

EDITOR'S CHOICE

Tackling HIV, malaria, tuberculosis and others together

I wish to welcome you to this Christmas edition of *African Health Sciences* in which we bring you diverse issues. Our lead research article¹ gives us a health policy perspective looking at the effectiveness of nevirapine and zidovudine in the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV. Scientists from Uganda and the USA compared the perinatal transmission rates of HIV among mothers who had received ARVs and those who had not. Perinatal transmission was 16% in the ARV group compared to 48% in the HIV naïve group. In our accompanying commentary Phillipa Musoke reviews the current issues on PMTCT.²

The theme of HIV runs through this issue of *African Health Sciences*³. In a very interesting essay written by a student from Tufts University in the USA⁴, we bring you a different approach to HIV care. The Cuban model that spurred a lot of controversy but which, nonetheless, seems to have been effective. The jury is still out. Or is it? In another essay from Tufts, Klein Chen⁵ explores the symbiosis between TB and HIV something we take for granted here in Africa, but which claims over 8000 lives a day. So is this an epidemic or an emergency of unimaginable proportions? Klein argues that there is a lot to be learnt from the two diseases in the symbiotic relationship at the biological and policy level. Food for thought.

The rest of this issue of *African Health Sciences* covers quality of health care for febrile children at the Kenyan coast,⁶ anti malarial drug usage in Ghana,⁷ infertility in Ugandan women⁸ and continuing medical education in Malawi⁹. We have three interesting case reports one on Takayasu's arteritis¹⁰, the other of Reiter's arthritis,¹¹ and psychotic manifestations of brain tumour patients¹². The other articles include the use of ICT in the face of globalization¹³, road safety¹⁴ and the rebellion against polio vaccine in Nigeria.¹⁵

As we strive to become the premier journal of health and development in Africa, we shall be publishing *African Health Sciences* four times a year (March, June, September and December) beginning with March 2005. This will enable us to respond to the increasing number of manuscripts and to decrease the lag time between acceptance and publication of papers. So please kindly note the change.

Finally I would like to remind you that the September 2005 issue of *African Health Sciences* will be devoted to neglected disease in Africa. This is in line with a decision by the Forum for African Medical Editors to request all African medical journals to highlight the neglected disease in their September 2005 issues. The diseases identified include leishmaniasis, cancer, sleeping sickness, filariasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, hydatid cyst, noma, Buruli ulcer, obesity related health disorders, dengue and other haemorrhagic fevers (Lassa, Ebola), yellow fever and others. So you are welcome to send your manuscripts for consideration for this issue.

Finally we wish to thank all our readers, reviewers, authors, development partners, editorial board, consultants, Prof. Nelson Sewankambo the dean Makerere Faculty of Medicine, the editorial staff and our printers and all of you who have contributed in one way or another to the success of

African Health Sciences. We say thank you very much for your support. May this Christmas season be peaceful and a time to reflect on what we, individually and collectively, can contribute to making the health of children, women and men of Africa better. That is the challenge.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

James K Tumwine
Editor

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