "AIDS" on Sept. 24, 1982, more than a year after the first cases appeared in medical records. Those early years of the crisis were marked by a great deal of confusion over what caused the disease, who it affected and how it spread.

HIV prevalence at 32.2% among Gauteng residents aged 50-54

Business Day | 4 September 2024

HIV prevalence peaked at 32.2% among Gauteng residents aged between 50 and 54 years in 2022, according to the sixth South African HIV prevalence, incidence and behaviour survey for Gauteng. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) released the findings at a provincial dialogue in Braamfontein recently.

How does a disease spread from animals to humans? A lot has to do with people's behaviour

Health-e News | 4 September 2024

Epidemics and pandemics of new diseases arise in two stages. Firstly, the zoonotic spillover event introduces the infectious organism, in the main a virus, into the human population from an animal source. The second stage involves various factors that could promote the spread of the pathogenic communicable organism throughout the human population.

SAMRC president highlights dire state of South Africa's health sector: calls for urgent reforms

Health-E News | 5 September 2024

The complex legacy of apartheid including the unequal distribution of resources between the public and private sectors, and the increasing disease burden are some of the issues that have led to a dysfunctional health system in the country. This is according to the newly appointed South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) president and CEO Professor Ntobeko Ntusi, who recently made a presentation on the state of health in South Africa. "The health and well-being of most South Africans remain plagued by a relentless burden of infectious and non-communicable diseases, persisting social disparities, and inadequate human resources to provide care for a growing population, and a crisis of governance in health," says Ntusi.

3 tricks Big Tobacco uses to stop SA's anti-smoking Bill from becoming law

Bhekisisa | 6 September 2024

On Wednesday, Parliament's newly appointed portfolio committee on health sat to discuss South Africa's proposed new Tobacco Bill for the first time since the government of national unity was formed. Some committee members raised concerns about the "potential social and economic impacts" of the Bill. Public health experts warn this could extend the approval process "by years".

The Bill says the same rules should apply to vaping and traditional cigarette smoking and that both should be sold in plain-looking packaging and banned in all public spaces.

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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@tshiamisotrusted.com

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

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!

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

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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.

Child Gauge

University of Cape Town | September 2024

The *South African Child Gauge*® is an annual publication of the Children's Institute, University of Cape Town. It aims to report on and monitor the situation of children in South Africa, in particularly the realisation of their rights. The publication focuses on a different theme each year.

A number of key features are included every year:

- A series of essays on a theme to inform, focus – and sometimes direct – national dialogue on an issue which has particular impact on children's rights in South Africa.
- A summary of legislative developments pertaining to children's rights in the year under review.
- A **Children Count – Abantwana Babalulekile** data section which tracks statistics on the demographics of children, and their access to social assistance, education, housing, health and other services.
- A reflection on the theme and the status of children in South Africa by a public figure or prominent person.

<https://ci.uct.ac.za/child-gauge-overview>

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.

<https://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/hivtbco>

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

<https://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/bmcstis#:~:text=Submission%20Status%3A%20Open%20%7C%20Submission%20Deadline,health%20issue%2C%20causing%20significant%20harm.>

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.

<https://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/mehado>

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.

<https://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/GERH>

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.

<https://www.hst.org.za/publications/Pages/-District-Health-Barometer-2022-2023.aspx>

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CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

8th World One Health Congress (WOHC) 2024

The Congress foresees four days of an outstanding, exceptional and forward-thinking agenda, which includes parallel tracks addressing one health science, antimicrobial agents and resistance, and science policy interface, amongst others. It will enable discussing major One Health challenges, as well as sharing research data and policy developments. Above all, it will provide a great opportunity to look at global One Health science and policy through an African lens. Through an open call for abstracts, notable work from distinguished scientists and opinion leaders will be disseminated at the world's largest forum dedicated to advancing the One Health agenda and community.

When: 20 – 23 September 2024

Where: Cape Town, South Africa

For more information: <https://globalohc.org/8WOHC>

World Congress of Epidemiology

When: 24 – 27 September 2024

Where: Cape Town, South Africa

For more information: <https://www.wce2024.org/>

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

For more information: <https://www.africahealthexhibition.com/en/attend/congress-registration-website.html>

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

No vacancies

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