

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

We hope you've had a good summer and that your family and friends are all safe and well.

RESEARCH STUDIES

Management of Chronic Conditions in Africa (MOCCA)

The focus over the next month or so is to discuss the findings from the study with our Ministry of Health and other stakeholders, prior to submission of the papers for publication. We plan to host individual sessions to discuss the findings of the main study, and the health economics and social science sub-studies.

NIHR-funded META Trial Phase 2

Recruitment was completed at end of July. Congratulations to Sokoine, Anu, Erik, Kaushik, Edna, Mfinanga and everyone involved in reaching this milestone!

EDCTP-funded META Trial Phase 3

We have drafted the protocol and have circulated for comments. We would like to expediate ethics clearance.



INTE-AFRICA training session, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

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INTE-AFRICA

As of end September, 25 health facilities were enrolling and just over 3,000 persons have been enrolled. Well done to Josephine, Ivan, Sokoine, Sama, Joseph, Mfinanga, Moffat, Erik and many others.

In Uganda, drug support is being channelled via the patient clubs. Study sites where there are no clubs are being encouraged to start one. The study will provide 2-months buffer drugs to kick start the clubs where these do not exist.

In Tanzania, it is considered that about 75% of patients have health insurance and others are able to pay. NIMR will support a small buffer of drugs to be made available via the routine health facility management for patients that do not have insurance and cannot buy drugs on their own.

Integrated clinics started in Uganda in late July and in Tanzania in mid-August.



Photo of a meeting of NCD and HIV In-Charges at Mpigi Health Centre, Uganda

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COMMUNICATIONS

We have developed new webpages on the LSTM site to promote the work of the partnership. We are proud to recognise the work of Kaushik and Mfinanga as honorary professors of LSTM.

See link to the website:

<https://www.lstmed.ac.uk/global-health-research-group-on-prevention-management-of-non-communicable-diseases-and-hiv-infection>

TASO, who is leading on community engagement activities in Uganda, continues to work on a short film showing patient perspectives on living with chronic conditions and being part of a research study. Following delays due to COVID-19, filming has now started and we expect to have a draft film in October.



Photo of home interview of a women living with HIV and hypertension as part of filming by TASO.

Please check out the INTE-AFRICA website <https://inteafrica.org/news> for latest news including a piece on our latest publication “Ethical issues in intervention studies on the prevention and management of diabetes and hypertension in sub-Saharan Africa”

 **Camila Picchio** @capicchio · Sep 14

INTE-AFRICA partners have published in @GlobalHealthBMJ on ethical issues when conducting interventional studies. Read more here inteafrica.org/news/inte-afri... @JVLazarus @LSTMnews @NIMRHQS @MRC_Uganda @LSHTM @IvanNamakoola @DrSama_A #INTEAFRICA

Commentary

BMJ Global Health **Ethical issues in intervention studies on the prevention and management of diabetes and hypertension in sub-Saharan Africa**

Elizabeth Shayo,¹ Marie Claire Van Hout,² Josephine Birungi,³ Anupam Garrib,⁴ Sokolne Kivuyo,⁵ Sayoki Mfinanga,⁶ Moffat J Nyirinda,^{1,5} Ivan Namakoola,³ Joseph Okebe,⁶ Kaushik Ramaiya,⁷ Max Oscar Bachmann,⁸ Walter Cullen,⁹ Jeffrey Lazarus,^{10,11} Geoff Gill,¹² Tinevimbo Shiri,⁸ Dominic Bukonya,³ Hazel Snell,⁶ Mastula Nanfuka,¹³ Luis E Cuevas,⁴ Meshack Shimwela,¹⁴ Gerald Mutungi,¹⁵ Joshua Musinguzi,¹⁶ Janneth Mghamba,¹⁷ Kenneth Mugisha,¹³ Shabbar Jaffar,⁴ Peter G Smith,¹⁸ Nelson Kaulukusi Sewankambo¹⁸

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INTERNATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

We held a virtual meeting of the International Steering Committee on 28 July with full attendance from members. The committee received updates from Shabbar, Mfinanga and Moffat on current studies, capacity building and community engagement, with members agreeing that we widen further the membership of the Steering Committee to include more community representation. The Committee also discussed our 2nd stage proposal to NIHR for RIGHT Call 3, led by Moffat and Mfinanga (which was submitted in September).

INTE-AFRICA PARTNERS MEETING

On 9 September we hosted a virtual INTE-AFRICA partners meeting with 37 people attending from across the partnership. Presentations from all work package leads coincided with submission of our first interim report to the European Commission, where we reported the achievement of all contractual deliverables and milestones to date. Whilst COVID-19 has undoubtedly had an impact on our programme of work it was encouraging to hear about the successes across the work packages and the support from our Ministry of Health colleagues. As a follow up to the meeting we plan to hold some smaller discussion and training sessions on specific work packages.

Whilst a virtual meeting is no substitute for the real thing, it was lovely to see all these smiling faces!



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TRAINING

14 members of the Liverpool, Uganda and Tanzania team attended unconscious bias training facilitated by Africa Research Excellence Fund (AREF). The virtual training looked at privilege and aimed to develop our understanding of microaggressions. Members agreed that it was a thought provoking and interesting training.

Fredrick Amani (NIMR, Tanzania) will start training in data governance through NIHR in December. He will then act as data governance champion for our Group.

Other training (e.g. on leadership) is being postponed until about March 2021.

HR UPDATE

In Liverpool we have recruited 2 new Senior Researcher Associates in Epidemiology (Katie Bates and James Prior) and a new Programme Officer (Layla Smith).



Layla Smith



Katie Bates



James Prior

Layla, who previously worked at London School in a similar role, joined on 5 October. Katie, who is currently Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Medical University Innsbruck, starts on 21 October; and James Prior, who is currently Lecturer in Epidemiology at Keele University, starts on 1 December.

We are in the process of advertising for a data manager to support Erik with the expanding data requirements for the partnership.

Our statistician in Liverpool, Usman, has left the team and we wish him and his wife the very best for the future. We are availing of additional support from Prof Duolao in Liverpool and Levi in Uganda whilst we make alternative arrangements.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

GACD International Scientific Meeting

The Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD) is holding its (virtual) Annual Scientific Meeting from 10-13 November. As part of its scale up projects, we will be presenting a session on the INTE-AFRICA project.

You can sign up at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RBQ356V>

Essential Grant Writing Skills Workshop

AREF is calling for applications from active, emerging health-researchers in Sub-Saharan Africa to participate in its sixth Essential Grant Writing Skills Workshop. This fully on-line programme for 16 participants will be held over eight 3-hour sessions during the weeks of 14 December 2020 and 4 January 2021.

For more details see link:

https://media.tghn.org/medialibrary/2020/09/AREF_Grant-Writing_Workshop_Open_Call.pdf



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