



UPDATES

SHEAR Zim study begins: Investigating hypertension in young adults

The Significance of Hypertension in Early Adulthood Research in Zimbabwe (SHEAR Zim), a Wellcome Trust -funded study, officially started in February with community sensitization activities and the official opening of the SHEAR Zim clinic at the University of Zimbabwe Medical School, within the Parirenyatwa Group of Hospitals. The study successfully recruited its first participants and aims to recruit 1,000 individuals over the next 18 months from areas in Harare and Chitungwiza, including Budiriro, Mufakose, Highfields, Sunningdale, St Mary's, Zengeza, and Seke.

The goal of SHEAR Zim is to understand the clinical significance of hypertension in young adults in Zimbabwe. This research aims to establish the population prevalence of hypertension in individuals aged 20-29 years and identify key risk factors. It will also assess the extent of end-organ damage, including hypertension-mediated organ damage and early vascular aging, which may already be occurring at this young age.

Community health workers, in collaboration with local health promotion officers and the study team, are leading the sensitization and recruitment efforts. Participants will undergo various investigations, including multiple blood pressure measurements, heart and kidney scans, and advanced eye screenings, with refreshments and compensation provided for their time and transport. This study will provide valuable insights into hypertension in young adults and its long-term impacts, helping to improve health outcomes for this age group in Zimbabwe.



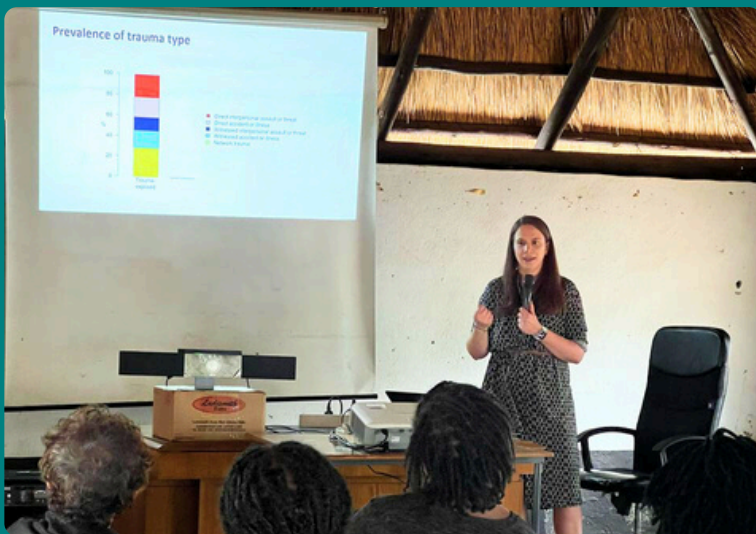
Shear study team leading the sensitization and recruitment efforts

Mind matters: Tackling trauma in young people—from London to Harare

On March 11, 2025, Dr. Stephanie Lewis delivered a hybrid seminar on “Trauma-Related Mental Health Problems in Young People: From Research in the UK to Plans in Zimbabwe.” The session brought together researchers, and mental health professionals to discuss critical issues in youth mental health.

Dr. Lewis shared findings from her research in the UK, shedding light on the impact of trauma on young people and the challenges they face in accessing appropriate mental health support. She also outlined potential strategies to adapt these insights to the Zimbabwean context, fostering a meaningful discussion on improving local mental health services for young people.

Attendees engaged in a dynamic exchange, reflecting on current gaps in mental health care and exploring opportunities for collaboration. The event provided a valuable platform to bridge research and practice, emphasizing the importance of evidence-based approaches to supporting young people affected by trauma.



Dr. Lewis sharing valuable insights on youth mental health from her UK study

THRU-ZIM hosts Research showcase

On Tuesday, 18th March 2025, THRU-ZIM hosted a Research Showcase bringing together researchers, students, and key stakeholders to highlight the diverse and impactful work being conducted across MSc, PhD, and postdoctoral studies. The event provided a platform to share groundbreaking research across multiple studies spanning the full spectrum of life—from neonatal health to ageing—while also exploring potential future funding opportunities.

The showcase featured presentations from researchers working on neonatal care and infection control, youth-focused sexual and reproductive health interventions, multimorbidity management, and healthy ageing. These studies, many of which are already shaping policy and practice, reflect THRU-ZIM's commitment to improving health outcomes through locally driven, high-impact research.

Beyond the research presentations, the event fostered meaningful discussions on how to sustain and expand postgraduate research funding. Attendees had the opportunity to network and engage with potential funders interested in supporting PhD and postdoctoral fellowships.



Researchers explore sustainable methods for expanding research and lines of funding

Zimbabwe Qualitative Research Network (ZQRN) kicks off with first seminar

The Zimbabwe Qualitative Research Network (ZQRN) officially launched with its first seminar on March 18th. The inaugural session featured Nonhlanhla Ndondo, who delivered a compelling presentation titled 'The Practice of Ethical & Emotional Awareness to Support Action in Qualitative Research.' Drawing from the 'Kids with Kids' Study, she explored the complexities of conducting qualitative research on sensitive topics, particularly with vulnerable populations.

She highlighted the risk of vicarious trauma for researchers, acknowledging the emotional impact on both participants and researchers. The 'Kids with Kids' team proactively addressed this before and during data collection as well as during data collection through pre- and post-interview debriefings and shared reflections on the data collecting process. Key strategies included self-awareness and emotional regulation to mitigate burnout. She stressed translating research into action, emphasizing the need to integrate researcher well-being into ethical research practices.

ZQRN is set to become a dynamic hub for qualitative researchers in Zimbabwe, fostering collaboration, refining research practices, and engaging in discussions on emerging methodologies.



Nonhlanhla highlights the importance of trust, trauma-informed methods, and ethical safeguards in qualitative research

Congratulations Mary Tumushime

Congratulations to Mary Tumushime for passing her PhD upgrading exam this month at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine! Upgrading is a milestone in which a student, initially registered for an MPhil degree, progresses to PhD candidate status after successfully demonstrating sufficient research progress and potential.

Her research aims to co-develop interventions to facilitate the control of sexually transmitted infections among young people and assess young people's and stakeholders' experiences of co-development.



Mary levels up on her PhD journey



Alex enjoys the beauty of Zim & some furry friends

THRU ZIM welcomes Alexandra Bradbury

We are delighted to welcome Alexandra Bradbury to Zimbabwe as she embarks on the VACURU project in partnership with THRU ZIM! Funded by the UCL Global Engagement Fund, this initiative explores healthy ageing in retirement villages and care homes through conversations with older adults and clinicians on social prescribing.

Alexandra, who is currently pursuing an MSc in Clinical Trials alongside her pre-doctoral fellowship at University College London (UCL), brings valuable experience and a passion for global health.

While not based at THRU ZIM's office, she joins the KOSHESAI biweekly meetings, learning from colleagues as she prepares for future research in the field.

Welcome, Alex!

THRU-ZIM kicks off Zumba sessions with high energy

The THRU-ZIM Wellbeing Series turned up the heat with the first Zumba with Zorro session this March. The session saw a fantastic turnout, with staff turning up dressed for the occasion, ready to dance, sweat, and have fun. From the first beat to the last, the team moved and proved that fitness can be both fun and energizing.

More than just exercise, this session was a celebration of movement, well-being, and community. With such an incredible start, anticipation is already building for the next one.



Two left feet or perfect rhythm—Zumba was pure joy and nonstop moves

Welcome new employees and interns

THRU ZIM is excited to welcome new members to our growing team!

- **Farai Wellington Hoko** has come on board as a Research Assistant with the Fractures E-3 Study.
- **Takudzwa Taderera** is our new IT Support Intern.
- **Sharon Sibanda** is now part of the team as a Junior Social Scientist on the Neotree project.
- **Kudzai Jenami** has joined the Neotree project as a Research Assistant for the 28-day follow-up.

We look forward to their contributions and wish them all the best in their roles!



Sharon



Farai



Kudzai



Takudzwa

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Register now for the CGCC Multimorbidity Research Symposium at THRU ZIM

The Centre for Global Chronic Conditions (CGCC) is hosting a two-day hybrid symposium, bringing together experts from LSHTM and partner institutions to explore multimorbidity research across diverse settings.

This year, the symposium is hosted by THRU ZIM, with hubs joining from LSHTM London, MEIRU Malawi, MRC Unit The Gambia, and MRC Unit Uganda.

Dates: 13 & 14 May (Full days)

Location: THRU ZIM Gazebo (Hybrid event)

To register, email justin.dixon@lshtm.ac.uk ASAP to confirm attendance and numbers.

OPPORTUNITIES

Applications Open: RSTMH 2025 Early Career Grants

The RSTMH 2025 Early Career Grants Programme is now open, offering up to £5,000 for early-career researchers to conduct a one-year project in tropical medicine and global health. Eligible projects can focus on infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, neglected tropical diseases, or broader global health challenges.

Funding covers lab-based, clinical, translational, implementation, and policy research. PhD-linked projects are eligible, but tuition fees are not covered.

Deadline: May 14, 2025, 12 PM BST

Applications via Benefactor. Full details on the [RSTMH website](#).

Join the '4M' Network: Menstruation, Menopause, Menarche, and Mental Health

The '4M' network focuses on key areas of research: Menstruation, Menopause, Menarche, and Mental Health. Recent seminars have explored the use of menstrual blood in research, a topic many at your institute may find fascinating. We believe that engaging with this network will benefit both your research and the network, particularly through the insights Zimbabwean researchers can contribute.

Joining is simple and free—visit [4M Network](#) to sign up

PUBLICATIONS

Burton A, Manyanga T, Wilson H, Jarjou L, Costa ML, Graham S, Masters J, Jallow MK, Hawley S, Nyassi MT, Mushayavanhu P, Ndekwere M, Ferrand RA, Ward KA, Marenah KS, Gregson CL. **Challenges to fracture service availability and readiness provided by allopathic and traditional health providers: national surveys across The Gambia and Zimbabwe.** J Glob Health. 2025;15:04082

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THANK YOU!