

Child, reproductive, mental health; infections and NCDs in the African environment

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Welcome to this December issue of AHS.

In this issue we focus on several themes: child, reproductive and mental health; infections and non communicable diseases.

Child health: The first 10 articles focus solely on child health.

Researchers from Uganda¹ report on the context surrounding out-of-hospital deaths and the barriers to accessing timely care for Ugandan children recently discharged from the hospital. Compelling reading!

Still in Uganda,² we have reports of a multi-model community nutrition intervention program; while from neighboring Kenya researchers report on the effect of Mother Support Groups on nutritional status of village children.³ It seems there is a resurgence of interest in adolescent health. In line with this, we bring you an interesting systematic review of factors affecting energy intake of adolescent girls highlighting the paucity of information in this area.⁴

Now from child nutrition to videos! Mutanda and others report results of an evaluation of community-made mobile videos for maternal newborn and child health (MNCH) education. They assert that “locally made mobile community videos are effective in improving knowledge, attitudes, practices and use of maternal and child health messages among rural semi-illiterate communities.”⁵

South African researchers on the other hand report on aspects of care for children with Down’s syndrome: subjective experience, perceptions and attitudes of caregivers; and dynamics surrounding care-giving that may influence holistic interventions.⁶

The rest of the child health articles focus on correlates of autism among primary and secondary children in Nigeria.⁷; Caries and dental erosion vis-à-vis increased soft-drink availability in Uganda⁸; physical activity, body mass index and blood pressure in primary school pupils attending private schools.⁹; and long-term outcome of Tunisian children with primary ciliary dyskinesia confirmed by transmission electron microscopy.¹⁰

Reproductive health: In the next 6 papers, authors report on several reproductive health issues such as: utilization of ante-natal and delivery services¹¹, geophagia in pregnancy¹², and risk factors for pre-hypertension in Congolese women¹³. We have child marriage and implications for mortality, entitlements and freedoms.¹⁴; and inhibitory ef-

fects of *Cyperus rotundus* on uterine fibroids.¹⁵; The section ends with a paper on IgG isotypic antibodies to crude *Plasmodium falciparum* blood-stage antigen associated with placental malaria in Cameroon¹⁶.

Mental health:

The next section is on mental health. Hence we have articles on demand for psychiatric services¹⁷; referral letters to the psychiatrist¹⁸; suicidal ideation and attempt in post conflict Uganda.¹⁹; and socio-demographic correlates of treatment response among patients with schizophrenia in Nigeria²⁰. We also have an article on aerobic exercise, quality of life, psychological wellbeing and systemic inflammation in Alzheimer’s disease²¹. In a randomised controlled trial scientists describe the effects of vasodilator- and esmolol-induced hemodynamic stability on early post-operative cognitive dysfunction in elderly patients²²; while Tunisian researchers report on opiate withdrawal syndrome in buprenorphine abusers admitted to a rehabilitation center²³. The section ends with a rhetorical question: Does exercise alleviate depression related systemic inflammation in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease patients?²⁴

Infections:

Subjects on infections include: sero-prevalence of hepatitis delta antibodies in HIV/ hepatitis B co infected patients²⁵; post-transplant withdrawal of lamivudine and fatal hepatitis flares in kidney transplant recipients, under immunosuppression, with inactive hepatitis B infection.²⁶ The next paper explores patient satisfaction with TB care clinical consultations²⁷; while Abbas reports on glyceryl trinitrate as a novel inhibitor of quorum sensing in *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*²⁸. From South Africa we have an interesting paper on ‘Concurrent use of Antiretroviral and African traditional medicines amongst people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA) in the eThekweni Metropolitan area of KwaZulu Natal.’²⁹ Ugandan authors report on factors associated with community-acquired urinary tract infections among adults.³⁰

Non communicable diseases (NCDs)

These conditions are on the rise and we find that our authors continue sending in high quality papers. Hence from Uganda, we have a paper on diagnostic accuracy of fine needle aspiration cytology in patients undergoing thyroidectomy³¹; while Ghanaian researchers report on determinants of isolated systolic hypertension among diabetic

patients³². In a randomized clinical trial, Min-Hua Fan and others,³³ report the effect of individualized diabetes education for type 2 diabetes mellitus. The rest of the NCD articles are on sonographic assessment of the portal vein diameter in apparently healthy adults³⁴; usage of motor third party insurance³⁵; and use of locally manufactured wheelchairs in Tanzania³⁶. From Malawi we have a report on anatomical and osteometric study of the femoral sulcus angle in adults³⁷ while from South Africa we have a report on retinal nerve fibre layer thickness values and their associations with ocular and systemic parameters.³⁸

Conclusion:

Finally, we know that you will enjoy reading this bumper issue of African Health Sciences. Thank you for your custom and for being a reliable partner.

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African Health Sciences

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