



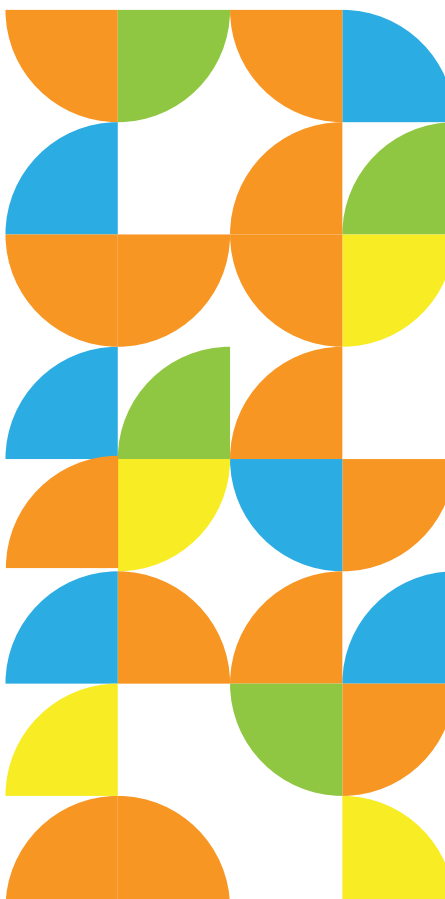
MARCH 2023 - FEBRUARY 2024

ANNUAL REVIEW



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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

As we reflect on 2023, it's remarkable to think that just two short years ago, we were fully immersed in the urgent task of supplying COVID-19 vaccines to half a million South African healthcare workers between February and May of 2021. As with so much related to the COVID19 pandemic—much was achieved in a very short time. In 2023, however, we were able to refocus almost entirely on our core mission: HIV treatment, prevention, and care; tuberculosis prevention and care; and addressing critical issues such as sexual, reproductive, and mental health, particularly among youth and LGBTQI+ populations. The global community has recently reflected on 40 years of the HIV epidemic and acknowledged the centuries-long battle against TB, and whilst these pandemics have been more protracted, as we move into

celebrating 20 years of the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation, we look forward to celebrating the impact we have had on these epidemics over the last two decades.

This year, we placed a strong emphasis on enhancing HIV prevention. Our FASTPrEP project, which aims to ensure unfettered access to sexual and reproductive health services for all young people in a single health district, truly gained momentum, reaching nearly 20,000 young people in the past year. The program's unique, vibrant approach resonated widely within the community and attracted the attention of visitors, including leadership from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, our project sponsors.

2023 also highlighted the importance of prevention choice, and with the results of the Cabotegravir long-acting PrEP we were honored to be selected as one of the implementation science projects to advance the CAB-LA PrEP agenda. We are hopeful that 2024 will see much wider access to this innovative, less frequently dosed, injectable PrEP option.



In addition to our HIV work, we continued to explore new innovations and solutions for related communicable diseases, including sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Historically, STI programming has not been prioritized globally, yet nearly one million infections occur daily, many of them in South Africa. At DTHF, we are pioneering new methods for treating, diagnosing, and managing STIs. We are also dedicating more resources and attention to mental health, especially for young people, with a focus on peer-led and self-care approaches.

South Africa's large TB epidemic remains a major concern, and the groundbreaking, paradigm shifting work emanating from the aerobiology unit at our Masiphumelele site is noteworthy. The team's seminal research is now being published, capturing the attention of prominent researchers worldwide. We hope that the insights gained in the laboratory will soon translate into clinical research and public health impacts.

These are just a few of the highlights from 2023. None of this would have been possible without the incredible dedication, passion, and innovation consistently demonstrated by our DTHF/DTHC teams on the ground. I extend my deepest thanks to our site and project leads, as well as our management teams, for their tireless efforts. Every single person plays a crucial role in overcoming the challenges we face and in turning research triumphs into real-world solutions. I also want to acknowledge the extraordinary dedication of our operational support teams, expertly guided by Amanda Maree and Susan Thevar. As you will see from this report, the organization is in a strong and stable position, thanks to their efforts. We are grateful for the wise counsel and good governance provided by our board and associated committees. Lastly, none of this would be possible without financial resources and support. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our funders, sponsors, and supporters, who have continued to place their confidence in us this past year. Your support inspires and encourages us to achieve even more in the years ahead.

Linda-Gail Bekker

CEO, Desmond Tutu Health Foundation



ABOUT US

OUR VISION

To lessen the impact of the HIV epidemic on individuals, families and communities through innovation and our passion for humanity.

OUR MISSION

The pursuit of excellence in research, treatment and prevention of HIV and related infections in South Africa.

OUR VALUES

INTEGRITY - PASSION - PROGRESS
- EXCELLENCE - INNOVATION - RESPECT

OUR PATRON

Bearing the name of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu is a constant reminder that our work is in the service of our beneficiaries. We thank him for his support and commitment to the people of our country.

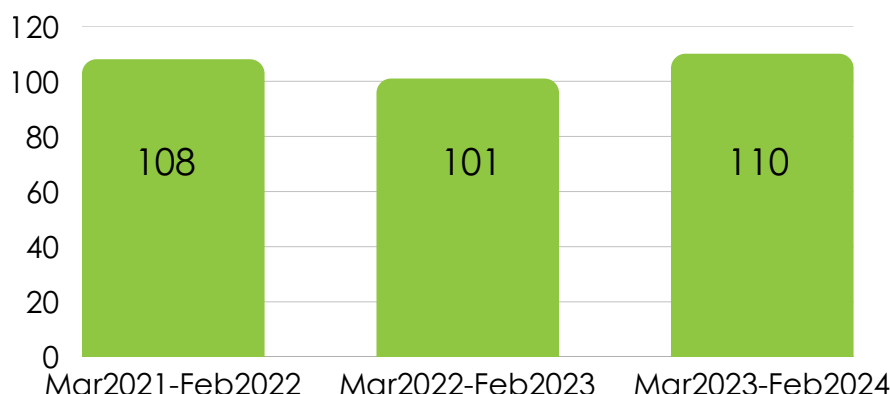


***"We are each made for goodness,
love and compassion."***

-- Archbishop Desmond Tutu



Number of peer-reviewed publications



Indicators 03/2023-02/2024

Number of client engagements *

31 407

Number of HIV tests *

24 263

Number of STI tests**

7 293

Number of pregnancy tests**

3 721

*excl. Eastern Cape

**Masi & FASTPrEP only



To support the development of healthy habits and lifestyles, the Mpiilo Health Park aims to provide a safe and welcoming environment where adolescents and young people can come together to engage in physical activity, learn about healthy living, and have access to free sexual and reproductive health services.

**EMPOWERING HEALTH,
TRANSFORMING LIVES**



Scan to donate

BOARD MEMBERS



Thandeka Tutu-Gxashe



Zohra Ebrahim
CHAIR



Kevin Osborne



Robert Appelbaum



**Makhosazana (Khosi)
Kubeka**



Peter Grant
A&R CHAIR



Linda-Gail Bekker



Mpho Ndebele

Pre-2000: Compassionate Care

1993 Start of a wide variety of clinical trials at New Somerset Hospital

1995 Establishment of the HIV Research Unit at New Somerset Hospital -- first ARV therapy available to HIV positive individuals enrolled in clinical trials

2000-2004: Treatment & Scale-up

2002 Opening of the Hannan Crusaid Clinic at the Gugulethu Day Hospital – the first community-based HIV treatment centre

2003 Launch of *Sizophila*, a team of therapeutic counsellors who provided support for patients starting treatment

2004 Relocation of the HIV Research Unit from New Somerset Hospital to the Department of Infectious Diseases and Molecular Medicine (IDM) at the University of Cape Town (UCT) **AND** renaming of the HIV Research Unit to the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation

Establishment of the foundation's academic arm, the Desmond Tutu HIV Centre within the IDM at UCT

MasiART (antiretroviral) services began as part of the Masiphumelele (Masi) site development

2005-2009: TB & HIV Comorbidity

2006 Initiation of the Clinical Trials Unit (CTU) at Groote Schuur Hospital

2007 Inception of the Emavundleni Clinical Research Site in Nyanga

2008 Launch of the Tutu Tester, the prototype mobile clinic

Establishment of the LGBT+ Health Division at Groote Schuur Hospital to promote equitable access to appropriate and affirming healthcare for LGBTQI+ populations

Introduction of Adolescent ARV treatment at the Gugulethu Community Health Clinic

- 2011** Launch of the Masiphumelele Youth Centre
- Introduction of TB treatment at Hannan Crusaid
- 2012** Initiation of treatment for multidrug-resistant (MDR) TB patients at Hannan Crusaid
- Desmond Tutu HIV Centre Clinic moves to Groote Schuur Hospital
- 2013** CTU shifts from DTHF to be governed by DTHC and the UCT CTU is formed
- Establishment of the Aerobiology and TB Research Unit at Masi

2010-2014: HIV prevention

2020-2024: HIV within a broader health context (NCDs & mental health)

2015-2019: Differentiated Service Delivery, key populations & adolescents

- 2015** Launch of the Tutu Teen Truck mobile clinic
- 2016** The Gugulethu Clinical Research Site moves to the adjacent Scout Hall
- 2017** Launch of three Tutu Kwik Test mobile clinics
- 2019** UCT CTU extended to 4 sites: Emavundleni CRS, GSH CRS, South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (SATVI) CRS and UCT Lung Institute CRS

2020 Renaming of the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation to Desmond Tutu Health Foundation

2021 Establishment of the Eastern Cape research site within the Buffalo City Metro Health District

2022 DTHF head office relocates

2023 Launch of the Mpilo Health Park in Masi

2024



CONGRATULATIONS



Research.com

**Best
Female
Scientists
2023**

Linda-Gail Bekker

CEO of Desmond Tutu
Health Foundation

In the 2023 Research.com world scientist ranking, Prof. Linda-Gail Bekker, has yet again been ranked number 1 female Scientist in Medicine in South Africa.

Prof. Robin Wood, was ranked 4th in the Medical Science rankings for South Africa overall.



Robin Wood

Former CEO of Desmond Tutu Health Foundation,
Head of the Aerobiology Unit



Cynthia Nombeko Mpongo

Cynthia Nombeko Mpongo has been appointed by the Medicines Patent Pool in 2023 to join the *Community Advisory Panel*.

Her role involves advising on community issues related to HIV treatment access as well as how governments in low-and- middle-income countries can improve availability of treatment.



Bryan Leonard

Data Manager & Analyst

Bryan Leonard, completed his Master of Public Health (MPH) in Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of Cape Town in 2023.

The title of his Master's thesis is "Patterns of HIV care prior to antenatal care, and the impact on later outcomes, among pregnant women living with HIV in Gugulethu, South Africa: a retrospective cohort."



Katherine Gill

Medical Doctor &
Masiphumelele CRS Lead

Dr. Katherine Gill has been selected as a member of the Medicines Patent Pool *Expert Advisory Group* -- she will hold the position of expert working with communities and the non-governmental sector (infectious diseases).



Gabriela Carolus

Project Coordinator
Adolescent Health Research

Gabriela Carolus completed her MPhil in Health Systems and Service Research at the University of Stellenbosch in 2023.



Carey Pike

Executive Research
Assistant & UCT medical
student

Carey Pike was awarded the 2023 Dr Francois Majoos Medal for top MBChB student in fourth year medicine & 2023 John Fleming Brock Prize for best student in Health in Context in fourth year MBChB.



Philip Smith

Social Behavioural Scientist
Mobile Services Project Leader

Dr. Philip Smith was awarded the prestigious PDRI-DevLab Visiting Fellowship for African Scholars at the University of Pennsylvania.

2024 IS A BIG YEAR FOR US !

Celebrating 20 Years of Impact!

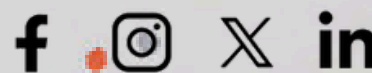
2024 marks a remarkable milestone for the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation as we joyfully celebrate 20 years of dedicated service, groundbreaking research, and unwavering commitment to health and well-being!

Since our inception, we have been at the forefront of bridging scientific discovery with clinical application and actively engaging with the communities we serve. This journey has been filled with moments of triumph, resilience, and collaboration.

Here's to two decades of advancing health, fostering community empowerment, and contributing to global initiatives. Thank you to our incredible team, partners, and communities for being part of this transformative journey!



Please follow along as we take you on a journey this year to commemorate both our challenges and victories.



E V E N T S

Cape Town Pride

4. MARCH 2023



The DTHF LGBT+ Health Division was honoured to join the Cape Town LGBTQI+ community for its annual Cape Town Pride event. DTHF participated in the march, and the LGBT+ Health Division and FASTPrEP had stalls at the Mardi Gras event afterwards, which was an opportunity to interact and proudly share the work of DTHF. Cape Town Pride is an opportunity to celebrate the beauty of the LGBTQI+ community whilst advocating for improved access to healthcare and equal treatment in society for LGBTQI+ people.



2023



FASTPrEP Youth Event

29. JUNE 2023

The FASTPrEP youth event aimed to raise awareness about the FASTPrEP project and introduce the Dapivirine Vaginal Ring to the community. Organized in collaboration with the Youth Reference Group, the event coincided with Youth and Pride Month, emphasizing the vital role of young people in promoting diversity and inclusivity. The primary goals were to highlight the impact of youth, embrace societal diversity, and introduce the new HIV prevention method. The Youth Reference Group played an integral role in shaping the event, providing input on how it should be conducted. Their feedback emphasized the importance of education focused on destigmatizing sexual and reproductive healthcare services and drawing parallels between the youth of 1976 and the current generation.



Adolescent Health Summit

26. AUGUST 2023



The Adolescent Health Summit is an initiative dedicated to addressing critical issues in adolescent health, particularly in HIV prevention and response. The summit focused on empowering young girls and boys living with chronic illnesses to become advocates for their own

health and well-being. It brought together 100 adolescents from our Better Together programme for discussions, workshops, and interactive sessions designed to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to reduce stigma and build resilience. FASTPrEP's involvement in the summit included: a panel discussion centered around the theme of "Breaking Stigma," encouraging open dialogue on challenging and overcoming societal stigmas; sessions focused on empowering adolescents to take an active role in advocating for improved access to sexual and reproductive health services and a breakout session on "Cultivating Resilience: Overcoming Challenges", which aimed to foster collaboration and resilience among adolescents, encouraging them to thrive despite challenges.

Central Karoo LGBTQI Health & Advocacy Day

14. & 15. JULY 2023

The LGBTQI+ Health and Advocacy Days, held at the Youth Hub in Beaufort West on 14 July and PACT Centre in Prince Albert on 15 July, highlighted a strong consensus from the LGBTQI+ community in the Central Karoo that: "More should be done so that healthcare can be accessed in the community we live in."

This significant event was organised collaboratively by Central Karoo PRIDE, the Department of Local Government Community Development Workers Program Central Karoo Region, Desmond Tutu Health Foundation, GCIS Western Cape and Trans Tec SA. The days' activities focused on raising awareness, advocating for inclusive healthcare services, and addressing the specific health needs of the LGBTQI+ community in the region.



DESMOND TUTU
HEALTH FOUNDATION

LGBT+ HEALTH DIVISION



The event underscored the importance of community-based healthcare access and the ongoing efforts required to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, receive equitable and affirming healthcare services.

EVENTS



Launch of the Dapiring

29. AUGUST 2023

In 2015, South Africa was the first country on the African continent to approve oral Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, or oral PrEP, as an HIV infection prevention method. Oral PrEP is a daily pill developed for both men and women, to prevent the acquisition of HIV. Less than a decade later, and South Africa again lead the way with the approval of a longer acting HIV prevention product for women, a dapivirine vaginal ring (DPV-VR), also known as the Dapiring, which was approved by SAHPRA in March 2022.

The Dapiring is a flexible silicone vaginal ring that women can self-insert, which contains 25mg of dapivirine (an antiretroviral drug), which is slowly released over 28 days. Thereafter, it can easily be removed and replaced with a new ring. The dapiring is intended to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV during vaginal sex for women who were assigned female at birth. It does not prevent HIV infection through any other mode of transmission such as rectal intercourse or through drug injection.

DTHF's FASTPrEP team was thrilled and excited to add the DapiRing as an additional option for HIV prevention to their mobile clinics, expanding the product choice offering to their clients in line with their person-centered, differentiated service delivery approach.



Mandalay Safe Space

14. SEPTEMBER 2023

The Mandalay Safe Space hosted a significant event in the Klipfontein District, attended by 54 dedicated participants, including Community Health Workers and NIMART-trained Professional Nurses. The DTHF LGBT+ Health Division facilitated a Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) workshop in collaboration with leaders from the Mandalay Safe Space. The workshop centered on critical discussions about the importance of raising awareness regarding LGBTQI+ healthcare needs, promoting inclusivity, and reducing stigma. Key takeaways from the event highlighted the necessity for ongoing collaboration, the integration of SOGI topics into healthcare curricula, and increased support for LGBTQI+ initiatives.

Fenway Institute Workshop

26. SEPTEMBER 2023

In collaboration with Professor Ken Mayer from Harvard Medical School and the Fenway Institute, the DTHF LGBT+ division hosted a workshop that provided invaluable insights into Fenway's pioneering work in LGBTQI+ health research. This event featured a comprehensive roundtable discussion focused on integrating research and training into service provision for the LGBTQI+ community in South Africa. The engagement and contributions from our partners were instrumental in addressing these critical topics and advancing our collective efforts in LGBTQI+ health.





Launch of the Mpilo Health Park

15. SEPTEMBER 2023

In recognition of the need to prioritize adolescent and young peoples' health and HIV prevention, the DTHF built and operates a youth centre in Masiphumelele. The Youth Centre was first launched in 2011 and is located on 1.5 hectares of residential land outside, but adjacent to, Masiphumelele. The site is directly opposite Masiphumelele High School. About 5000 youth aged 12-24 years (roughly about 100-150 youth would use the facilities daily) were registered at the youth centre initially before it was restructured as an emergency vaccine centre in 2020 with the COVID19 pandemic outbreak. There have consistently been around 700-800 young women attending for sexual, reproductive health services at the youth clinic when it was an active youth centre and those SRH services have continued throughout. As the vaccine centre closed in early 2023, the centre was transitioned into the Mpilo health park, which was launched in September 2023.

The clinic at the Mpilo Health Park is staffed by nurses and doctors from the DTHF Masiphumelele research site who are trained in offering youth-friendly services.



It is supported by the Western Cape Department of Health who provide the required pharmaceuticals, testing kits and non-pharmaceuticals. This is in accordance with an MOU with them, as they recognize the importance of this service in the community.

The establishment of the Mpilo Health Park aims to provide a safe and welcoming environment where adolescents and young people can come together to engage in physical activity, learn about healthy living, and have access to free sexual and reproductive health services. The Mpilo Health Park includes a multi-purpose court that accommodates soccer, netball and basketball, exercise facilities and equipment, and offers regular exercise classes.





DTHF-IAVI WORKSHOP: WHAT'S NEW? INNOVATIONS IN ADOLESCENT HEALTHCARE WORKSHOP

19. & 20. OCTOBER 2023

The DTHF adolescent division hosted the first in-person adolescent health workshop post COVID. The theme of the 2023 workshop was 'What's new? Innovations in Adolescent Healthcare'. The intention was to highlight a range of areas where exciting innovations and approaches are being introduced into adolescent sexual and reproductive healthcare and the mental wellbeing of young people. The overarching aim of the workshop was to create space for early career researchers to share adolescent health research findings from the sub-Saharan region and to learn from senior adolescent health scientists.

Through networking with senior researchers, it was anticipated that early career researchers could identify collaboration opportunities to strengthen their research efforts in the sub-Saharan region. In addition, the workshop provided an opportunity for those working in delivering services to hear of innovative developments in the arena of adolescent research and service delivery for HIV prevention and treatment. The 2-day workshop was attended by close to 80 people in-person and up to 60 people online.



Professor Linda-Gail Bekker is the Director of the Desmond Tutu HIV Centre at the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine, UCT and Chief Executive Officer of the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation. Prof Bekker is a physician, scientist and infectious disease specialist. Linda-Gail Bekker gave the opening plenary of the workshop.



Differentiated service delivery for HIV prevention & treatment among adolescents



Dr. Ivy Kasiye is a medical doctor with 26 years of experience in the health sector. She has 17 years of experience as a Paediatrician working in the area of Paediatric and adolescent HIV service delivery and programming. She has extensive experience providing technical support for child health and adolescent girls and young women programmes in Eastern and Southern Africa



WATCH NOW



Dr Grimsrud is a Senior Technical Advisor at the International Aids Society. She holds an MPH and PhD from the University of Cape Town (UCT). Previously, she worked at the Treatment Action Campaign in implementation science and epidemiology at UCT with the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation and Médecins Sans Frontières.



Dr Priscilla Tsondai is the Technical Lead of the Collaborative Initiative for Paediatric HIV Education & Research (CIPHER) - the paediatric and adolescent programme of the International AIDS Society.



New products and medical interventions in the field of HIV prevention & treatment



WATCH NOW



Sébastien Morin joined the Medicines Patent Pool (MPP) in 2019. His work in the policy space covers various disease areas (e.g., HIV and TB) and geographies (Africa, Latin America and MENA). Sébastien is also MPP's lead in paediatrics and for the Global Accelerator for Paediatric Formulations (GAP-f). Sébastien Morin joined virtually and introduced the MPP and their role in ensuring access to HIV prevention and treatment.



Shelly Malhotra is Executive Director of Global Access at IAVI and heads IAVI's efforts to ensure the affordability, availability, acceptability and broad adoption of vaccine and therapeutic candidates. She leads IAVI's access strategy, policy engagement, and stakeholder engagement efforts. Shelly Malhotra joined virtually and presented on bnAbs treatment and prevention, and related access issues.

Non-communicable diseases and risk factors and associated mental health concerns



WATCH NOW

Dr Amith Ramcharan is a Paediatric Endocrinologist at Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital and Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town, South Africa.

Dr Ramcharan will be presenting on his work on diabetes in adolescents and related obesity.



Dr Janetta Harbron is a Senior Lecturer in Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Cape Town, with a particular interest in obesity and non-communicable diseases. Dr Janetta Harbron is presented on her work on the CO-CREATE project working with young people to create, inform and promote policies for obesity prevention.



Dr Simiso Sokhela is a medical Doctor with over 20 years in public and private health care. She is currently a Director of Clinical Research at Ezintsha, University of the Witwatersrand with a special interest in HIV, infectious diseases, and non-communicable diseases research. Dr Simiso Sokhela is presenting on obesity in adolescents related to ARV treatment



WATCH NOW

Digital health innovation for adolescent health

Dr Hanif Homaira is an Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology: CONRAD at Eastern Virginia Medical School. Dr Homaira will talk on the development of the Vuka app, and the research with end users to design this, as well as the current RCT which is underway to test this.



Dr Ntombifikile Mtshali, MD, MBA, is Chief Executive Officer of Shout-It-Now, a South African NGO that delivers youth-friendly, community-based HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health and related services in Gauteng and North West provinces. Dr Mtshali is an experienced manager with an exemplary 12-year postgraduate track record in clinical work and health service management, blending her experience in business re-engineering seamlessly with her technical expertise and extensive public health management experience.

Adolescent sexual and reproductive health novel approaches & treatments



WATCH NOW



Dr Katherine Gill is a medical doctor, public health specialist and senior researcher at the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation specializing in HIV Prevention Clinical Trials, adolescent and STI research. Dr Gill prepared a presentation on emerging research and understanding of the vaginal microbiome and its impact on vaginal health and STI risk and the re-purposing of drugs and vaccines for the treatment of STIs.

Dr. Rirhandzu Ndzhukule is a Principal Investigator (PI) at the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation in Cape Town, South Africa. She earned her medical degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2004. Over the past seven years, Dr. Ndzhukule has transitioned into clinical research, beginning as an investigator in an HIV vaccine trial. Her research interests include HIV prevention and STI studies. Notably, she was the PI in a clinical trial that demonstrated no HIV infections among participants who received the six-month injectable PrEP. Currently, she is leading an STI prevention clinical trial.



Kylie Marais is a feminist anthropologist, pleasure activist and a PhD candidate at the University of Cape Town. Her research critically explores the sexual subjectivities of coloured women from Cape Town through the lens of sexual pleasure. Kylie Marais will present on her research findings on women's sexual subjectivities, as well as looking at

- (1) what sexual pleasure is
- (2) why it is important for individuals
- (3) why it is important within the context of South Africa
- (4) why it is important for adolescent sexual and reproductive healthcare in South Africa.



Dr Sheetal Kassim is a principal investigator and senior research officer with experience working on numerous HIV prevention and treatment trials

Dr Kassim provided an overview of new and upcoming products for HIV prevention and treatment to orientate the audience.



Mbali Jonas a Marketing & Communications Coordinator for the FASTPrEP study is passionate about sexual reproductive healthcare and hopes to create change through developing educational content. Mbali Jonas presented a skills workshop to the in-person attendees on "Creating demand for adolescent HIV prevention products: knowing your consumers"



Project Manager, Lynn Bust, and Community Engagement Officer, Xola Tatubana, of the DTHF LGBT+ Health Division presented a skills workshop on Navigating Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities in Adolescent Health.

Sex assigned at birth:

Biological sex is typically assigned at birth based on measurable characteristics such as genitals.



Female: A category that babies are assigned at birth based mainly on having female genitals.



Male: A category that babies are assigned at birth based mainly on having male genitals.



Intersex: People who are born with sex characteristics that do not fit into conventional definitions of male or female.

Gender identity:

A personal sense or awareness of one's own gender, and the interpretation of what that means. This can be the same as a person's assigned sex or can differ from it.



Agender: A person who identifies as not having a gender or being genderless.



Cisgender (Cis) Woman: A person who was assigned female at birth and whose gender identity is female.



Cisgender (Cis) Man: A person who was assigned male at birth and whose gender identity is male.



Genderfluid: A person whose gender identity shifts over time. May be male, female or neither at various time points.



Non-binary: A person who does not identify as either male or female.



Transgender (Trans) Woman: A person who was assigned male at birth and whose gender identity is female.



Transgender (Trans) Man: A person who was assigned female at birth and whose gender identity is male.

Sexual orientation:

Who a person is sexually attracted to based on sex or gender in relation to their own.



Asexual: No sexual attraction to others, or low or absent interest in sexual activity.



Bisexual: A person who is sexually attracted to both men and women.



Gay: A sexual attraction to people of the same gender. Most often used to describe a man who is sexually attracted to other men.



MSM: Men who have sex with men. They may also have sex with women, and may or may not identify as gay.



Lesbian: A woman who is sexually attracted to other women.



WSW: Women who have sex with women. They may also have sex with men, and may or may not identify as lesbian.



Pansexual: A person who is sexually attracted to people of all genders and sexes.



Straight: A person who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite gender.



Queer: A general term for people whose sexual orientation is not exclusively straight.



Questioning: People who are exploring their sexual orientation.

Creating conversation, understanding, visibility and Safe Spaces within our communities

NOVEMBER 2023

The DTHF LGBT+ Health Division is proud to have been a part of #16daysofactivism in the Central Karoo from 27-30 November. Together with their partners, Central Karoo Pride, Local Government Community Development Workers Program, Prince Albert Community Trust, and Government Communication and Information System, they hosted 4 sessions in the spirit of building inclusive LGBTQI+ environments, raising awareness on issues faced by the LGBTQI+ community as well as the importance of visibility within our communities.

The focus of the sessions was the establishment of Safe Spaces for the LGBTQI+ people of Central Karoo and to run Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Workshops with stakeholders both in Beaufort West and Prince Albert. At the SOGI workshops representatives from the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, Department of Home Affairs, Western Cape Department of Health and Wellness, Local Government Community Development Workers, Right to Care, Government Communication and Information System, and Central Karoo Pride were in attendance. This was truly an opportunity for collaborative action and key conversations around tangible action plans to make the departments LGBTQI+ inclusive were had.



www.bit.ly/SOGI_Universe



This event also provided the opportunity for LGBTQI+ community members in the Central Karoo region to voice their experiences of being part of the LGBTQI+ community and allies were able to connect and identify areas of support. We thank all our partners who made these engagements possible and look forward to working together in 2024 to continue creating LGBTQI+ inclusive environments in the Central Karoo.

***These fundamental conversations
need to be continued for every one
of our communities to feel safe and
to end hate crimes and stigma.***



World AIDS Day

01. DECEMBER 2023

As we gather around the globe on this significant World AIDS Day, we feel compelled to amplify the collective voice that echoes in our hearts: the voice that speaks of compassion, resilience, and a shared commitment to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Today, we reflect on the progress we've made, acknowledge the hurdles still before us, & renew our dedication to a world free from the shackles of HIV/AIDS.

In the spirit of solidarity, let us recommit ourselves to the principle that no one is left behind. The fight against HIV/AIDS is not just a scientific endeavor; it is a movement fueled by empathy, understanding, and a fierce determination to break down the barriers that perpetuate the spread of this virus.

Our journey towards a world without AIDS demands that we confront stigma and discrimination head-on. To truly make strides in prevention and treatment, we must create environments where individuals are not judged for their status but are instead embraced with open hearts and open minds. We must empower communities with knowledge, resources, and the tools necessary to protect themselves and their loved ones. This includes access to testing, treatment, and prevention methods that are not only effective but also context-specific, adaptable and feasible.

The fight against HIV/AIDS knows no borders. It requires a united front, transcending geopolitical boundaries and joining hands with partners across the world. By fostering global collaborations, we amplify our impact and create a network of support that can withstand any challenge. On this World AIDS Day, let us be the architects of change. Let our actions speak louder than words, and let our compassion be the driving force that propels us towards a world where no one lives in the shadow of HIV/AIDS



Together, we can create a legacy of hope, resilience, and triumph over adversity. We have done the science and we know now that antiretroviral-based pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) dramatically reduces HIV incidence amongst individuals at risk for HIV acquisition when access, adherence, and persistence are high. We also now know that individuals on anti-HIV treatment, whose viral load is not detectable, are not infectious to their intimate partners (Undetectable equals Untransmittable). We now need to focus on the optimisation of preventative and treatment measures by offering product choice and differentiated access. Although we have conquered many mountains, the winding path to the summit, to a world without AIDS, remains challenging, but with our collective strength, it is a path we will tread until we reach the destination we so fervently seek. But this requires ongoing advocacy, and we call on governments and the pharmaceutical companies to accelerate their access programmes and expedite their cost negotiations, remembering that in the time it took you to read this post, 4 adolescents died of preventable causes, and in this past week, 4000 adolescent girls and women became infected with HIV.



EVENTS

Mama Leah visits HQ

01. FEBRUARY 2024



In February DTHF had the immense honour of hosting a truly special guest at our Headquarters in Woodstock, Cape Town – Mrs. Nomalizo Leah Shenxane Tutu! In a heartfelt dedication and handover ceremony, Mrs. Tutu, the remarkable wife of our patron, the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu, shared her love and grace with us. As a symbol of the Archbishop's legacy, she presented us with an iconic Desmond Tutu cap along with a generous donation. The cap is one of nine caps gifted to Mama Leah to commemorate each decade of the Arch's incredible 90-year journey. The DTHF is honoured to be one of the recipients.

Adding to the significance, a special plaque was unveiled in honour of the DTHF's Mpilo Health Park at our Masiphumelele clinical research site. Mpilo means 'life', and is also the Archbishop's second name. Our team was overjoyed to celebrate this momentous occasion with Mrs. Tutu.



Hanover Park Pride

28. FEBRUARY 2024

A day filled with joy, community and love was had in the second annual Hanover Park Pride event, supported by the LGBT+ Health Division. The day honoured the queer elders but was also aimed at highlighted young queer voices and bringing our transgender community to the forefront. The event started with a march through the streets of Hanover Park – where song and dance were the order of the hour, followed by talks from local LGBTQI+ community members, government stakeholders and a variety of fabulous performances. An HIV-testing station – equipped with testing kits, safe sex paraphernalia and PrEP, was provided by the FASTPrEP team with wonderful healthcare workers making sure our community stays safe and healthy.



DESMOND TUTU
HEALTH FOUNDATION
LGBT+ HEALTH DIVISION

Follow @dthf_lgbtqi on
Instagram for regular updates



NGOsource
Equivalency Determination on File

**We are thrilled to have received our ED-
certified status through NGO source !
DTHF's equivalency determination
certificate is now on file in the NGOs ource
repository for US-based grantmakers to
request and access.**

To learn more about NGO source, visit www.ngosource.org

DTHF in the media



DTHF's CEO Linda-Gail Bekker spoke to Bhekisisa about different types of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV prevention. How much is the national health department prepared to pay? And why do men with HIV get diagnosed later? Watch the full episode to hear more about this.



In this episode, the Bhekisisa Centre for Health Journalism looks at affordable ways of HIV prevention. The first half of the video features DTHF's mobile clinic services and interviews with various stakeholders.

DTHF's Implementation Science Researcher Elzette Rousseau talks to Newzroom Afrika about CAB-LA, a two-monthly HIV prevention injectable. DTHF was the first in South Africa to offer this PrEP product as part of the 'PrEPared to Choose' study.



Linda-Gail Bekker talks about how the Access to Medicine Foundation is driving change to make sure that patients in all parts of the world get the treatment they need and how the Foundation's insights are a tool for changemaking. Linda-Gail also reflects on health inequity she has witnessed working as a healthcare provider in South Africa for the past 25 years.



Research Updates

HIV Treatment

Treatment of HIV has been a core business of the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation since the beginning. Two sites remain focused on HIV treatment: the Groote Schuur Clinical Trials Unit (known as “J52”) and the Centre for Adherence and Therapeutics (DCAT), adjacent to the Gugulethu Community Health Centre.

- The Groote Schuur Clinical Trials Unit (J52) comprises a multidisciplinary team of 44 people, including doctors, nurses, pharmacists as well as lab, data and counselling staff. They manage a dedicated, state-of-the-art clinical trials unit with outpatient and inpatient pharmacokinetic facilities, with access to tertiary services of the world-famous Groote Schuur Hospital. Professor Robin Wood was the first to offer antiretroviral therapy to public sector patients through clinical drug trials at this site, when treatment was unaffordable and unavailable in sub-Saharan Africa.
- The DTHF Centre for Adherence and Therapeutics (DCAT) is a smaller dedicated treatment unit with a focus on novel methods to measure and improve adherence to antiretroviral therapy and retention in care. The site is based in the Gugulethu community. Profs Linda-Gail Bekker and Catherine Orrell were the first to offer community-based ART at this site, in September 2002.



DTHF remains at the current edge of ART research, exploring new drugs, new formulations and new treatment strategies.



Treatment strategy studies include the D²EFT study (**D**olutegravir and **D**arunavir **E**valuation in adults **F**ailing **T**herapy), which has recently presented week 48 results, showing that dolutegravir-based second-line options are as good to use as the current protease inhibitor-based options. This study has contributed to the data resulting in a change to the South African treatment guidelines.

FLAIR and **ATLAS/ATLAS 2M** (completed at J52) were the original pharma studies which showed intra-muscular cabotegravir (CAB) and rilpivirine (RPV) could maintain viral suppression in people whose viral load was already suppressed on oral medication. Both DCAT and J52 have been critical sites exploring the appropriate niche for these newly registered (but not yet launched) injectable ART formulations: in adolescents and young people (the **AFINAty** study); in those struggling with adherence in Africa (**IMPALA** study). Injectable formulations are a breakthrough in HIV treatment, where viral suppression rates are reduced due to people being unable to manage the burden of daily tablet taking.

In addition to these studies, the DCAT team has been awarded funding from the EDCTP to explore the use of injectable preparation in another vulnerable population, post-partum women (**DOLPHiN3** study).

DCAT also explores, through a number of investigator-driven studies, the use of novel methods of measuring adherence: such as the Wisepill device, tenofovir diphosphate assays in dried blood spots and the Urine Tenofovir Rapid Test (**UTRA** study). These studies are currently funded by the EDCTP (the **RETAIN** study) and the NIH **SUSTAIN** study (R01 and R21 mechanisms).

Another cluster of studies (MSD 017 and 020, 051, 053, 054) explore the use of Islatravir, a new class of ART with the potential to be offered as a once a week or even once a month tablet. Islatravir is currently offered as a single daily tablet in combination with Doravirine, a newer non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor. Due to a recent pause due to drug accumulation in CD4 cells, all patients have been switched onto a new lower dose. As a result, we have started investigating a similar drug, MK8427 which in early PK trials is showing promise for a long acting formulation (MK004). In later 2024, the ISLEND study will commence at both J52 and DCAT: looking at a single weekly tablet of Islatravir and Lenacapavir: another step forward for people who struggle with adherence.



Our inpatient ward has been used for a number of pharmacokinetic and early phase studies, including overnight stays for the **DoRIS** study (Drug Interactions between Dolutegravir and escalating-doses of Rifampicin Study) – creating PK profiles of dolutegravir with increasing doses of rifampicin – critical for maximising the use of this first-line anti tuberculosis agent. Results are due in August 2024. MSD004 (A Single-Dose Clinical Trial to Study the Safety, Tolerability, Pharmacokinetics, and Anti-Retroviral Activity of MK-8527 Monotherapy in Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART)-Naïve, HIV-1 Infected Participants) is a phase I study evaluating a new drug in small cohorts to explore the minimum dose for early viral suppression in ART-naïve individuals.

In addition to drug trials and novel long acting treatment methods- we are also participating in exciting new Analytic Treatment Interruption trials. The A5416/HVTN806/HPTN108 trial is looking at 2 promising monoclonal antibodies, delivered IV at one timepoint, in order to achieve viral neutralization and long term suppression. These antibody treatment trials are exciting because they provide an alternative to pharmacotherapy, side effects, adherence challenges and are a foundation for cure research.

We are currently enrolling participants on the **ARTISTRY** trial, which investigates a fixed dose combination drug of Lenacapavir and Bictegravir. Lenacapavir is a new compound, a capsid inhibitor, also under investigation in the HIV prevention PURPOSE studies. LEN/BIC has been approved for use in Highly Treatment Experienced PLWHIV in the UK and USA. The ARTISTRY study compares safety and efficacy of LEN/BIC to the standard regimen of PLWHIV on third line regimens, often consisting of multiple drugs with twice daily dosing, making adherence to treatment extremely difficult. If LEN/BIC is found to be effective, this will be a game changer for people on third line regimens.

The **PAUSE** study is a phase 1 Analytical Treatment Interruption (ATI) trial which is set to begin soon at our unit. PLWHIV who are stable on suppressive ART will be randomized to receive a single dose infusion of combined broadly neutralizing antibodies, or placebo. We will then interrupt their HIV treatment and follow them up weekly, reinitiating ART when their viral loads are no longer suppressed. These antibodies have been designed from PLWHIV who have managed to maintain virologic suppression without ART- so called 'elite controllers.' ATI trials are specifically geared towards HIV cure research, with careful consideration for the sociobehavioural and safety aspects pertaining to interrupting ART momentarily.

HIV Prevention

Throughout the past year, the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation has been instrumental in driving HIV prevention research. By focusing on key populations and novel biomedical interventions, DTHF continues to champion innovative strategies to reduce HIV incidence globally.

Clinical Trials and Studies

Purpose 1 Study: The teams at the Masiphumelele, J52 Groote Schuur and Emavundleni sites, successfully enrolled participants for a study that could revolutionize HIV prevention for at-risk adolescent girls and young women through long-acting, subcutaneous Lenacapavir and daily oral Emtricitabine/Tenofovir Alafenamide. In total, the DTHF contributed 400 out of the 5639 participants globally.

Insight Study: The work with the Insight study across DTHF sites provided critical insights into oral PrEP adherence, allowing for the tailoring of approaches in consideration of young women's needs and preferences. This trial was done at Masiphumelele and Emavundleni, and they contributed an impressive 301 participants to the study.

VUKA+ App Trial: The effectiveness-implementation trial of the Vuka+ app for PrEP adherence, which enrolled 330 participants, exemplifies DTHF's commitment to leveraging technology to empower young women in South Africa.

Purpose 2 Study: DTHF's significant enrollment achievements in the lenacapavir Phase 3 study (Groote Schuur's J52 site) underscore the efforts to extend cutting-edge HIV prevention options to key populations, including MSM and transgender individuals, who are often at higher risk and face barriers to accessing care.



Advancements in Pharmacologic Prevention

CAB LA Implementation: Following the successful HPTN 083 and 084 trials, the implementation of long-acting injectable Cabotegravir (CAB LA) stands as a testament to DTHF's contribution to the advent of new, highly effective HIV prevention methods. In addition to implementation studies, the Foundation, together with ViiV Health Care continues to ensure post-trial access to the HPTN 083 and 084 trial participants, through the Palisade study.

HIV Prevention in Key Populations

DTHF's efforts in reaching key populations have been expansive and diverse:

Youth Engagement: Tailored programs for adolescents and young adults, focusing on both education and practical prevention tools like PrEP, have been crucial.

MSM and Transgender Populations: Trials such as the lenacapavir study for cisgender men and transgender individuals have brought groundbreaking prevention methods to the forefront, addressing the unique challenges these groups face.

Mobile Clinics and Accessibility: FASTPrEP's mobile clinics have been critical in overcoming geographical and systemic barriers, ensuring that HIV prevention methods are within reach of those most in need.



Vaccine and Monoclonal Antibody Research



The foundation has actively engaged in the exploration of monoclonal antibodies for both the prevention and treatment of HIV. Our participation in Phase 1 and 2 experimental vaccine programs also demonstrates our commitment to long-term solutions for HIV prevention.

Experimental Vaccines: The ongoing research into HIV vaccines promises a future where HIV can be prevented before exposure, potentially eliminating the virus altogether.

Novel delivery methods of vaccine candidates are also being trialled in HVTN305- Intradermal Injection with Electroporation in a ph 1 DNA based HIV vaccine candidate. This trial also focused on capacity building in RSA for specialized procedures eg leukapheresis

Participation and being selected as a site in a highly competitive process for the BRILLIANT Consortium – Vaccines for Africa in Africa by Africans. Phase 1 trial BRILLIANT 001 to start in January 2025.

Monoclonal Antibodies: The development and testing of novel monoclonal antibodies could offer a new dimension to HIV prevention, potentially providing long-lasting protection with fewer administrations.

Completion of the HVTN140/HPTN101 trial- this looked at 3 different antibodies, modified to be long acting and given in sequence, in order to achieve broad neutralization. Novel delivery method was looking at Sub cutaneous administration, as well as IV and also looked at acceptability and feasibility of SC vs IV. This trial is forming the basis for the future Combo AMP trials

As we conclude a year marked by scientific achievement and innovation, the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation renews its commitment to the elimination of HIV/AIDS. The work in clinical trials, key population outreach, and advanced biomedical prevention strategies, including vaccines and monoclonal antibodies, stands as a beacon of hope and a clear path forward in the global fight against HIV.

In partnership with communities and the foundation's valued stakeholders, DTHF moves into the next year with the promise of reducing the burden of HIV through prevention, research, and unwavering dedication to the health and well-being of all populations at risk of HIV.



FASTPrEP

Don't delay - get protected today!

Launched in April 2022 with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the FastPrEP study is an implementation science project aimed at scaling up oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and other new biomedical HIV prevention products. The project focuses on differentiated service delivery models for adolescent girls and young women, their partners, and young men who have sex with men in the Klipfontein-Mitchells Plain Health Sub-district in Cape Town.

FastPrEP delivers PrEP within a seroneutral and integrated sexual and reproductive health package from 4 mobile clinics as the “hub” and a combination of local government clinics (n=12) and other community-based delivery options (youth club, courier delivery, and 16 schools) as the “spokes”. FastPrEP is a youth-focused and co-created service. In 2021, a youth reference group of 80 young people was established to act as expert consultants, contributing to the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the project. The service operates through four mobile clinics as hubs and various community-based delivery options, including local government clinics, youth clubs, courier delivery, and schools.

In September 2023, FastPrEP started offering the dapivirine vaginal ring (DPV-VR), also known as the DAPIRING, as an alternative to oral PrEP to those who meet the eligibility criteria.

Following the successful HPTN 083 and HPTN084 trials to which DTHF contributed, the implementation of ViiV Healthcare's Cabotegravir long-acting injectable PrEP (CAB LA, “Apretude”) was approved by SAHPRA in December 2022, for people weighing more than 35kg, including adolescents. CAB LA is a long-acting intramuscular injectable administered every 2 months. From February 2024, the FastPrEP study was the first provider in South Africa to be offering CAB LA as an alternative PrEP product, thereby further extending the available PrEP choice options.

FASTPrEP indicators

03/2023-02/2024

Total Client engagements

18 282

Number of oral PrEP initiations

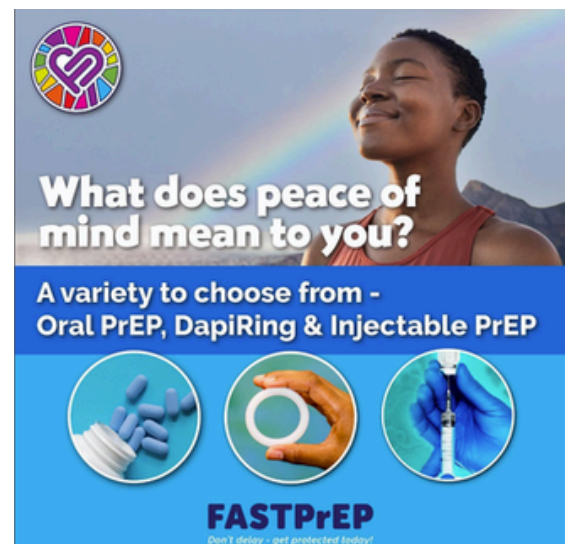
9 189

Number of Dapiring initiations

85



The FASTPrEP hub and spokes model



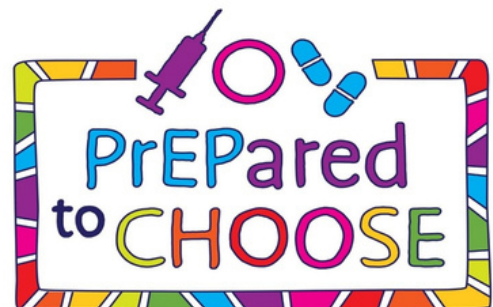
PrEP awareness creation on social media

Follow

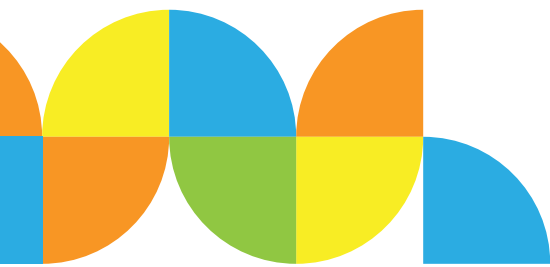
FASTPrEP on
Instagram/Facebook/TikTok for
regular updates

In February 2024, DTHF kicked off the PrEPared to Choose (PtC) study, which seeks to determine patterns of persistence on injectable, oral, and vaginal ring HIV PrEP products when delivered within a PrEP choice framework to adolescents and young people (aged 15-29 years) and their intimate partners (any age).

Increasing choice amongst HIV PrEP products bears potential to increase uptake, persistence, and HIV exposure coverage amongst those at risk of HIV acquisition. PtC is delivered from a mobile clinic that rotates across community sites in Cape Town, South Africa, and that is staffed by adolescent-friendly nurses, HIV counsellors, and peer-navigators. Participants revisit their PrEP choice at each study visit and PrEP switches, pauses, and re-starts are tracked.



PtC is a non-randomised Phase 3B clinical trial that utilises a hybrid implementation design to compare persistence among participants who self-select to initiate on injectable, oral, or vaginal ring PrEP products over an 18-month period. PrEP is provided as part of a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health package, which includes testing for sexually transmitted infections and family planning, and PrEP choice is guided by an extensive PrEP choice counselling process.

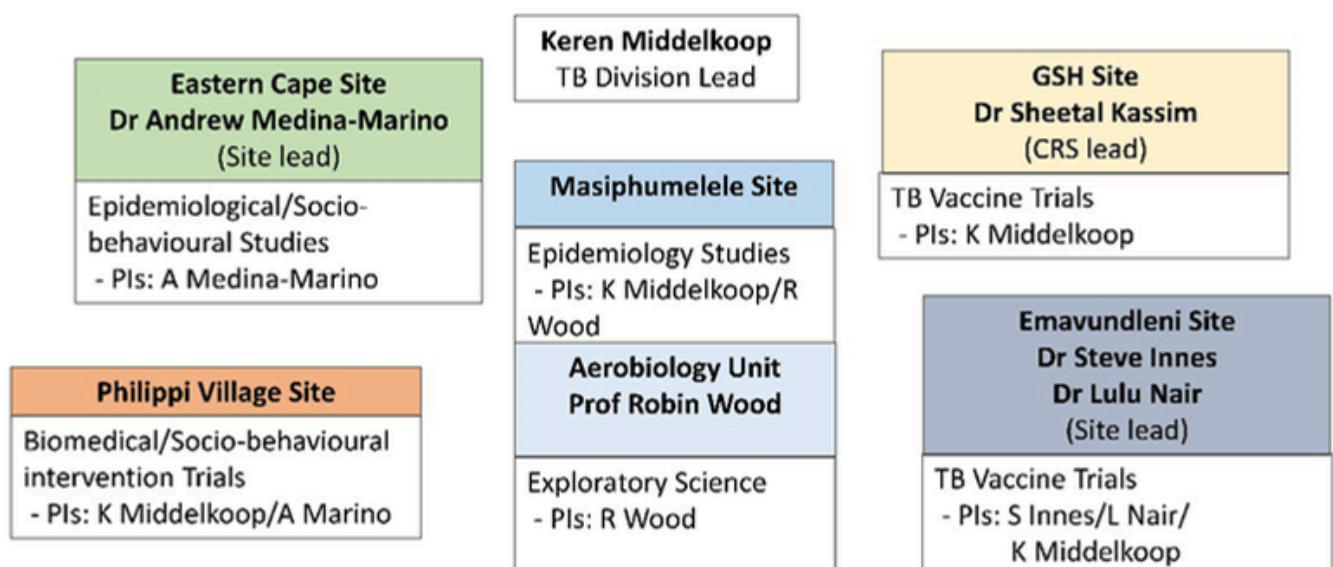


TB treatment & prevention

The DTHF remains actively engaged in epidemiological, behavioural and microbiological studies to increase our understanding of the community, socio-economic, social network and mycobacterial and host factors influencing Mtb transmission dynamics in affected communities. The overall aim of this work is to inform more effective social and biomedical interventions to break the cycle of TB transmission, including advancing efforts to upscale effective active case finding and potentially informing TB diagnostic development. Clinical trials include assessing biomedical interventions for the prevention of TB infection acquisition and reducing risk of TB disease, especially in the population of people living with HIV. Currently these studies are largely focused on TB vaccine trials, although other interventions such as Vitamin D supplementation have been performed.



The DTHC/DTHF TB Division work extends across the Foundation sites, including TB vaccine studies at the Emavundleni and Groote Schuur sites, and clinical and epidemiology studies at Philippi Village, Masiphumelele and the Eastern Cape sites. This work is closely related to the TB Aerobiology Unit work in Masiphumelele.



TB TRANSMISSION studies

Spear-headed by the Aerobiology Unit in Masiphumelele, under the leadership of Robin Wood, the DTHF/DTHC continues to contribute significantly to the understanding of the environmental, host and pathogen contributions to TB transmission.

We have previously explored mathematical modelling and spatial data analysis to inform TB care and control strategies in high TB incidence settings with Prof McCreesh and White at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical medicine. Secondary analysis of the social mixing data is ongoing, with the most recent analysis exploring within-country heterogeneity in patterns of social contact and the potential implications for TB transmission, prevention, and care.

In collaboration with colleagues at Gates MRI and Stanford University, we have previously established protocols for environmental sampling approaches for detection and quantification of Mtb – showing it is possible to extract and quantify TB through air sampling in clinics and other spaces. With collaborators from the University of Bern we have built on this work, exploring novel approaches to estimate tuberculosis transmission at HIV care clinics. This collaboration combined our environmental Mtb sampling with CO2 measurements, clinical, and patient movement data to develop a spatiotemporal model of airborne Mtb transmission to estimate TB transmission in health care facilities. Preliminary data from this study was presented at the World Lung Health conference in Paris, 2023, and a primary manuscript is under development. In addition, secondary analyses use this spatiotemporal model to estimate TB transmission in health care facilities during the COVID-19 as well as comparing the impact of infection control measures in clinics before and after COVID pandemic lockdown. Further, this approach to assessing Mtb transmission risk was also used to model airborne transmission risks of TB and COVID-19 in schools in South Africa, Switzerland, and Tanzania.

The aerobiology unit continues to optimise an aerosolized mycobacterial particulate sampling device and to characterize aerosolized respiratory particle produced by TB cases prior and post initiation of TB therapy. Prof Wood's work has shown that in the course of 24 hours just breathing accounts for 90% of Mtb released – meaning that even those patients without a cough can contribute to TB transmission. These findings have important implications for how we approach active case finding for TB control.





The DTHF Aerobiology Research Centre (ARC), under the leadership of Prof Robin Wood and in collaboration with the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine (IDM) at UCT, has made notable advancements in identifying TB aerosols among patients attending TB clinics. Building on these initial findings, their research has expanded to examine high levels of TB carriage among community members.

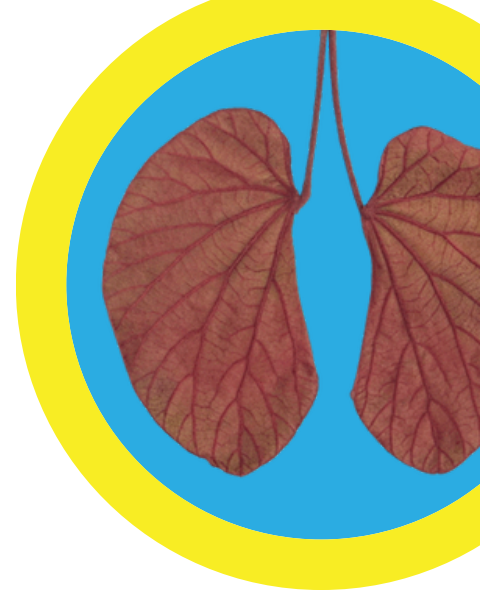
Currently, Prof Robin Wood and Prof Digby Warner from the IDM are engaged in several grant-funded projects. One significant project, funded by the NIH, focuses on "Identifying TB transmitters in high TB/HIV burdened communities." This research involves bio-aerosol sampling from TB cases, TB suspects, and individuals living with HIV to determine their relative contribution to TB transmission in communities with a high prevalence of both HIV and TB.

In addition, they are participating in the TBRU project titled "Metabolic determinants of Mtb virulence, vulnerability, and variation." This study aims to understand the roles of mycobacterial metabolites and cell wall lipids in supporting the survival of *M. tuberculosis* within the human host, with the ultimate goal of developing improved TB diagnostics and treatments. At the beginning of the year, the TBRU group held their annual meeting in Cape Town. During the event, they visited the Masiphumelele site, where they engaged with the research team to discuss progress and exchange insights (see photo).

ARC is also preparing to start the Horizon's BreathforDX Project, which aims to optimize the AveloCollect device by comparing it with the Respiratory Aerosol Sampling Chamber (RASC) using molecular assays. Along with employing advanced collection devices, ARC has enhanced their paucibacillary bacteriology techniques, incorporating methods such as liquid culture and genomic analysis into their research.



Additionally, Prof Robin Wood is in the process of designing a new exhaled collection device, drawing inspiration from the Respiratory Aerosol Sampling Chamber (RASC). This forthcoming device aims to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of breath-based TB detection, building on the principles of the RASC while incorporating novel features to improve sample collection and analysis. The development of this new device reflects ARC's commitment to advancing TB research and diagnostics through innovation.



TB PREVENTION studies

In 2023-2024 the DTHF was involved in 3 TB vaccine studies:

- Gates MRI-TBV01-201: A Randomized, placebo-controlled phase IIb study evaluating the safety, efficacy and immunogenicity of BCG revaccination in adolescents for the prevention of sustained Mtb infection. The Emavundleni site enrolled and vaccinated 362 adolescents into this study. Unfortunately, this study was stopped early in 2024 due to lack of efficacy of the BCG revaccination.
- HVTN 605: A phase 2a clinical trial to evaluate the safety and immunogenicity of MTBVAC in adolescents and adults living with and without HIV in South Africa. This study started recruitment at Emavundleni and GSH sites in 2024, and is ongoing.
- Gates MRI TBV02-301: A Phase 3, randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, multicenter, clinical trial to assess the prophylactic efficacy, safety, and immunogenicity of the investigational M72/AS01E-4 Mycobacterium tuberculosis (Mtb) vaccine when administered intramuscularly on a 0,1-month schedule to adolescents and adults. These large phase 3 study also started recruiting in 2024 at the Emavundleni and GSH sites.

In 2025 the DTHF site at Masi will work with the biotech company Bio- N Tech on the first TB mRNA Vaccine. Furthermore, both Emavundleni and Masiphumelele may be participating the phase 2b study for the MTBVAC vaccine.

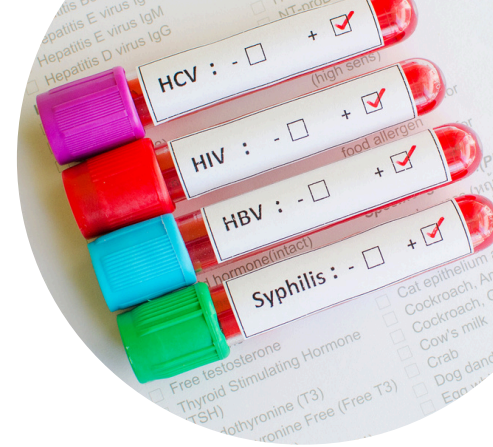
Socio-behavioural and mental health factors influencing TB health CARE

The Eastern Cape site under Andrew Medina-Marino is leading the field in exploring socio-behavioral and mental health factors and TB, especially among male patients. See the 'Men's Division' section for a detailed update.



STIs & other infectious diseases

Sexually transmitted Infections (STIs) remain a serious public health concern and a number of our Sites are actively working on strategies to reduce STI transmission in our communities.



GARDP's phase 3 clinical trial (**the Zoli study**) of a first-in-class oral antibiotic to treat uncomplicated gonorrhoea was carried out in 16 sites across five countries. The DTHF's research site in Masiphumelele in Cape Town was one of the clinical trials sites.

Zoliflodacin is a first-in-class antibiotic that has a unique mechanism of action and is active against multidrug-resistant strains of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, the bacterium that causes gonorrhoea. The trial enrolled 930 patients with uncomplicated gonorrhoea across five countries, South Africa being one of them, and compared a single oral dose of zoliflodacin to the current standard of care regimen of ceftriaxone injection and azithromycin oral.

Zoliflodacin met the primary endpoint of microbiological cure at the urogenital site and demonstrated statistical non-inferiority to the standard of care. Zoliflodacin was also generally well tolerated and no serious adverse events or deaths were reported.

DTHF's Dr Katherine Gill is Principal Investigator of the trial in the Masi community where one in ten people have gonorrhoea: "Zoliflodacin could be a game-changer in the future. We don't have antibiotic resistance here yet, but it could happen anytime. We need other options. What's great about zoliflodacin is that it is an oral drug that only needs to be taken once. It will make it so much easier to treat patients as it doesn't have to be injected, like the drug we are using now."



The "Zoli study" DTHF team at Masi
Photo: GARDP

GARDP published a [photo story](#) of our work on the clinical trial on zoliflodacin at our Masi site.

Read GARDP's press release [here](#)



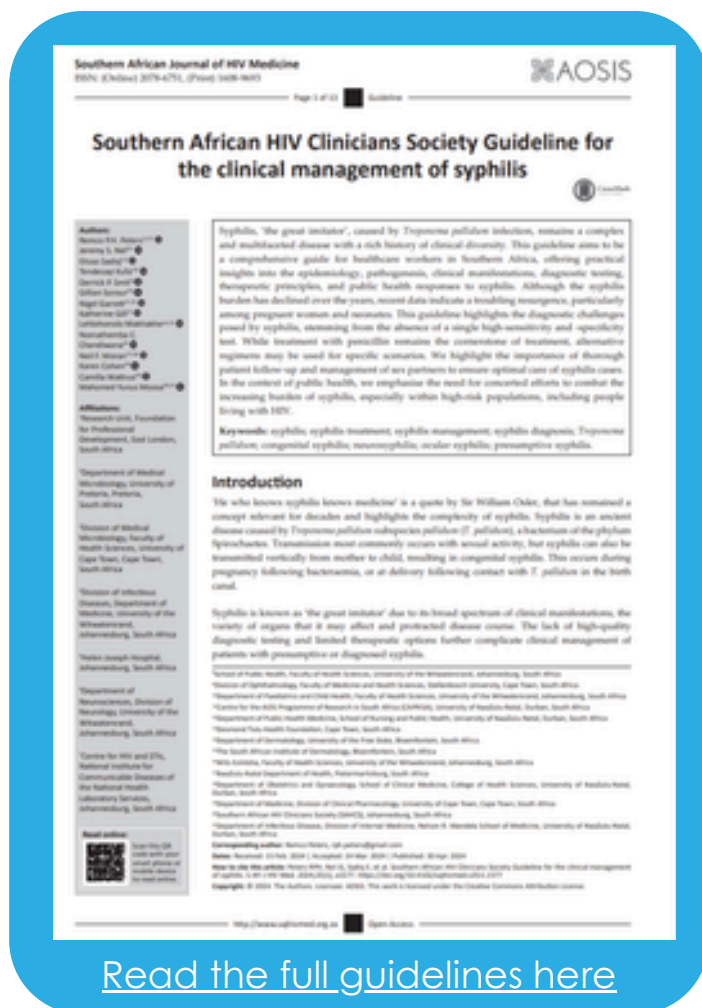
We also investigated optimum dosing strategies for the HPV vaccine (Gardasil-9).

DTHF collaborated with the South African HIV Clinicians Society to draft guidelines for the management of syphilis in the country.



<https://gift.org.za>

The team at Masiphumelele is partnering with the University of Cape Town and teams in Madagascar and Zimbabwe on a study called “**GIFT**” to trial a new point-of-care test to detect genital inflammation. We are also working with the team at UCT and a team at KEMRI in Kenya on a project to understand the vaginal microbiome.



[Read the full guidelines here](#)

DTHF is working with Skills Panda to place young people into the workplace to gain skills and confidence to improve chances of future employment. Below: our new interns based at the DTHF Masi site.

The “**FastPrEP-STI**” study, evaluates the impact of screening **and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs)** on PrEP uptake and persistence. The project site is based in the Klipfontein/Mitchells Plain district, located in the Cape Town Metro.

**Number of STI tests conducted
by FASTPrEP
03/2023 - 02/2024**

6 749



Research Updates: STIs & other infectious diseases



Adolescent Programme

The DTHF Adolescent Division is committed to being a proactive contributor to enhancing adolescent health, particularly within the context of Africa's burgeoning youth population. Adolescents and young people face significant challenges, including vulnerability to HIV, other sexual and reproductive health issues, and mental health problems. These challenges threaten their overall health, future prospects, and roles as future adults and parents.

Multi-Site Study for Adolescent Girls and Young Women (MAGY)

In collaboration with IAVI, the DTHF designed and delivered a comprehensive five-day online training program focused on conducting clinical research with adolescents. This training was pivotal for the MAGY study, which explores future HIV vaccines and antibodies for prevention among adolescent girls and young women. The program attracted over 60 participants from various research organizations, including the Aurum Institute South Africa, Centre for Family Health Research Zambia, and Uganda Virus Research Institute. Attendees ranged from principal investigators to research assistants, contributing diverse expertise and perspectives.

Divisional Updates: Adolescent Division



Divisional Updates

Waves for Change (W4C) Adolescent Health Training

The DTHF Adolescent Programme facilitated essential training in sexual and reproductive health, as well as mental health, for the surf coaches of the W4C teams in Cape Town and the Eastern Cape. The Cape Town-based team of 32 coaches participated in a two-day face-to-face training session. Simultaneously, the Eastern Cape team, consisting of 16 coaches from East London and Gqeberha, received online training.



DTHF-IAVI We Move webinar programme

As part of their goal to build capacity of emerging researchers to conduct research with adolescents, DTHF and IAVI continued to host a popular webinar series, covering pertinent and innovative topics related to adolescent health research.



WEBINAR 1: Differentiated service delivery for adolescent health

Differentiated Service Delivery for Adolescent Health with Dr Anna Grimsrud and Dr Webster Mavhu, followed by a panel discussion with Elzette Rousseau and Mhairi Maskew.

WEBINAR 2: Health Economics: The Price of Adolescent Health Care Services

Dr Anne Neilan and Dr Gesine Meyer-Rath, followed by a panel discussion by Prof Lungiswa Nkonki and Cheryl Hendrickson.



WEBINAR 3: Implementation Science in Adolescent Health Research

Prof Audrey Pettifor and Ms Susan Vorkoper followed by an insightful panel discussion by Ms Nicolette Naidoo and Ms Melanie Pleanar to follow.



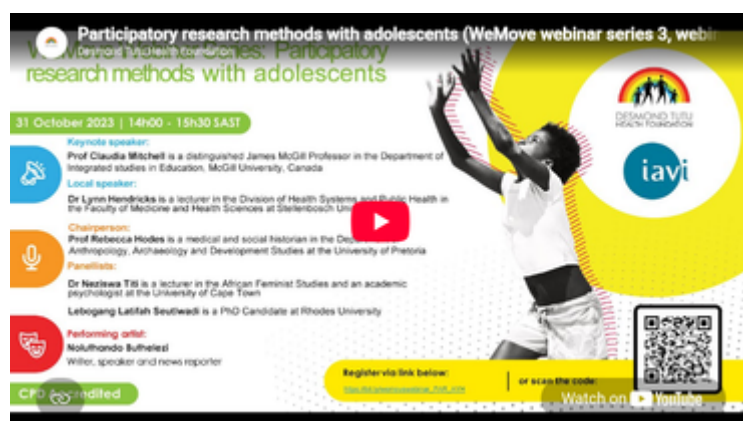


WEBINAR 4: Living Long With HIV

Presentation by A/Prof Elona Toska (University of Cape Town), Dr Nicolette Comley-White (University of Witwatersrand), followed by a panellists A/Prof Lesley Gittings (University of Cape Town), Theresa Mapfuti (Zvandiri) and Dickson Madzivadondo (DTHF).

WEBINAR 5: Participatory research methods with adolescents

Presentations from esteemed speakers Professor Claudia Mitchell and Dr. Lynn Hendricks followed by a lively panel discussion, with Dr Neziswa Titi, Ms Lebo Seutlwadi and Alice Clarfelt.



WEBINAR 6: Digital tools and engagement approaches to promote SRH services

Moderated by Prof Amnesty Lefevre and a presentations featuring Prof Kathryn Muessig, Cristianne Wendler, Ann Kistenmacher, and panellists Lisa Adams and Nicholas Niwagaba



WATCH THE WEMOVE WEBINAR SERIES 1 HERE

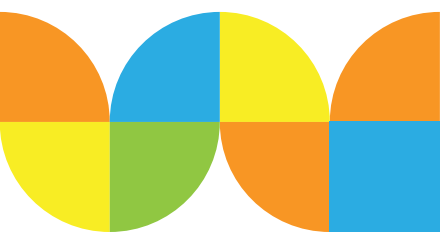


WATCH THE WEMOVE WEBINAR SERIES 2 HERE



Social Behavioural Research

Our social and behavioural research is essential for understanding the complex factors that drive human behaviour. This understanding is crucial for the successful implementation of biomedical, behavioural, or structural interventions aimed at improving health outcomes. By providing critical insights and contextual understanding, socio-behavioural research significantly enhances biomedical implementation science. Our research spans various populations, including adolescents, cisgender women, cisgender men, and MSM, and covers a broad range of topics such as HIV treatment and prevention, focusing on interventions that support better healthcare engagement.



Our division's supportive role in DTHF/C's largely biomedical research has been instrumental in ensuring the successful implementation and completion of groundbreaking studies, including those on oral Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), injectable PrEP, and other topical HIV prevention products. Over the past year, the social and behavioural division has been involved in several key research studies.

IMARA Study

The IMARA Study is a randomised controlled trial assessing the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of a family-based behavioural intervention designed to reduce HIV and STI infections, increase PrEP and HTC uptake, and decrease risky sexual behaviour. The study involves 1,290 female caregivers and their adolescent girls. Enrolment began in October 2021, and participant follow-up visits are ongoing, with completion expected in August 2024.



Digitapp Study

We have received funding for the Digitapp study, which aims to understand perspectives from emerging digitally driven risk networks to inform a target product profile (TPP) for next-generation HIV prevention vaccines. This study is being conducted at three sites in Africa and two sites in India, examining the nature and characteristics of HIV risk networks across digital and physical spaces. It involves consultations with scientific experts and vaccine developers to understand HIV prevention product development and potential vaccine attributes. The study targets priority populations such as AGYW, female sex workers, adolescent boys and young men, truck drivers, and fishing communities, especially those in Uganda. Phase 1 participant accrual is complete, and we are preparing to start Phase 2. Data from Phase 1 has been presented at two international conferences.



SAMURAI Study

The SAMURAI study aims to assess the acceptability and preferences of implants and injections as long-acting PrEP delivery formulations for HIV prevention among men who have sex with women (MSW) and MSM aged 18-35 in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa. Following the completion of formative research, the clinical trial began in January 2023. This crossover study randomises participants to receive either a placebo implant for six months or bimonthly placebo injections for six months, used in a randomised sequence. Each participant is followed for approximately one year. Accrual was completed in June 2023, and all study follow-up visits are expected to be completed by June 2024.



LGBT+ Health Division

Clinical Trials

Based at the DTHF Groote Schuur Hospital Clinical Research Site, the LGBT+ Health Division is at the forefront of innovative research addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ populations. In 2023, the Division participated in two significant HIV prevention studies: HPTN 083 and Purpose 2. These groundbreaking studies evaluated long-acting injectable PrEP for men who have sex with men and transgender individuals, advancing targeted prevention strategies within these communities.

Fogarty LGBTQI+ Health Research Fellowship

The Division achieved a significant milestone by securing an NIH Fogarty International Centre Funded Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training Supplement Award for the Khulani Siphile Siphuhle Training Program in South Africa. The fellowship includes a mentored research project focused on improving access to health and psychosocial support for LGBTQI+ communities. This initiative facilitated the recruitment of five early-career researchers, with the goal of fostering a diverse and inclusive research environment. It is dedicated to nurturing emerging talent and developing the next generation of leaders in LGBTQI+ health research.



Safe Spaces

The LGBT+ Health Division runs a community engagement program to enhance the health and wellbeing of LGBTQI+ individuals. A key part of this program is the network of ten Safe Spaces, which offer inclusive environments for networking, HIV education, and leadership development. These are supported by our Community Liaison team in Philippi Village.

The Division supports one transgender and gender diverse Safe Space, Queer & Active, established in 2023, which is a peer-led group for transgender and gender diverse people meeting at GSH. This group provides psychosocial support, skills-building, and advocacy to promote acceptance and combat discrimination against transgender and gender-diverse individuals.

The South African LGBTQI+ Healthcare Equality Programme



The Division has developed the LGBTQI+ Healthcare Equality Program, designed to promote inclusivity in healthcare environments and improve service delivery to LGBTQI+ populations across South Africa. This program aims to address the unique healthcare needs of LGBTQI+ individuals and ensure equitable access to quality care. With funding from the Charlize Theron Africa Outreach Project, we will implement a pilot program in five primary healthcare facilities. This includes the delivery of three CPD accredited workshops at healthcare facilities over the course of one year and establishing Inclusivity Working Groups which will develop and implement a strategic plan for LGBTQI+ inclusivity at the health facilities.

Men's Health Division

The DTHF Men's Health Division is dedicated to enhancing men's access to healthcare and improving their health outcomes through tailored services. The division's mission is to amplify men's perspectives in the development of interventions and research to improve health outcomes. Operating in two key locations, namely Cape Town, Western Cape, and East London, Eastern Cape, the division is co-led by Drs. Andrew Medina-Marino and Philip Smith.



KiSS-TP fellows with Eastern Cape DTHF staff and EC Dept of Health.

In May 2023, the DTHF, University of Fort Hare, Walter Sisulu University, UCT, and the University of California Global Health Institute launched the Khulani Siphile Siphuhle Training Program (KiSS-TP), a groundbreaking multilateral PhD training initiative. The program, funded by the United States National Institute of Health's D43 International Research Training Grants program with \$1.4 million over five years (2023-2028), aims to empower the next generation of HIV/AIDS researchers in South Africa and is supported by the Eastern Cape Department of Health. The consortium, comprising partnering institutions, will provide intensive, interdisciplinary, and mentored PhD training to selected Masters-level staff from the University of Fort Hare, Walter Sisulu University, and the DTHF in the Eastern Cape, addressing a capacity gap in HIV/AIDS research.

The Men's Health Division in Eastern Cape also leads several major, NIH-funded studies:

On the **U=U for Men's Health study**, Drs. Andrew Medina-Marino and Alison Buttenheim (UPenn) serve as the principal investigators for a research grant aimed at addressing the significant disparities in HIV testing, treatment initiation, and viral suppression among cis-gender heterosexual men living with HIV in South Africa.

The **MISSED TB Outcomes Study** is exploring multi-level and intersectional stigma and other social determinant effects on TB case detection, care, and treatment outcomes. This multi-cohort study utilises a mixed methods approach to identify and measure individual- and community-level stigma and social determinants associated with (a) presentation for TB services among actively referred contacts, (b) returning for test results among symptomatic individuals tested for TB, (c) loss-to-follow-up (LTFU) and treatment outcomes among individuals initiated on TB treatment and (d) LTFU from HIV care following TB treatment among co-infected individuals. Community surveys were conducted with 4178 head-of-households in 93 communities to measure community level stigma and associated social determinants.

A randomised study showed that in-home testing for TB with a molecular test was acceptable, feasible, and increased HHC testing. In-home testing mitigates a major limitation of household contact investigations, providing a new strategy for enhancing early case detection. The **TB Omni study**, funded by the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) aims to evaluate the predictive value of pooled individual oral swab specimens as a household-level triage test for TB during community-based household contact investigations using a portable GeneXpert device.

The TB and Men's Health study seeks to 1) identify men's preferences for a male-centered TB care intervention, and 2) measure real-time influences of mental and tangible resources on men's TB treatment lapses and adherence behaviours.

A hybrid effectiveness-implementation trial is currently underway at sites in Cape Town and the Eastern Cape, investigating the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of implementing an evidence-based depression counseling intervention to improve adherence among TB patients. The study is being conducted across 8 health facilities, with 9 staff members involved in data collection across the three sites. Currently, the intervention is being offered in 4 clinics. To date 12 staff members across the two sites have completed the training and are certified to provide the counselling intervention.

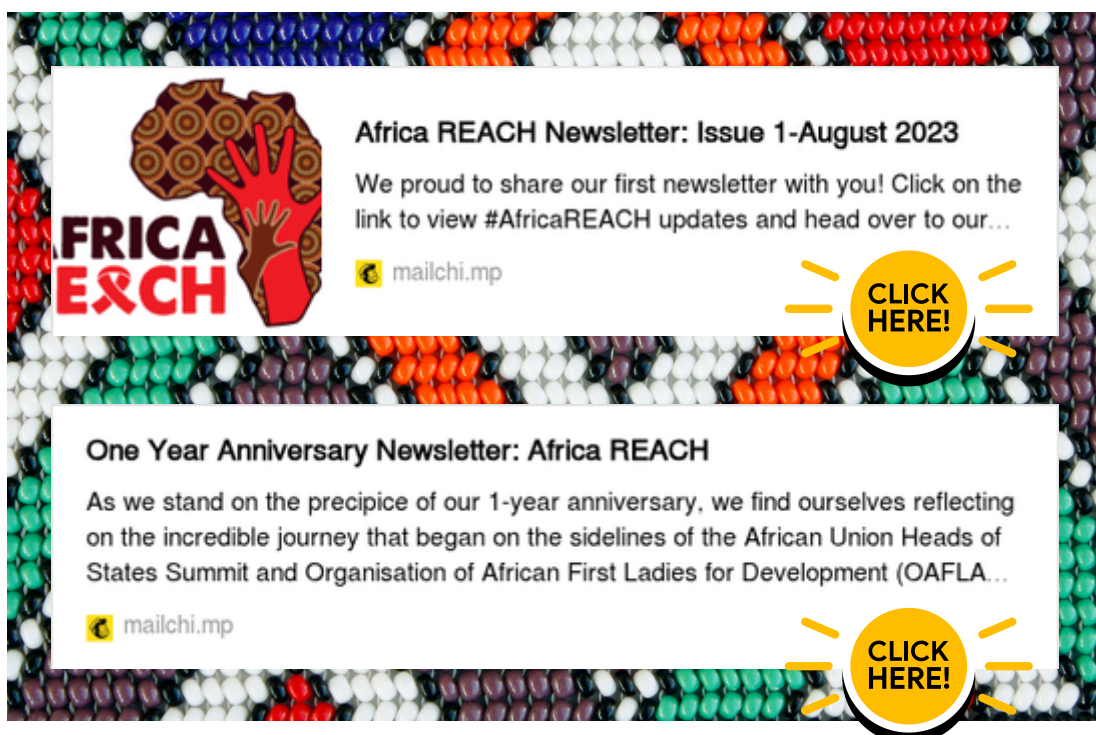


Africa REACH commenced its work in June 2022, after hosting the inaugural Leadership Council meeting. The initiative coalesces around the powerful elements of African political and cultural influence, together with intergenerational leadership to create a new action agenda around ending AIDS in children and young people in Africa. This is in response to the disproportions in HIV response for children and young people living with HIV.

Africa Reaching the End of AIDS in Children and Young People in Africa by 2025 (Africa REACH) is an African-led, African-focused effort that aims at an Africa with children and young people free from AIDS.

You can subscribe to the Africa REACH newsletter [here](#) to receive important updates on their activities and initiatives.

Africa REACH Partners:



Africa REACH created a video message for World Immunization week 2023, featuring Prof. Linda-Gail Bekker from the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation.



ViiV Healthcare Positive Action in collaboration with Africa REACH and the Desmond Tutu Health Foundation conducted a workshop on meaningful youth engagement. This spotlight video shows interviews conducted with the youth champions who attended the event.





CONFERENCES

In the past year, our researchers have been at the forefront of HIV research and advocacy, making significant contributions to major conferences and publications. We showcased our extensive research portfolio at several high-impact conferences, where we presented groundbreaking studies and shared valuable insights on the latest advancements in HIV treatment, prevention strategies, and the integration of new modalities to enhance public health outcomes.

Through these engagements, we foster collaborations with international experts, driving forward our shared goal of improving health outcomes for communities most affected by HIV, TB, STIs, and other related conditions. This collective effort ensures that we remain at the cutting edge of research, advocacy, and implementation science, with the ultimate aim of reducing the global burden of these diseases.



19.-22. FEBRUARY 2023



9.-12. MAY 2023



11.-13. JUNE 2023



IAS 2023
23.-26. JULY 2023



International Workshop on HIV Drug Resistance & Treatment Strategies

20.-22. SEPTEMBER 2023



4.-6. OCTOBER 2023



EDCTP

7.-10. NOVEMBER 2023



15.-18. NOVEMBER 2023



SOUTHERN AFRICAN HIV CLINICIANS SOCIETY CONFERENCE

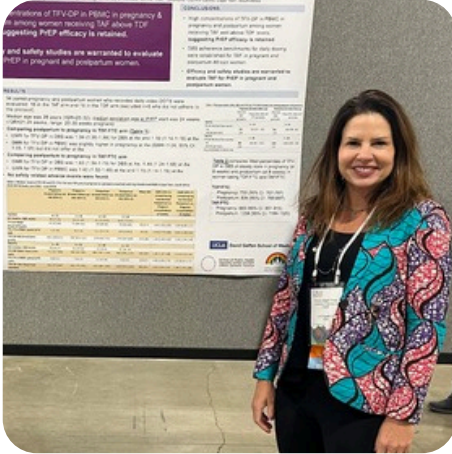
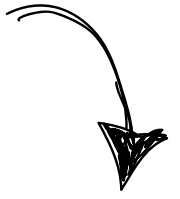
9.-11. NOVEMBER 2023



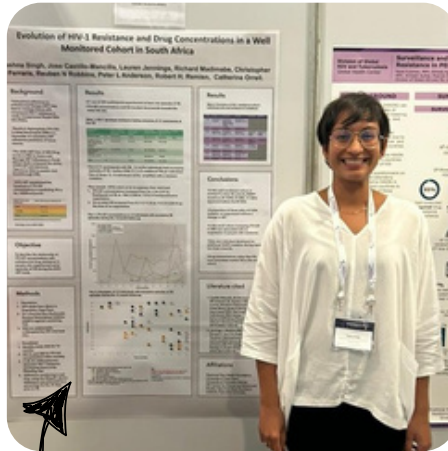
4.-9. DECEMBER 2024



Lynn Bust joined an esteemed panel discussion at the 'Women In Leadership Conference' on access to gender-affirming healthcare within institutions of higher learning and government healthcare services.



Dvora Joseph Davey presenting her poster on: **Safety of oral PrEP in pregnant women, Cape Town at CROI 2023**



Yashna Singh presenting her poster titled **Evolution of HIV-1 Resistance and Drug Concentrations in a well-monitored cohort in South Africa** at the HIV Resistance Workshop

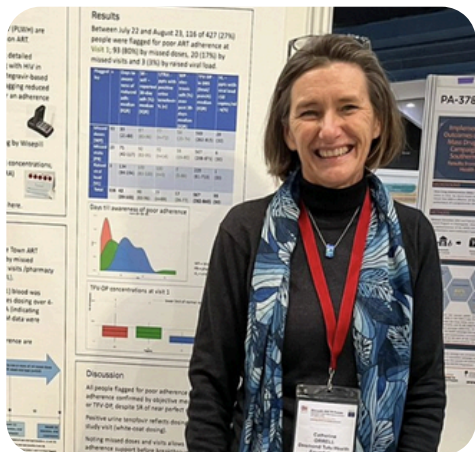


“ 42 years into this epidemic and we have made impressive strides in antiretroviral- based treatment and prevention. For this we celebrate and are deeply grateful. Despite ongoing, magnificent efforts in the lab and in the field, we are yet to discover an effective vaccine and a scalable cure for those living with HIV. -- Linda-Gail Bekker at IAS 2023 ”

Katherine Gill presenting her poster on **Consideration for the inclusion of adolescents in HIV prevention clinical trials at IAS 2023**



Because IAS 2023 was in Australia



Catherine Orrell presenting her poster at EDCTP titled: **Early Identification of ART Missed Doses: Baseline Data from the RETAIN Study.**



Melissa Wallace presenting her poster on **Integrating mental health support into differentiated adolescent sexual and reproductive health service delivery platforms** at the HIV & adolescence workshop



At the SAHCS conference Linda-Gail Bekker discussed advances in HIV treatment and PrEP for adolescents, while Sheetal Kassim presented on HIV vaccine research. Carey Pike highlighted long-acting injectable cabotegravir, and Dvora Joseph-Davey explored PrEP's role in preventing HIV during pregnancy and postpartum. Katherine Gill chaired sessions on opportunistic infections and neglected co-infections.



At ICASA 2023, Melissa Wallace presented a poster on **When digital networks become physical: heightened HIV risk for AGYW in South Africa.**

Melissa Wallace with IAVI team at ICASA 2023.





DTHF calls on our community to support the “Young People’s Lusaka Declaration”

“Despite the great progress made in the HIV treatment and prevention cascade over the past four decades, HIV treatment and prevention options are limited, especially in the Global South where HIV prevalence remains the highest. As innovations become available, inequalities stall progress.

Current antiretroviral regimens have transformed HIV from a deadly disease into a manageable chronic condition. But young people living with and at risk of acquiring HIV encounter various challenges in adherence and persistence with daily pill taking, such as treatment fatigue and forgetfulness which could potentially be solved through longer acting treatment and prevention options.”

-- Excerpt from the Young People’s Lusaka Declaration

Accelerating access of effective LONG-ACTING antiviral drugs

CALL TO ACTION

HIV prevention vs HIV treatment

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or **PrEP**, is a medicine that can prevent HIV infection.

The treatment for HIV is called antiretroviral therapy, or **ART**.

BUT...

PrEP and **ART** are both highly dependent on a strict daily dosing regimen and assumes that a person has continued access to the drug.

TYPES OF PrEP:

Oral PrEP = is a pill for men women that needs to be taking every day.

Dapiring = is a vaginal ring where HIV medication is slowly released over 28 days and is replaced once a month. (self-inserted)

Sometimes people struggle to get their medication refilled and daily pill taking comes with various challenges.

MORE ABOUT PrEP:

PrEP is for people who are HIV negative and at risk of getting HIV.

PrEP does not protect against other sexually transmitted diseases, and does not prevent pregnancy.

undetectable=untransmittable

When viral load is consistently kept low and remains suppressed, HIV becomes undetectable in blood tests. When this is achieved there is zero chance of transmitting the virus to someone else.

#sayzero #UequalsU

MORE ABOUT ART:

ART involves taking a combination of HIV medicines every day.

ART does not eliminate HIV completely but can decrease a person's viral load (the number of viral cells in the body) to such a point that they are no longer infectious.

Scientists have developed a **long-acting prevention and treatment** type, an intramuscular injection, which is administered once every two months.

Help us advocate for the development of injectables as a better treatment solution that will improve therapy outcomes AND prevention.

Click [here](#) link to sign up and speak out in support of the young people declaration calling on the pharmaceutical industry, governments, funding bodies, and researchers to do their part to accelerate access of effective long-acting antiviral drugs to all for treatment and prevention of HIV.

The DTHF Operations Leads team based at HQ responsible for keeping the DTHF machine running smoothly.



From left to right:

Susan Thevar (CFO),
Jovaan Dutt (Facilities Manager),
Shovaan Pillay (IT Manager),
Amanda Maree (COO),
Tania Thornton (HR Manager),
Riaan Beukes (Resource Mobilization Officer)

"Undetectable equals Untransmittable" means that if you are HIV positive but are taking ART every day, and your viral load is low, you no longer risk infecting your sexual partner, even during unprotected (condomless) sex. For this to happen though, ART must be taken every day. It is also important to keep testing for HIV and viral load levels even when you are taking your ART every day. That's because ART cannot cure HIV, meaning that ART cannot rid the body of the virus completely, and the viral load has the potential of going up again if ART is not taken as prescribed or stopped -- that is why regular checks are important.

Women who live with HIV who are pregnant or who are at increased risk of being infected with HIV during their pregnancy, or while breastfeeding, are at risk of passing the virus to their child. However, the risk of this type of viral transmission (also known as vertical transmission) can be lowered substantially or even completely when the viral load is kept low, so by taking ART regularly. Hence, U=U also rings true in the context of mother-to-child infections.

Therefore, while ART allows people living with HIV to live longer and healthier lives, the U=U message can also improve quality of life by reducing the stigma that people with HIV pose an infection risk to others.

U=U explained





KiSS-TP

KHULANI SIPHILE SIPHUHLE
TRAINING PROGRAM

Capacity Building

Khulani Siphile Siphuhle Training Program (KiSS-TP)

To build HIV scientific, research and academic capacity within South Africa's Historically Disadvantaged Universities and Create a critical mass of cutting-edge HIV researchers through the KiSS-TP consortium.

South Africa faces significant health challenges as the epicentre of the global HIV epidemic, with high rates of HIV and TB. These disease burdens are compounded by the co-occurrence of common mental disorders, particularly in the context of HIV and HIV/TB. Underlying these national-level health trends are provincial and district health inequalities resulting from the legacy of the racist apartheid regime. The structural inequities wrought by apartheid continue to influence the distribution and prevalence of social, economic and behavioural risk factors that impact health outcomes.

KiSS TP -- EASTERN CAPE

Eastern Cape province has one of the highest HIV prevalence, the highest TB incidence, and some of the poorest outcome metrics in South Africa. Even with these facts, most research support, capacity, implementation, donor funding and infrastructure continues to flow to the well-established, historically advantaged institutions in Durban (KwaZulu-Natal Province), Johannesburg (Gauteng Province) and Cape Town (Western Cape Province). This too is a legacy of apartheid policies that impacted access to educational opportunities and the allocation of resources to universities.

The development of HIV research capacity in the Eastern Cape Province is pivotal for combatting South Africa's HIV epidemic. Addressing gaps in training local investigators to utilize mixed methods effectively is essential for enhancing HIV prevention and treatment efforts. KiSS-TP offers comprehensive graduate training for South African PhD candidates, with a specific focus on empowering historically disadvantaged institutions and students, ultimately contributing to improved HIV prevention and treatment outcomes in the Eastern Cape Province.

To rectify health and institutional disparities, it's essential to invest in institutions beyond Durban, Johannesburg, and Cape Town. By supporting Eastern Cape's HIV researchers, an immediate return on investment can be achieved, fostering a critical mass of cutting-edge experts within the region by aiming to reach two main goals.

Goal 1: Provide PhD training to the next generation of historically disadvantaged HIV researchers in Eastern Cape Province.

Goal 2: Strengthen PhD training capacity in Eastern Cape through professional development and progression towards independent research programmes for UFH and WSU faculty and D43 trainees.

KISS-TP -- LGBT+ DIVISION

The DTHF LGBT+ Health Division based at the Groote Schuur Hospital Clinical Research site in Cape Town collaborated with the KiSS-TP at the DTHF Eastern Cape site to establish the LGBTQI+ Health Research Fellowship to improve the research capacity of young HIV researchers, with a focus on sexual and gender minorities.

In line with their commitment to empowering LGBTQI+ individuals and communities, the DTHF LGBT+ Health Division is providing a research training program for early career LGBTQI+ health researchers.

Aims

To build HIV scientific, research and academic capacity within South Africa's Historically Disadvantaged Universities and Create a critical mass of cutting-edge HIV researchers in Eastern Cape Province, South Africa through the KiSS-TP consortium.

Objectives

1. Increase the scientific expertise and complementary skills of KiSS-TP trainees.
2. Improve the ability of trainees to pursue independently supported scientific careers.
3. Integrate trainees into HDIs and/or the Eastern Cape research community following the program.
4. Strengthen trainee contributions to KiSS-TP research focus areas.



KiSS-TP -- LGBT+ Fellows 2024

Programme

Five LGBTQI+ health research fellows have been selected at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level in South Africa. Three graduate fellows and one postgraduate fellow are based at the LGBT+ Health Division at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town and one postgraduate fellow is based at the DTHF Eastern Cape site in East London.

The training program involves a mentored research project looking at various aspects of access to health and psychosocial care for LGBTQI+ populations and creating inclusive LGBTQI+ healthcare environments. Trainees will gain experience in qualitative and quantitative research methods, including conducting surveys, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. They will participate in all phases of the research process, receive mentoring from experienced LGBTQI+ researchers, and have access to educational resources, seminars and community outreach activities. The ultimate goal is to nurture a diverse and inclusive research environment and develop the next generation of LGBTQI+ health researchers.

Aims

- 1. Provide research training for early career LGBTQI+ health researchers primarily via a mentored qualitative research project examining factors that influence access to health and psychosocial care for LGBTQI+ people in South Africa.
- 2. Strengthen the capacity of researchers from diverse, underrepresented backgrounds particularly sexual and gender minorities in South Africa.
- 3. Enhance research focus on HIV and other health needs of sexual and gender minority communities.



Number of KiSS-TP fellows

10

2024 cohort

Number of other PhD students

19

across various disciplines

Number of collaborating Universities

18

on funded grants

UPenn Fellowship report back

The PDRI DevLab Visiting Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania provides African Scholars with the opportunity to collaborate with global experts in Behavioural Science, Economics, and International Development, to develop new research concepts, and interact with a world class academic community. During my four-month fellowship, I was privileged to work closely with my mentors, Dr. Alison Bittenheim and Dr. Harsha Thirumurthy, whose guidance continues to help refine my research. I attended two behavioural science meetings (Behavioural Science and Health Symposium, NUDGE Symposium), where I learned about individual and system-level health intervention advancements. I also had the opportunity to present my K research at various forums, where I received valuable feedback from the Penn Global and the PDRI-DevLab forums. Additionally, I engaged with the PDRI DevLab community at weekly seminars, which includes researchers, postgraduate students, and international scholars, fostering a network of collaborators. The fellowship augmented my research skills and connected me with globally recognised experts, enhancing my ability to make a meaningful impact in HIV prevention and behavioural science in our setting.

One of the highlights of my time at Penn was experiencing the culture firsthand. Their emphasis on entrepreneurial, practical innovation, inspired by Ben Franklin, was truly inspiring. Plus, Philly's food scene was fantastic, and I even ran the Philly Marathon while I was there.



Philip Smith



The expansion of our capacity to conduct Phase 1 trials with specialized procedures like leukapheresis and biopsies places us at the forefront of HIV research infrastructure in Africa.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Audited Annual Financials for the year
ended February 29, 2024



Non-current
assets growth

↑ 9%

Total asset
growth

↑ 6%

Equity
increase

↑ 12%

Percentage change
compared to the
previous financial year

Gross
Surplus

↓ -88%

Operating
Surplus

↓ -92%

Surplus for
the year

↓ -78%

NOTE: Values below are in South African Rand.

Equity & Liabilities

Equity

	2024	2023
Revaluation reserve	4 290 000	4 290 000
General reserve	1 122 890	1 122 890
Accumulated surplus	396 665 118	354 334 334
	402 078 008	359 747 224

Liabilities

Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	21 883 514	15 823 081
Deferred Revenue	76 742 061	97 153 160
	98 625 575	112 976 241

Total Liabilities

500 703 583 472 723 465

Assets

Non-Current Assets

Property, plant and equipment	70 934 747	64 968 696
Investments	98 932 907	90 390 196
	169 867 654	155 358 892

Current Assets

Trade and other receivables	61 925 520	69 295 614
Cash and cash equivalents	268 910 409	248 068 959
	330 835 929	317 364 573

Total Assets

500 703 583 472 723 465

Statement of Comprehensive Income 2024

	2024	2023
Revenue	279 845 145	351 727 335
Direct Project Costs	-257 687 210	-169 013 514
Gross Surplus	22 157 935	182 713 821
Other Income	2 862 277	4 180 733
Administrative Expenses	-11 008 717	-6 215 915
Operating Surplus	14 011 495	180 678 639
Investment Revenue	28 319 291	12 976 984
Surplus for the year	42 330 786	193 655 623

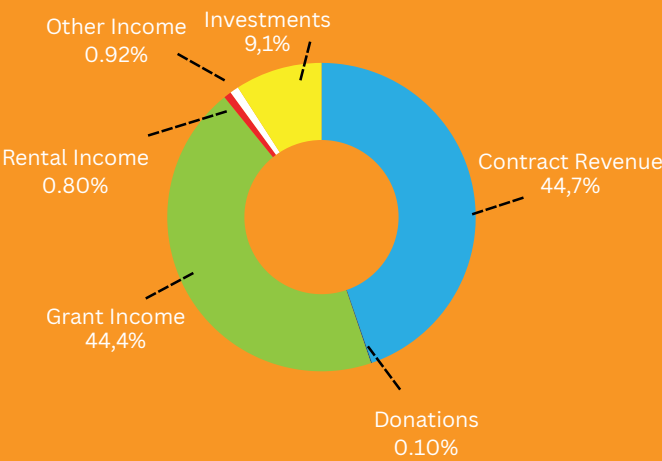
Gross Surplus 2024
22 157 935

Operating Surplus 2024
14 011 495

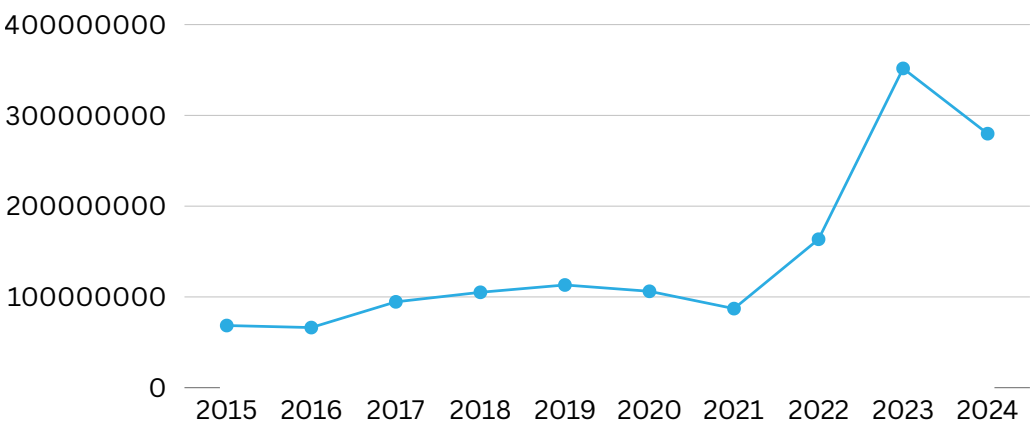
Surplus for the year 2024
42 330 786

Revenue Ratio FY2024

	2024	2023
Revenue		
Contract Revenue	139 037 396	89 070 388
Donations	302 060	141 935 129
Grant Income	138 006 803	117 617 276
Rental Income	2 498 886	3 104 542
Other income	2 862 277	4 180 733
Investments	28 319 291	12 976 984
	311 026 713	368 885 052



10 YEAR AUDITED REVENUE RESULTS



2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
68 493 469	66 246 111	94 583 061	105 096 730	113 164 470	106 199 130	87 122 519	163 542 313	351 727 335	279 845 145

Our funders



BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation



ELIZABETH GLASER
PEDIATRIC AIDS
FOUNDATION
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HEIDELBERG
UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL



HITOTSUBASHI
UNIVERSITY



PPD GLOBAL



u^b UNIVERSITÄT
BERN



UC GLOBAL
HEALTH
INSTITUTE
University of California





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March 2023 - February 2024

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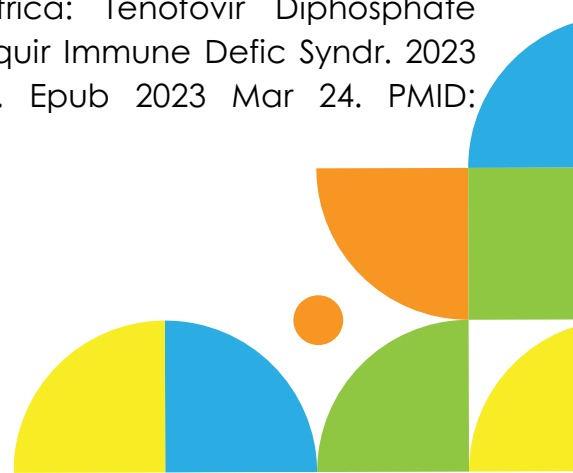
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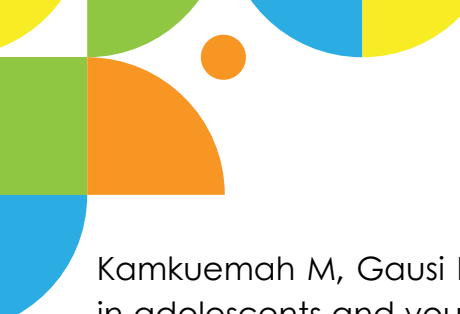
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