

NICD PULSE

ISSUE 09 | VOLUME 4 | DECEMBER 2021



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

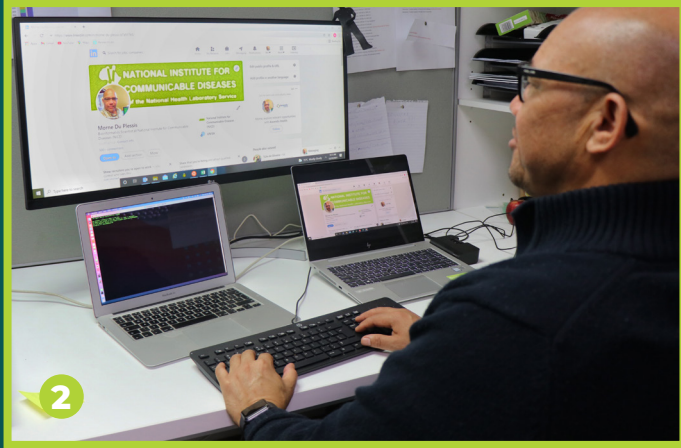
Division of the National Health Laboratory Service



Happy Holidays
SOUTH AFRICA



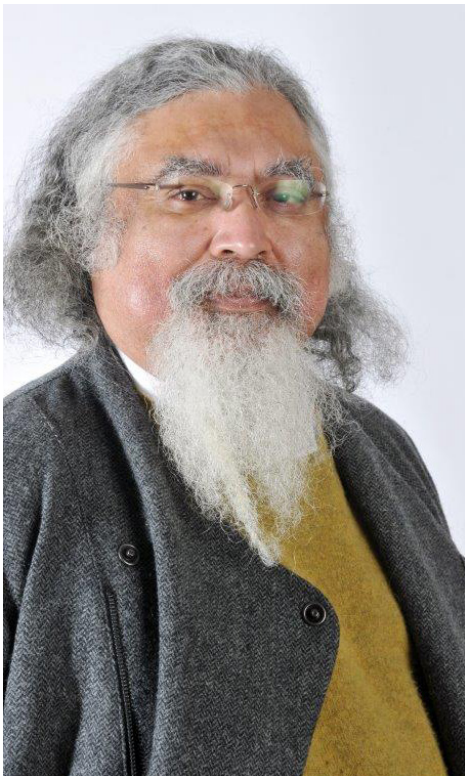
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MESSAGE FROM ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Prof Adrian Puren

Dear colleagues

The theme for this edition is "A Thousand Points of Light", which brings to mind the CS Lewis quote.

"One moment there had been nothing but darkness; next moment a thousand, thousand points of light leapt out -- single stars, constellations, and planets, brighter and bigger than any in our world."

I have always enjoyed browsing through the NICD Pulse in preparing

the editorial, and this edition was no different. This final edition of the year is my favourite as we hear your voices speaking on matters close to your hearts. I strongly urge you to take the time to read through it.

The edition starts with a LinkedIn piece, where Morne du Plessis demonstrates how this platform can benefit your team and our institute as a whole. Whether you are social media shy or an active participant, we cannot ignore the powerful influence of social media. I will give LinkedIn a go, once I have found the slip of paper where I scribbled my login details.

Next, Sinenhlanhla Jimoh shares insights into the Communications Unit's holiday season campaign that hopes to reignite public efforts in adhering to COVID-19 preventative measures. Another interesting read is the Cough Check pilot study that enables participants to self-swab for COVID-19 testing in the comfort of their homes.

The Communications Unit has been exceptionally busy giving voice and images to various health awareness campaigns during the last quarter. We've had the polio campaign that hosted a CPD accredited webinar, to the exciting activities for World Toilet Day and many in between! I commend all the teams involved in engaging the NICD staff.

Academic bragging rights are reserved for Serisha Naicker, Faith Moyo and Villyen Motaze, amongst others who obtained their PhD qualifications in their respective disciplines. Congratulations, the long hours, sweat and tears have paid off and we salute you!

Then we turn our attention to COVID-19 vaccine booster shots, with the piece focusing on the importance of boosters and how it is being rolled out to the various priority groups. We also check in with the team behind the trailblazing technology that powers the Notifiable Medical Conditions Surveillance System and briefly examine the multiple steps needed to bring an app to fruition.

Finally, as I reflect on 2021, I am reminded of the countless lessons I have learned. I remember the advances made, with our institute leading the way in many, and I could not be prouder. We have come a long way, and I believe we are all better equipped to deal with COVID-19, despite the ongoing challenges it presents. It is hard to believe that COVID-19, wearing masks, lockdowns and family meetings, has been our reality for nearly two years. But there is hope and this too shall pass.

“Thank you for a remarkable year. We can all be very proud of what we have achieved.”

I wish you all well. Be safe this holiday season, be responsible and see you all refreshed and energised in 2022.

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KEYBOARD WARRIOR MAKES THE MOST OF LINKEDIN, AND SO SHOULD YOU

By Nileen Gale

With more than 13 years of experience in the genomic research space, Dr Morne du Plessis is an accomplished Bioinformatics Scientist by day, and avid LinkedIn aficionado by night. After obtaining his PhD in Biotechnology from the University of the Western Cape in 2008, Du Plessis honed his bioinformatics skills while working for a number of genomics research organisations, before joining the NICD's Sequencing Core Facility team in May this year. He feels that this has been a good career move, remarking "My current role is very rewarding, given the fact that my contributions have an immediate impact on society. And I find my work environment highly stimulating, where growth and development are both encouraged and rewarded."

Du Plessis considers himself a bit of a keyboard warrior and enjoys being active on LinkedIn, a social media business communication tool, where he regularly shares content about the sequencing core unit. He has found LinkedIn to be a useful resource for reaching out to, and networking with various professionals within his field, and those in related fields. "LinkedIn creates a network that allows a person to quickly and easily disseminate important information about the activities, resources and innovations of the sequencing core facility", he explains.

Through content sharing on LinkedIn, Du Plessis tries to create an enhanced



Dr Morne du Plessis, Bioinformatics Scientist.

understanding of the advanced technology used at the facility, with the hope of encouraging greater acceptance of, and confidence in sequencing data. Additionally, he believes it will create opportunities to collaborate or partner with other infectious disease researchers globally, which will contribute to overall advances in the field. "I feel strongly about LinkedIn serving as a launchpad into other digital media platforms, given that those on LinkedIn tend to be active on other social media platforms too." He continues to say that the value of being active on LinkedIn is underpinned by the fact that it is regarded as a highly professional and reputable platform. This means that the content shared is viewed with the gravitas it deserves. Du Plessis adds that "The proof is in the pudding, and I encourage my colleagues to become better acquainted with LinkedIn. Interact on the platform and connect with others by sharing content of the

pioneering work you do."

When asked to comment on the responses his content normally elicits, he shyly grins and states that generally the feedback is positive. "There have been several messages of support in reference to the valuable work we do. Encouragingly enough, counterparts from various countries have reached out to me, asking about capacity building and how they can emulate our success." His approach is certainly working, as companies who are active in the research and technology space have engaged in sharing new advances. "Overall, I would describe the response as a tremendously positive experience that not only enhances the reputation of the sequencing unit but also reaffirms our institute's stature of being a leader in the field."

To connect with the NICD on LinkedIn, click [here](#).



CELEBRATING THE FESTIVE SEASON SAFELY

By Puseletso Kobedi

The time to put your feet up, sit back and relax in the company of loved ones has finally arrived. However, with COVID-19 ever present, it is very important that everyone takes steps to celebrate safely.

The emotional toll of the COVID-19 pandemic is unquestionable, with more individuals experiencing what experts call "COVID fatigue". An unfortunate consequence of COVID fatigue, is a greater reluctance to adhere to the recommended safety precautions, such as face masking and social distancing. We sat down with Sinenhlanhla Jimoh, Senior Communications Manager at the NICD, to find out what the Communications Unit is doing to help keep COVID-19 messaging relevant over the holidays.

"I have observed more people out in public without their masks and a general non-adherence to other non-pharmaceutical interventions," Jimoh notes with concern. She adds that COVID fatigue makes it increasingly difficult to generate COVID-19 content that will resonate with the public. Although the odds of generating acceptable messaging are slightly stacked against the Communications Unit, the unit remains committed to the cause.

To raise COVID-19 awareness over the festive season, the Communications Unit is in the process of rolling out a campaign, aptly titled "Tis the Season to be Safe". Jimoh states that, "The campaign aims to reinforce positive behaviours, such as getting vaccinated, in order to minimise the spread of COVID-19."



Mask up, stay safe

Jimoh believes the campaign will encourage the public to act responsibly in protecting themselves and their loved ones. "Some individuals may be tired of following COVID-19 precautions, and we get that, however, it is vital for us to remain resolute in sharing COVID-19 content, even more so during the festive season," Jimoh stresses. She adds that the message tonality and reference to real-life scenarios are especially important, as the holiday season tends to go hand-in-hand with family vacations and travelling domestically or abroad. "The public should be

able to relate to the content we share," she adds.

Getting back to "normality" is the end goal. However, the only way we will get there, is to take simple precautionary steps that will help keep ourselves, our families and our communities safe. "Celebrating the festive season safely this year does not downplay merriment with many having lost so much during the year, may be first Christmas without loved ones, it simply means that we all have to reconsider how we can celebrate, safely," Jimoh concludes.



Happy Holidays SOUTH AFRICA

Be safe when spending time with loved ones by masking up, washing up, keeping your distance, avoiding large gatherings and getting vaccinated.

#TisTheSeasonToBeSafe #FightCOVID19



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COUGH WATCH: THE POWER OF COVID-19 TESTING IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

By Puseletso Kobedi

As the new Omicron variant continues to spread across South Africa, there is the added threat of being infected with influenza (flu). As both COVID-19 and the flu share symptoms, the only way to know for certain whether you have a nasty flu infection, or COVID-19, is to have yourself tested for COVID-19. Accessing COVID-19 testing can present challenges for some, especially those who are too sick to travel or those who fear the actual COVID-19 sample collection procedure.

A possible solution is Cough Check, a self-swabbing pilot study. Research has shown equal effectiveness of tests, irrespective of samples being collected by self-swabbing or by a trained healthcare professional. As part of the Cough Check study, trained personnel visit your home and provide with you the tools to collect the samples

required for COVID-19 testing. With self-swabbing, you have complete control over the swabbing process to ensure a more comfortable and less invasive experience. Once the swab-based sample has been collected, the sample is taken to a laboratory for analysis. A SMS informing you whether you have a common cold, the flu or COVID-19 is sent to you as soon as

the results are available. A positive test result for SARS-CoV-2 will prompt you to follow the prescribed guidelines to limit disease transmission.

Why should you take part in this pilot study? Besides the convenience of collecting the required sample yourself, in the comfort of your home, you will be provided with valuable information on how COVID-19, the flu and the common cold impacts South Africans. In addition, the information you provide will help guide planning and decision-making to prevent future COVID-19 waves in South Africa, while the sample you provide will be screened to detect new flu or COVID-19 variants.

To book a Cough Check test, you will need to either book a test online or message Epicentre on their WhatsApp number at 072 843 7564. [Click here](#) to find out more on Cough Check.



TAKE CONTROL ENROL TEST YOURSELF
COUGH CHECK STUDY

Self-Swabbing

FREE TESTING AT HOME
072 843 7564
INFO@EPICENTRE.ORG.ZA

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GIVE COVID-19 THE BOOT WITH BOOSTER SHOTS

By Nileen Gale

As custodians of the COVID-19 vaccination drive in South Africa, the National Department of Health (NDoH) recently announced plans to offer COVID-19 vaccine booster shots to at-risk priority populations. This follows Johnson & Johnson booster shots being offered to all healthcare workers who were vaccinated under the Sisonke trial, with a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Although the exact date for the launch of the national booster vaccine initiative has yet to be announced, the NDoH has stressed that a Pfizer booster shot will only be offered to individuals who received their second Pfizer vaccination at least six months ago.



Lehlohonolo Kumalo Chandu: "I have taken my booster jab. It is important to vaccinate to protect and strengthen one's immune system."

While the logistics for the booster campaign are being put to bed, the NDoH continues to encourage all unvaccinated individuals to get vaccinated. Adolescents, aged between 12 and 18-years, who received the single Pfizer dose, are now being offered a second Pfizer dose, provided the first dose was administered

at least 42-days ago. This age group was initially only offered single dose of the Pfizer vaccine, due to concerns around possible heart inflammation (myocarditis) following a second Pfizer vaccination. However, recent research shows that this is self-limiting and further studies are being conducted.

The question of the moment is "Do vaccines (and booster shots) offer protection against the newly emerged Omicron variant?" Prof Penny Moore, Medical Scientist at the Centre for HIV and STIs at the NICD, who collaborated on a study to determine exactly that, states that although vaccines do offer some protection, the new variant partly escapes protection offered by vaccines. Interestingly, the study also showed that those individuals with previous COVID-19 infection, who were now fully vaccinated, may enjoy enhanced protection. Read the [preprint](#) here.

I GOT MY JAB-GET YOURS!



Mandla Chonco

"Ngijovile umjovo we COVID-19 ukuze ngivikele abanye abantu kuleli gciwane."



Nileen Gale

"Ek glo in die wetenskap agter die inenting, en het my mou opgerol om my deel te doen om COVID-19 te bekamp. Hierdeur beskerm ek net nie myself nie, maar ook my geliefdes."



Vanessa Quan

"Vaccines work! Protect yourself, protect those around you. Don't wait, VACCINATE!"



Comfort Tladi:

"Ke hlabile ente ya COVID-19 go itshireletsa kgahlanong le bolwetsi bo matla ba COVID-19."



Mvuyo Makhasi:

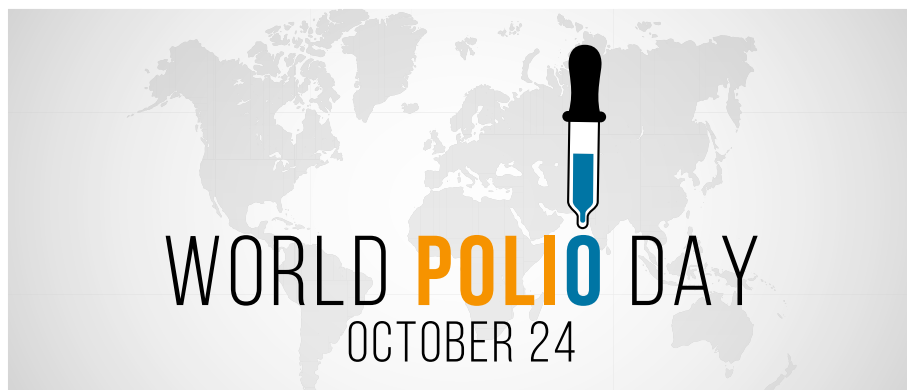
"I chose to vaccinate to protect myself against sever disease and to protect those around me. I believe we share a collective responsibility to protect each other and minimise the impact of COVID-19."



PLACING POLIO UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

By Nileen Gale

The 24th of October marks World Polio Day, a day that highlights the critical role that polio vaccine programmes play in preventing the disease. According to the World Health Organization, polio mainly affects children under the age of 5-years, with an estimated one in 200 infections leading to irreversible paralysis. Sadly, approximately 10% of the children that suffer paralysis, succumb to the disease. This year, the Centre for Vaccines and Immunology (CVI) commemorated World Polio Day through informative communication, sharing of resources, and by hosting a CPD accredited webinar. The webinar, chaired by Dr Melinda Suchard (CVI Centre Head), featured a panel of respected polio experts, who discussed the progress made towards eradicating polio.



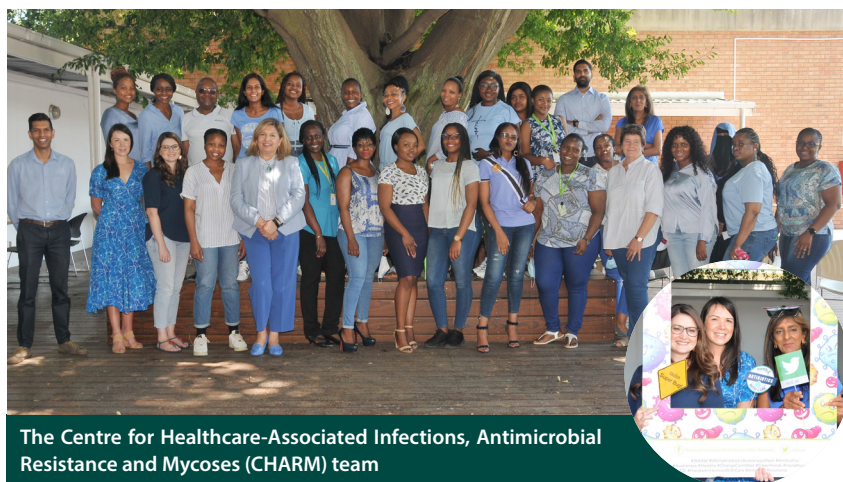
As an effective polio vaccine is readily available, CVI believes that no child should be affected by, or die from polio. CVI, therefore, strongly urges parents, caregivers and guardians to protect their children by ensuring they received a polio vaccination. Suchard comments that, "Even though South Africa is polio-free, polio outbreaks

experienced in other countries can pose a risk. Therefore, the importance of immunising children cannot be stressed enough." She adds that spreading awareness about polio vaccines and South Africa's immunisation programme will drastically reduce the risk of children contracting polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases.

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE, WHY THE FUSS?

By Nileen Gale

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) describes the situation where infectious organisms have evolved mechanisms to evade the action of medications designed to kill them. AMR has been recognised as a major threat to global public health, given the potential it has to significantly increase morbidity and mortality. The Centre for Healthcare-Associated Infections, Antimicrobial Resistance and Mycoses (CHARM) at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases commemorated World Antimicrobial Awareness Week between the 18th and 24th of November 2021. "The purpose of the campaign was to increase awareness of AMR, thereby avoiding the reemergence and spread of drug-resistant infections," quips Marshagne Smith,



The Centre for Healthcare-Associated Infections, Antimicrobial Resistance and Mycoses (CHARM) team

co-campaign lead from CHARM.

The campaign was supported through regular communication, infographics, animated videos, and a series of insightful podcasts. NICD employees were encouraged to don their best blue outfits and accessories in support of the cause on the final day of the campaign.

"When diseases become harder to treat, there is an increased risk of diseases spreading, severe illness developing and death," Prof Olga Perovic, co-campaign lead from CHARM highlights. She, however, goes on to say that this grim reality can be reversed through an enhanced understanding of treatment options, and the proper use of antibiotics.



MORE THAN JUST AN APP - PUBLIC HEALTH SURVEILLANCE MADE EASY

By Puseletso Kobedi

To enable rapid responses to certain public health threats, the National Department of Health has mandated that certain diseases and illnesses be reported as soon as they are detected. These diseases and illnesses, referred to as 'Notifiable Medical Conditions' (NMCs), should be reported through the Notifiable Medical Condition Surveillance System (NMCSS). The NMCSS is a passive surveillance system, which relies on healthcare providers (clinicians, both public and private laboratories and medical schemes), and medical schemes) to promptly report any NMC detected. The NMCSS reporting platform was initially solely paper-based, but in 2018, a real-time electronic application (App) for android devices was rolled out across South Africa.

We spoke to Gloseije Bazolana, an Information Manager at the NICD, to get some insight into what it took to develop the NMC App. Bazolana played a major role in enhancing the existing NMC processes and applications. Bazolana has been supported by Muzammil Bano, an Analyst Developer, who has been actively involved with the iOS development of the NMC App.

What makes a good app?

Bazolana explained that when developing a mobile health application, which uses patient health data, a number of factors, such as data security, app design, efficiency and readability, have to be considered. In addition, the app must undergo rigorous testing before being launched.

1. Data security: Ensuring that the data uploaded onto the app are secure and only accessible by authorised individuals is critical. Health data systems, therefore, must always have rules and strategies that ensure the highest possible level of confidentiality. Each user accessing the system needs to be compartmentalised to the required level of access.

2. Design: Developing an App with an intuitive, easy-to-understand design that ensures a positive user experience is vitally important. User experience refers to the emotions a user experiences when using the App. It takes into consideration how well the user can navigate through the App, how easy the App is to use and how relevant the content displayed are.

3. Efficiency: If a mobile application performance doesn't meet a user's expectations, they are more than likely to abandon the experience. Having the app work efficiently will also ensure the seamless transition for the user from the old system to the new.

4. Testing: Pilot testing of the app in real life situations, prior to its release date, is a crucial phase of app development. It allows for glitches in the system to be detected and corrected before the product is launched. Uptake of new Apps, where the software fails to function correctly, is very poor. Therefore, everything should be done to ensure a glitch-free launch.



Bazolana and his team continue to work on the NMC App to ensure that it is flexible, fast and easily accessible across all platforms (Web, Android, iOS). Most importantly, their work contributes to the timeous detection and response

to public health threats. We would like to thank this dynamic team for their ongoing contribution towards improving public health surveillance in South Africa.

**WHEN IT COMES TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASE THREATS,
WE HAVE SOUTH AFRICA'S BACK**



ACHIEVEMENTS



Serisha Naicker

Hats off to Serisha Naicker, from the Centre for Healthcare-Associated Infections, Antimicrobial Resistance and Mycoses, who recently obtained her PhD in Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases from the University of the Witwatersrand. "It is unbelievable," Naicker exclaims, adding that it's hard for her to verbalise how much this qualification means to her. "Although it has been a long, hard struggle, finally having a PhD under my belt makes the journey worthwhile." Serisha has been employed at the NICD for nearly 10 years, having started her career as an Intern Medical Scientist in 2012. Naicker's passion for laboratory work and her fascination with microorganisms is undeniable and has resulted in a number of peer reviewed publications.

With the title of Senior Researcher in her sights, Naicker believes that her dedication and aptitude for hard work will help her achieve her career goals. And judging by her success to date, her potential is truly limitless. Congratulations Serisha, we salute you!



Villyen Motaze

Applause and salutations go to the Head of the Notifiable Medical Condition Surveillance System, Villyen Motaze, who recently obtained his PhD in Epidemiology from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at Stellenbosch University. Motaze is a valued member of the Division of Public Health, Surveillance and Response, and stated after obtaining his PhD, "I have reached a target I set for myself many years ago. Embarking on a PhD is a journey that ends with a degree, however, it also leads to a new journey of discovery and professional development." Motaze is not resting on his laurels, and has already set his next career next goal. Over the next few years he would like to have established himself as a global leader in epidemiology and have graduated his first PhD student.



Pictured here with Motaze (left) is Professor Jimmy Volmink, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences at Stellenbosch University

NICD WEBSITE: THE REAL DEAL



The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has ensured the continual generation of information pertaining to the pandemic; however, some information is accurate whereas others are not! Inaccurate information spreads widely and with great speed, making it increasingly difficult for the public to identify verified facts and advice from trusted sources. The NICD's website has been recognised by the Daily Maverick as being the number one trusted source of credible COVID-19 information in South Africa. They continue to add that the site "will give you high-grade scientific, useful, credible, accurate, up-to-date information". Read more [here](#)

NICD RECOGNISED FOR LONG COVID RESEARCH



The International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI) recently awarded the National Institute for Communicable Disease with a

certificate of recognition, for a project investigating long COVID in South Africa. The project, spearheaded by Dr Waasila Jassat, won the best project award as part of IANPHI's Recognition of Success contest. IANPHI collectively builds public health capacity by connecting, developing, and strengthening national public health institutes worldwide.

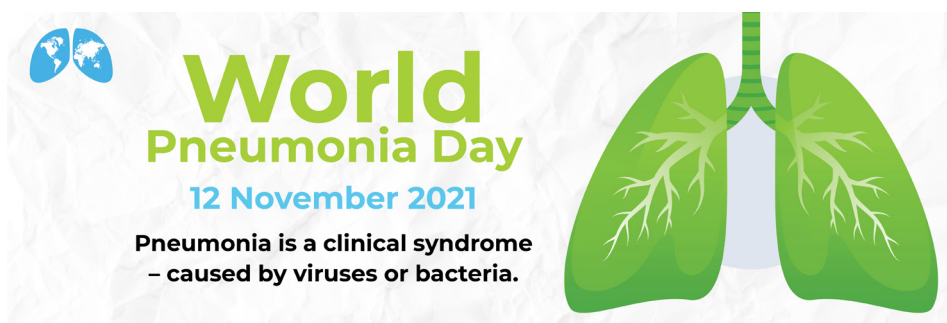
EVERY BREATH COUNTS

By Lesego Sibilanga

World Pneumonia Day is celebrated annually on the 12th of November in order to raise awareness of this deadly disease. Pneumonia, a clinical syndrome caused by a collection of viruses and bacteria, is one of most lethal infectious diseases, claiming approximately 2.5 million lives annually. It is also a leading cause of death amongst children under the age of 5-years.

The awareness of pneumonia could not have come at a better time as influenza B, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) subgroup A, and variants of COVID-19 were most commonly detected in the pneumonia surveillance, in substantial percentages, according to the Respiratory Report for week 44 of 2021.

Pneumonia often begins to develop two or three days after an infection associated with a cold or sore throat. However, influenza, RSV and COVID-19 infections can also cause pneumonia. It is, therefore, important to be on



the lookout for rapid heartbeat or breathing; shortness of breath or breathlessness; heavy sweating; and dizziness if you have a cold, the flu, RSV, or COVID-19. The incidence of pneumonia is higher among smokers, those who have a history of alcohol intake or other illicit substance abuse, and those with underlying chronic respiratory conditions, for instance, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD for short. Other risk factors for pneumonia include:

- Poor nutritional intake, especially amongst children
- Inadequate ventilation at home or in the workplace

- The presence of underlying immunocompromised conditions, for example, HIV
- Steroids or other immunosuppressant medications for organ transplant or autoimmune disorders
- Uncontrolled diabetes

Effective ways to prevent pneumonia are similar to COVID-19 preventative measures. This includes getting the annual flu vaccine, practicing healthy hand hygiene, covering coughs and sneezes with your elbow, pneumococcal vaccination and steering clear of those who are sick.

TACKLING SUSTAINABLE SANITATION, ONE TOILET AT A TIME

By Lesego Sibilanga

The 19th of November is designated for World Toilet Day. While World Toilet Day may sound like a strange occasion to commemorate, it highlights the pivotal role that sanitation and hygiene play in driving improvements in public health, gender equality, education, economic development and environmental protection.

This year the Centre for Enteric Diseases encouraged the NICD staff to join them in a series of fun activities to help celebrate the humble loo. Activities included The Big Squat, Fishing for Poop and Toilet Trivia.

The Big Squat, where staff had to squat as many times as possible in one minute, raised awareness of the importance of the toilet seat, in terms of hygiene and the efficiencies it provides. Fishing for Poop reminded us of the sanitary benefits of a toilet, while Toilet Trivia highlighted the remarkable evolution of toilets and the development of wastewater treatment systems.

When carefully managed, wastewater can provide some surprising social, environmental and economic benefits, contributing to overall well-being, health, water and food security and sustainable development. Often taken



for granted, basic toilet facilities are critical for improved health outcomes for many in the developing world. Ensuring access to toilets is particularly important in addressing gender inequality issues, as toilets are beneficial to women and girls, especially during menstruation and pregnancy.



BEHIND A SEEMINGLY HARMLESS MOSQUITO BITE

By Dr Jaishree Raman and Nileen Gale

A bite from a mosquito often only results in the temporary swelling and itching of the skin around the bite site. However, in malaria-endemic areas, a bite from a malaria mosquito can have more severe consequences. Despite being preventable and treatable, malaria still affects millions of individuals around the globe, many of whom reside within the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The Centre for Emerging Zoonotic and Parasitic Diseases (CEZPD) at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, therefore, commemorated SADC Malaria Week in November.

During the first week of November, the CEZPD malaria team shared information geared towards raising awareness around malaria diagnosis, treatment and prevention. In addition, they highlighted the ongoing efforts to eliminate malaria within the SADC region.

The Elimination Eight (E8) malaria initiative is a coalition of eight southern African countries, who are working together to eliminate malaria in all eight participating countries by 2030. South

Africa, who is part of the coalition, has been earmarked to eliminate malaria by 2025, because of its relatively low malaria burden. With the global focus shifting to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, there were concerns that the essential activities of malaria control programmes would be disrupted, allowing malaria case numbers to increase across Africa. Thankfully, in South Africa, efforts to curb malaria transmission have remained largely on track, as outlined by Drs Jaishree Raman and Shüné Oliver in an **opinion piece** for The Conversation Africa. Here, they discussed the various steps that South Africa is taking to stop local transmission within its borders. Amongst others, the piece unpacked the importance of prompt testing for malaria using rapid diagnostic tests and the need to report

positive results through the Notifiable Medical Conditions reporting system within 24 hours.

“The road towards malaria elimination is not easy and walking that last mile tends to be toughest. However, with sustained funding to ensure delivery of essential malaria services and strong political leadership, all underpinned by community acceptance and participation, the 2025 malarial elimination goal is attainable,”

says Dr Jaishree Raman. She concludes with, “As we look towards the future, the possibility of a bite from a malaria mosquito being harmless in the E8 region is very real.”



GENEROUS USAID DONATION IS A GAME CHANGER FOR PATHOGEN SEQUENCING

The National Institute for Communicable Diseases recently became the recipient of a state-of-the-art sequencing system, Illumina Nextseq1000. The generous donation, courtesy of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), will significantly increase the capacity for genomic surveillance in South Africa. “We are very appreciative of this donation and believe the equipment will be most useful

during the COVID-19 resurgence and as we consider the health system recovery for the HIV program,” an elated Prof Adrian Puren, NICD Acting Executive Director comments. He adds that the system will not only enable rapid turnaround times, but will also be used for processing additional pathogens on the genomic platform, and will ensure exceptional data accuracy and efficient data analysis.



Pictured with the impressive Illumina Nextseq1000 is from left: Dr Heena Brahmhatt (USAID: Senior HIV Advisor), Dr Natalie Mayet (NICD Deputy Director), Prof Adrian Puren (NICD Acting Executive Director) Dr Arshad Ismail.

