

# Editorial I

## Reproductive health issues, infections and non-communicable diseases

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ahs.v20i1.1>

Cite as: Tumwine JK. Reproductive health issues, infections and non-communicable diseases. *Afri Health Sci.* 2020;20(1):I-IV. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ahs.v20i1.1>

Welcome to this bumper March 2020 issue of African Health Sciences. The first five papers in this issue are on sexuality in men and adolescents. Hence Lampiao and Chisaka have written an interesting research article on the 'incidence and impact of hyperviscosity on sperm parameters of Malawian men seeking assisted reproduction'<sup>1</sup>. A similar paper from Tanzania reports on 'bacteriospermia' and other factors associated with male infertility<sup>2</sup>. The next three articles are on sexual behaviour and practice. They include: 'use of sachet alcohol and sexual behaviour among adolescents in Nigeria'<sup>3</sup>; sexual knowledge and practice of adolescent learners in rural South Africa<sup>4</sup>; and sexual behaviours and risk perception of STIs among polytechnic students' in Nigeria<sup>5</sup>.

The next group of papers are on, yes you have guessed right, infectious diseases. They cover uptake of human papilloma virus vaccines among female secondary school students;<sup>6</sup> *Candida* spp. and age-related disparities amongst women presenting with vaginitis;<sup>7</sup> and toxoplasmosis in pregnant women<sup>8</sup>. Continuing with the pregnancy theme, we have a paper on the use of alternative medicines during pregnancy in Zimbabwe<sup>9</sup>; and outcome of gestational trophoblastic disease in Egypt<sup>10</sup>. The infectious disease theme continues with work on HIV-related knowledge level among Indonesian women<sup>11</sup> and a systematic review of ARVs<sup>12</sup>. There are more papers: chronic HIV infection and health related quality of life in resource poor settings<sup>13</sup>; cryptococcosis among HIV patients in sub-Saharan Africa<sup>14</sup>; malnutrition amongst HIV adult patients<sup>15</sup>; viral suppression and low attrition in healthy HIV-infected patients initiated on ART with CD4 above 500 cells/ $\mu$ L<sup>16</sup>; acceptance and utilization of HIV testing among the youth<sup>17</sup>; rabies in Kwazulu-Natal<sup>18</sup>; and central line-related bloodstream infections<sup>19</sup>. There are papers on *Stenotrophomonas* species<sup>20</sup>; risk factors for trachoma in Burundi<sup>21</sup>; plasmid-mediated resistance genes and multidrug-resistant uropathogens<sup>22</sup>; prevalence of *plasmodium*, *leptospira* and *rickettsia*<sup>23</sup>; seroepidemiology of human fascioliasis<sup>24</sup>; Parvovirus B19 DNA detection in HIV anemic patients<sup>25</sup>; safety of vaccines used in rou-

tine immunization in Africa<sup>26</sup> and distribution of genes among uropathogenic *Escherichia coli* and antimicrobial resistance<sup>27</sup>.

The next group of papers is in the NCDs realm: obesity<sup>28,29,30</sup>, diabetes<sup>31,32,33,34</sup>, acute kidney injury<sup>35</sup> plasma homocysteine and hypertension<sup>36</sup>, coronary care<sup>37</sup> and cancer<sup>38,39</sup>. Then we have papers on smoking and lung function<sup>40</sup>, epilepsy<sup>41</sup>, and gall stones<sup>42</sup>. One major observation made in patients with Covid\_19 is hypercoagulability. We have a related article on hypercoagulability in sickle cell disease<sup>43</sup>.

Other NCD papers are on hyperbilirubinemia<sup>44</sup>, zinc deficiency in children,<sup>45</sup> effect of pumpkin seed oil on oxidative stress,<sup>46</sup> upper GI haemorrhage,<sup>47</sup> vitamin D deficiency<sup>48</sup> and cystic fibrosis in Tunisia<sup>49</sup>. We have articles on risks associated with health care waste management<sup>50</sup>; anti-proliferative effects of *Amarillydaceae*<sup>51</sup>; periodontal and dental conditions in a volcanic region with highly fluoridated community drinking water<sup>52</sup>; effects of head-of-bed elevation on respiratory pattern<sup>53</sup>; kangaroo mother care outcomes<sup>54</sup>; and ultrasound and carotid stenosis<sup>55</sup>. Others are on unorthodox ophthalmic preparations in Ghana<sup>56</sup>, feeding and swallowing difficulties of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders<sup>57</sup>; visual impairment<sup>58</sup>; and two letters to the editor<sup>59,60</sup>.

Quite a rich menu. Happy reading!

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