

GLOBAL HEALTH RESEARCH GROUP ON PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND HIV INFECTION IN AFRICA

We hope this finds you and your families and friends safe and well.

We have had severe disruption of activities because of Covid-19 but thanks to the leadership of Shabbar, Mfinanga, Moffat, Kaushik and Kenneth we are now in the process of re-starting some activities and the team is adjusting well to the new ways of working. At this challenging time, we are thankful for the support and flexibility shown by all our partners and funders.



RESEARCH STUDIES

Management of Chronic Conditions in Africa (MOCCA)

Usman has now taken on the analyses of the data from Tanzania and Uganda. The main paper is almost ready to circulate. Tinevimbo has made good progress with the health economics paper. Both are almost ready to circulate. The findings are striking.

The MOCCA cohort will be followed up again this year and tested systematically to identify the level of undiagnosed conditions.

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Joseph and Ivan working from home

NIHR-funded META Trial Phase 2

We had enrolled just over 250 participants in the trial but had to suspend the recruitment on 17 April. However, we managed to re-start last week following emergency ethics clearance and have now recruited a further 10 or so. During the month of May, we will conduct a study on the knowledge and attitudes to Covid-19. This will also be repeated in INTE-AFRICA and MOCCA (both in Tanzania) if these studies can resume soon. The knowledge gained will be provided to health services to inform the Tanzania response to Covid-19.

We are not doing this in Uganda as knowledge appears to be very high. Uganda is leading the world in its response to Covid-19, as it did in the past against HIV.

We have opened a new site- Mwananyamala Hospital. One of the original sites, Amana Hospital, was re-assigned by health services as a Covid-19 only hospital.

Prof Mfinanga, Sokoine and team have been active in keeping participants engaged with the research; however, we think we have lost-to-follow-up some patients due to fears of Covid-19.

The phase III contract with EDCTP is signed and we're about to advertise for staff.

MATIPIO: The NIHR retrospective study

The Matipio study is looking at the incidence of non-communicable diseases among people with HIV-infection from existing records at Hindu Mandal Hospital. This work started recently during the lockdown, with about 120 records from patients who first presented in 2010 now having been transcribed. We will look at the data once all records from 2010 have been done to determine the next steps for this study.

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INTE-AFRICA

The trial had enrolled 8 participants in Uganda when the lockdown started. We are hoping to re-start enrolment in the next week or so, in both countries, with infection control measures in place.



Photo above shows a patient club in Uganda set up to help patients purchase drugs when there are stock-outs

PAPERS UPDATE

We have submitted to BMJ Public Health:

- *Ethical issues in intervention studies on the management of treatment of diabetes and hypertension in sub-Saharan Africa (a viewpoint).*
- *Strengthening integration of chronic care in Africa: protocol for the qualitative process evaluation of the integrating and decentralising HIV, diabetes and hypertension cluster randomised controlled trial in Uganda and Tanzania.*

The main protocol paper on INTE-AFRICA is also ready. We are just waiting for submission of the MOCCA main paper first.

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Camila and Tinevimbo in their 'offices'

FUNDING UPDATE

NIHR Health Policy & Systems Research proposal recommended funding of our proposal on community care with a project start date of 1 September 2020. This is under negotiation but our original request was for £4m over 4 years.

TASO made a funding application to EDCTP2 for Modelling, Screening and Management of COVID-19 and Related Comorbidities in Uganda.

Moffat and Prof Mfinanga applied to the NIHR RIGHT call (£5m to expand the chronic care model to incorporate mental health.) This has been shortlisted to stage 2.

UPCOMING EVENTS

We are holding a series of virtual meetings/trainings as follows:

- Monday 22 June: INTE-AFRICA partners meeting
- Tuesday 23 June: EDCTP Kick-off meeting for META Phase 3
- Wednesday 24 June: Training in process evaluation
- Tuesday 28 July: International Steering Committee meeting

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NEW STARTERS

Erik van Widenfelt, who was previously working with us as a consultant, is now formally part of the team in the position of Senior Database Programmer. Erik continues to be based in Texas but is now a full-time LSTM employee. He provides data management/programming support across all our studies and leads the capacity building of programmers in Tanzania and Uganda.

Jed Weightman has joined us as part-time Programme Administrator. Jed works with us 2.5 days per week supporting general administration, project management and communications across all studies.

We hope you and your families remain safe and healthy.



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EDCTP



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