

# NIHR Global Health Research Group on Prevention & Management of Non-Communicable Diseases and HIV infection in Africa.

## NEWSLETTER

### RESEARCH STUDIES

**Management of Chronic Conditions in Africa (MOCCA) study** – In Tanzania, integration is now occurring in 2 facilities with another 3 expected to start integration by May/June. In Uganda, integration is happening in 5 facilities.

A stakeholders meeting took place on 21 March in Uganda at which the MRC/UVRI and TASO team made a presentation on the progress of the MOCCA study. The meeting was officially opened by Dr Gerald Mutungi, Program Manager of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) at the Ministry of Health Uganda. He said that this study is very timely and that the policy makers are looking to us to inform development of guidelines for chronic care in Uganda.

Other presentations included; national NCD monitoring tools and training materials under development and pre-testing, lessons learnt from other projects that can be applied during the implementation of decentralisation of Integrated chronic care.

Ms. Edith Mukantwari from the African Diabetes Alliance shared her testimony about mis-diagnosis, living with diabetes and seeking care in Uganda. A group of expert patients acted out a short play about Integrating care for HIV and NCDs. The meeting was then officially closed by Dr Joshua Musinguzi, the Assistant Commissioner, AIDS Control Program in Uganda who pledged his support for this study and collaboration. He emphasized the need for quality evidence to inform provision of chronic care in Uganda.

As integration of chronic care clinics takes off in Uganda, health care workers and expert clients have each on 12-13 March had a one-day training by the MOCCA team particularly on packaging patient information in terms of adherence counselling, info on Diabetes and Hypertension their common signs, symptoms and complications to discuss with patients in the counselling sessions.

GCP training for MOCCA staff in Uganda who did not attend the previous one is scheduled to take place on 27 – 28 March at MRC/UVRI & LSHTM training facility.

**META Trial Phase 2** –We are still waiting on Merck for documentation and on TFDA final approval but we should start in 4-8 weeks' time. Tsi and Anu visited Tanzania for a week and used the visit to update ourselves on progress with the MOCCA study as well as helping to develop the forms and procedures for the META trial. We were very impressed by the work being done at Amana hospital, where we spent a bit of time during the visit. This was a great opportunity to catch up with and provide a bit of support to the team in Tanzania. The visit greatly contributed to our own learning and, as before, we were inspired by the commitment and hard work of the team



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19 staff working on MOCCA and META studies are participating in GCLP and GCP training in Tanzania this week in course that is jointly conducted by NIMR and University of Nairobi. (See photo below).



**INTE-AFRICA** – the project kick-off meeting is 27-28 March in Liverpool. We have 30 delegates attending the 2-day meeting with the main objectives to present more detailed workplans and ensure linkages across all work packages. We will also spend time discussing the communications plan for the project and agreeing on a new logo and website design!

### **PROPOSALS**

An application to EDCTP is well underway for Phase 3 of META trial.

Elizabeth Shayo has been in Liverpool this week to develop a proposal with colleagues for the GCRF call on health in context. This will study the contextual factors that inhibit persons who have awareness from modifying diet and lifestyle behaviour. It will develop an intervention and evaluate in terms of process outcomes. If we get funding, this could be one of our in-roads into prevention.

### **PAPERS**

- ✚ Systematic review of retention in diabetes care – almost finalised with more work needed on discussion
- ✚ Systematic review of the safety of metformin in HIV patients also taking antiretroviral therapy. Ivan and Anu have agreed on the list of included papers and data extraction has begun.
- ✚ Systematic review on rates of retention-in-care for type 2 diabetes management in sub-Saharan Africa– almost finalised with more work needed on discussion
- ✚ Survival rate for individuals with type one diabetes after institution of an appropriate program in health facilities in Tanzania – almost finalised with discussion to be written
- ✚ Systematic review on the prevalence of microvascular and macrovascular complications of diabetes in newly diagnosed diabetes patients – screening of potential articles ongoing

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### **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

MSc studentship – 2 Students have been chosen, both for MSc Epidemiology: Dr Kauthrah Ntabadde (Uganda) and Dr Faith Aikaeli (Tanzania)

Josephine and Ivan (Uganda) attended a two day training on Economic Evaluations for Health Interventions organised by BRAC International in partnership with London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine RECAP-GCRF-UK Research and Innovation. The training took place in Uganda on 4-5 March (see photo below).



Leadership and communications training for senior African investigators will not happen in March (due to travel concerns around Brexit) but will be rearranged for later in the year.

Anu and Tinevimbo have applied for an internal LSTM grant of £50k each to do an ancillary study around the metformin trial. Anu's wants to work with Prof Mfinanga and colleagues to better understand the clinical picture with respect to diabetes and to estimate diabetes incidence in those who will screen with normal glycaemia. Tinevimbo wishes to study costs around the diabetic foot with Kaushik and colleagues. This will enable a mathematical model to be developed, which could be used for other co-morbidity.

### **EXPANSION OF PARTNERS**

We have approval from NIHR to expand the Group to include Hindu Mandal Hospital in Tanzania as a formal independent partner.

### **MEETINGS/VISITS**

Shabbar visited Dublin to meet the UCD partners. He has also been invited to a 2-day scoping meeting at WHO next month to discuss integration.

John and Paul from LSTM Research Management Services visited partners in Uganda and Tanzania to explain the rules and requirements for EU Horizon 2020 funding for INTE-AFRICA. This visit was very successful with partners acknowledging the importance of good record keeping and compliance with EU rules.

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### **NEWSLETTER**

Shabbar attended a meeting of partners in Tanzania on 27 Feb (see photo below). The meeting included representation from both HIV and NCDs control programmes in both Tanzania and Uganda. Minutes will be circulated separately. There has already been learning of the key issues we need to tackle if integration is going to work. Surprisingly stigma does not appear to be as big an issue as we all thought it might be.



The MoH representatives felt that supply of drugs was essential for the RCT in INTE-AFRICA and a small group was formed to look critically at the issues around drug access and management, co-chaired by Josephine and Sokoine.