CHIEDZA & STICH TRIALS’ SYMPOSIA

On July 24th and 25th, the CHIEDZA and STICH trials held symposia at the STI and HIV World Congress in Chicago and at the 12th International AIDS Society Conference in Brisbane. The lineup of speakers included Prof. Rashida Ferrand, Dr. Vicky Simms, Dr. Chido Dziva Chikwari, Ethel Dauya, Dr. Constancia Mavodza, Dr. Mandi Tembo, Dr. Nyasha Dzavakwa and Dr. Sarah Bernays. The symposia highlighted key findings, lessons learnt, and post-trial ethical considerations from the CHIEDZA and STICH trials.

All the presentations and posters from the events can be viewed here: https://www.chiedza.co.zw/
A warm welcome to Phoebe Walsh, Ana Bayona, and Talia Glanville, visiting MSc students from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine who will be implementing their summer projects with us for the next few months. We took a moment to get know more about them and here is what they had to say:

**Phoebe Walsh**

“My name is Phoebe Walsh and I am doing an MSc in Public Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. I have come to THRU ZIM to work on a project looking at food insecurity and tuberculosis using data from the ERASE-TB cohort. I am looking at whether the BMI of adolescents’ changes in response to a TB diagnosis in the household. When I am not studying, I love cycling and am currently training for an 800km bike ride across the Dolomites in Germany and Italy. I also enjoy knitting and have bought a lovely basket from one of the markets here in Harare to store my wool in! I have loved my time in Zimbabwe so far, visiting the markets and watching some live music. I am really excited about visiting Victoria Falls and Hwange – where I will get the chance to see amazing animals!”

**Ana Bayona**

“My name is Ana Bayona, I study public health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and I am very excited to be in the THRU ZIM as part of my MSc summer project. For my research, I am analysing qualitative data from the GIFT study, looking at the acceptability and messaging of a novel STI test for women in Zimbabwe. I am a nurse, and although I live in London, I am from Valencia, Spain. I love reading, swimming, cooking and trying different food, and, of course, travelling. I love animals and look forward to exploring Zimbabwe’s amazing nature and wildlife. What I am enjoying the most so far is how friendly and welcoming people are here!”

**Talia Glanville**

“Hello! I am Talia, I am 24 years old and I am from Portsmouth, a coastal city in the South of England. I now live in London where I am studying for my MSc Control of Infectious Diseases at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. In my spare time, I love exploring and travelling, reading, cooking and playing tennis. During my time here at THRU ZIM, I am excited to understand how primary research is conducted through collecting qualitative data as part of the Pregnancy in Minors study. I have been fortunate to travel with my lovely team, Maureen and Modester, to Epworth, where we have begun carrying out interviews with local people who have been kind and welcoming. Everyone I’ve met here in Harare has been so friendly, and I am excited to explore more of Zimbabwe when I travel to Victoria Falls in a few weeks’ time.”

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**ABSTRACTS ACCEPTED FOR PRESTIGIOUS CONFERENCES**

We would like to congratulate, Dr. Edith Majonga, whose abstract for the Characterisation Of Cardiac Disease in adolescents with perinatally-acquired HIV infection in the antiretroviral therapy (CORD) study has been accepted for an oral presentation at the 11th EDCPT Forum scheduled to take place in Paris, France from the 7th -10th of November 2023. We would also like to congratulate, Steven Azizi, whose abstract titled “Health Services Uptake among female youth in Zimbabwe: a latent class analysis” has been accepted for an oral presentation at the 18th Biennial Sub-Saharan African Network of the International Biometric Society (SUSAN IBS). The conference will be held from 10th to 15th of September 2023 in Ghana at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), in Kumasi. Wishing them both the best of luck!
DR. RUDO CHINGONO GRADUATES FROM UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

On July 14th, Dr. Rudo Chingono, graduated with a Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Global Mental Health from University College London. Dr. Chingono’s PhD focused on the burden of maternal mental health on mother’s living with HIV and its impact on their parenting abilities. THRU ZIM wishes her a huge congratulations for this incredible milestone! Dr. Chingono is currently a postdoctoral fellow and the co-investigator on an UKRI funded study exploring the impact of setting up community hypertension groups in Zimbabwe. She also the training and mentorship co-lead here at THRU ZIM.

Y-CHECK BIDS FAREWELL TO TEAMMATE

The Y-Check team said goodbye to Saruh Rusike, an MSc in Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy & Programming student at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, who completed a one-month placement with the Y-Check team at THRU ZIM. Saruh has moved to Kigali, Rwanda to take up a placement with the Ministry of Health as a Global Health Corps Africa Fellow https://ghcorps.org/author/chido-kelly-saruh-rusike/. We wish Saruh the best of luck with her new position.
5 MINUTES WITH...
TINASHE MWATURURA

What do you do and when did you start?
I joined THRU ZIM on March 17th, 2021 as a research assistant for the CHIEDZA study, specifically testing urine samples. I went on to lead a sub-study known as the consent trial which sought to test video information consenting tools against the standard paper-based consenting methods in the study. I also fulfilled a role as study coordinator for the AVAPAR study and I am currently coordinating the GIFT study.

Where can we find you in the office?
You can find me in the office across the kitchen with my colleagues Claire, Bridgette and Edson.

What do you enjoy about your work?
I very much enjoy how my work is multifaceted in terms of the research and administrative aspects of it. The research side has helped me to consistently grow as a scientist by developing my skills while on the administrative side, I have excelled at ensuring that the studies I head, operate as per protocol.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call for abstracts – Annual HIV Research Symposium
The 4th Annual HIV Research Symposium is scheduled to take place on 27-28 September, 2023. This symposium serves as a national platform bringing together policy makers, researchers, program implementers, individuals living with HIV and related co-morbidities as well as community members. Its primary objective is to showcase evidence-based research and interventions that influence policy and programming towards the 95-95-95 targets and ultimately ending of AIDS.

The theme for this year is “Living and Ageing with HIV – Rethinking and Pioneering Interventions Towards Ending AIDS and Improving Quality of Life”.

Abstracts are required for the following thematic areas:

- HIV Prevention
- Treatment and Care
- Emerging epidemics and cross-cutting issues
- HIV and NCDs/ Climate impact and Emerging Pandemics.
- Cross-cutting Issues

The deadline for submission of abstracts is August 30, 2023. Please email mufaronashe@gmail.com for more information.

Social Science Research Group Seminar
The next Social Science Research Group Seminar will be on 30th August at 11am (CAT). Nyasha Dzavakwa will present on: Design of a Process Evaluation within a trial of electronic pill boxes.

The seminar will be in person at the THRU ZIM Gazebo. For those who cannot attend in person, the zoom link is:
https://ishtm.zoom.us/j/94713267383?pwd=RLidORZMXRWxQOURXY1VhWUNZckFMdz09
Meeting ID: 947 1326 7383 Password: 610536


Call for Applications: Essential Grant Writing Skills Programme October/November 2023

The Africa Research Excellence Fund (AREF) works to strengthen the health research capacity of scientists in Africa who are engaged in tackling the continent’s significant health challenges. AREF is calling for applications from scientists who are active, emerging biomedical/health researchers in African countries to participate in the forthcoming Essential Grant Writing Skills Programme.

This fully on-line programme will be held over eight 3-hour sessions during the weeks of 9 October 2023 and 27 November 2023. There will be a six-week break in between the two sessions, where you will be expected to write a mini proposal. This is an intensive programme that is designed to produce tangible progress towards a grant proposal by the end of the workshop series. Your commitment to the entire series and to the additional work outside of sessions will be necessary to achieve these outcomes.

To fully benefit from this workshop series, you will be at a stage in your research career where you are actively seeking independent funding, or have won smaller grants, but have yet to secure that big grant necessary to support your research independence:


Imperial College Research Fellowship Scheme

This message is a pre-announcement of the 2023 Imperial College Research Fellowship scheme (for fellowships starting between August and December 2024), which is due to launch in late June 2023. It includes information on the timeline and process, which I am now sharing with the Department’s potential applicants, for their early consideration.

The Imperial College Research Fellowship scheme seeks to recruit the highest calibre of early career post-doctoral researchers from the UK and across the world, and support them to establish their independent research careers and become research leaders of the future. These fellowships offer four years of support, including a contribution toward research and travel costs (up to £45,000).

The scheme is intended to support recently qualified post-doctoral researchers transitioning towards research independence. Candidates should have no more than four years post-doctoral research experience, though extensions will be considered in certain circumstances (such as part-time working, parental leave, or delays in research due to the Covid-19 pandemic). Salary will be offered in the Research Associate salary band, to reflect the junior nature of the scheme.

The eligibility criteria and application process are expected to duplicate from previous years, and so interested applicants are welcome to review the 2022 Imperial College Research Fellowship website for background information but must ensure to refer to the 2023 information (which is being updated as part of the call launch preparation) prior to submitting an application.

Applicants will be required to identify a sponsor to support their application, and so candidates may wish to use this time to contact potential sponsors and discuss their interest in applying and their proposed fellowship project. They should of course confirm that their chosen Department is supporting Imperial College Research Fellowship 2023 applications before proceeding.

The expectation is that the Imperial College Research Fellowship call will be released in late June 2023, with an application deadline of Monday 21 August 2023. Decisions are expected to be announced in mid-late December 2023. The start date for fellowships will be between 1 August and 1 December 2024.

For further information, please contact Felicity Fitzgerald at felicity.fitzgerald@ucl.ac.uk.

Share your news, publications, pictures, announcements: publicengagement@thruzim.org. Follow us on Twitter: https://twitter.com/ThruZim

THANK YOU!