

Blood is Life



Africa Society for Blood Transfusion

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AfSBT e-Newsletter



January 2017

All our readers are wished a happy, healthy and successful 2017.

By the time this newsletter reaches you, it will almost be the end of January! This issue will be relatively short, as I am going to distribute a bumper issue in February. I think we are all still recovering from the festive season and need to get into top gear – to meet the demands that 2017 is sure to bring..... in our collective quest for blood safety in Africa.

The February newsletter will give you feedback on the International Donor Recruitment, Engagement and Management Workshop in Johannesburg: 30 Jan–3 Feb 2017.

Beryl Armstrong – editor

Introducing the Management Team:

- David Mvere
- Beryl Armstrong
- Rob Wilkinson
- Lesley Bust
- Chrispen Dandavare
- Claude Tayou Tagny
- Swaibu Katare
- JB Tapko
- Bright Mulenga
- Molly Gondwe

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AfSBT Member, Tonderai Mapako, awarded a PhD

Dr Mapako successfully defended his thesis on Friday 9 December 2016. Congratulations from all of us, Dr Mapako – you make us proud! This is the link to the thesis: [http://www.rug.nl/research/portal/en/publications/risk-modelling-of-transfusion-transmissible-infections\(3c8ff2c7-0db7-4734-8198-5e3d7727667f\).html](http://www.rug.nl/research/portal/en/publications/risk-modelling-of-transfusion-transmissible-infections(3c8ff2c7-0db7-4734-8198-5e3d7727667f).html)

Risk modelling of transfusion transmissible infections

Mapako, T. 2016 [Groningen]: University of Groningen. 291 p. Scientific › Doctoral Thesis

Two PhD students (Tonderai Mapako and Nyashadzaishe Mafirakureva) from Zimbabwe under the T-REC PhD Fellowship managed to successfully defend their theses on 9 December 2016 at the University of Groningen in Netherlands.

Here are some photos – taken during the auspicious occasion on 9 Dec 2016



Dr Tonderai Mapako

A proud moment – the culmination of so much hard work – Congratulations from us all!



AfSBT Member, Tonderai Mapako, awarded a PhD *cont.*



In the photos are Dr Mapako and Dr Mafirakureva with (on the left) the officials at the ceremony, and (on the right) with Dr Imelda Bates shown standing between the two proud graduates.

Dr Mapako knows that I am sharing this announcement with readers of **Blood is Life**. He says: "I feel highly honoured by AfSBT. Here is the introductory letter that was used by the University when the theses were dispatched."

Dear colleagues and friends,

It is a great honour and a pleasure to present you the theses of Nyashadzaishe Mafirakureva and Tonderai Mapako, entitled:

- Health economics of blood transfusion in Zimbabwe (Nyashadzaishe Mafirakureva);
- Risk modelling of transfusion transmissible infections (Tonderai Mapako).

The theses can be downloaded from the provided link.

Blood transfusion is a life-saving medical intervention, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. However, there is inherent risk of transfusion transmissible infections (TTIs), which can be minimized by appropriate blood donor selection and testing of blood. Despite these safety interventions which can be costly, zero-risk is not achievable because of the remaining risk of transmission. Hence the need for risk modelling and health economic analyses for blood transfusion safety interventions.

The lack of data and difficult access to data is challenging in performing risk modelling of TTIs in sub-Saharan Africa. Nevertheless, Tonderai Mapako successfully explored the HIV dynamics in the general and blood donor populations, evaluated methods for the estimation of the risk of transmitting HBV, HCV and HIV. Also, Tonderai Mapako developed a novel method to estimate the risk of TTIs by travellers, which enables authorities in blood services settings to proactively assess the traveller's TTIs risk on their domestic blood supply.

Also, availability and accessibility to data needed for health economic evaluations is a tough challenge in sub-Saharan Africa. Nevertheless, Nyashadzaishe Mafirakureva successfully carried out studies on patients receiving, and the adverse events following blood transfusions, health related quality of life and healthcare costs for patients infected with HIV and screening costs for the serology tests.

Cont..p.3

AfSBT Member, Tonderai Mapako, awarded a PhD *cont.*

Finally, a cost-effectiveness analysis of introducing individual donation nucleic acid of HBV, HCV and HIV testing in addition to serologic testing in Zimbabwe was conducted. Nyashadzaishe Mafirakureva and Tonderai Mapako showed that despite further reducing the risk of viral transmission through blood transfusion, the introduction of nucleic acid testing in addition to the current serological screening cannot be considered cost-effective for Zimbabwe. However, compared to high-income countries the cost-effectiveness is rather good.

On December 9th, Tonderai Mapako will defend his thesis at 14.30h and Nyashadzaishe Mafirakureva at 16.15h in the Academiegebouw, Broerstraat 5 9712 CP Groningen. You are cordially invited to attend the ceremonies.

Please do not hesitate to contact Nyashadzaishe Mafirakureva and/or Tonderai Mapako for research opportunities.

Also on behalf of promotor Prof Dr Maarten J Postma

Dr Marinus (René) van Hulst (co-promotor)

Hospital pharmacist – Health economist

Martini Ziekenhuis

University of Groningen, the Netherlands

Dept. Clinical Pharmacy and Toxicology / Pharmacotherapy, -Epidemiology and -Economics

AfSBT Education Committee

You were introduced to the AfSBT Education Committee members in the last issue of the newsletter, but I was not able to get a photo and a little introductory message from one of our valued overseas experts. Here it is!

Daniele Sondag-Thull, Administrator General, Belgian Red Cross, Brussels, Belgium



Daniele Sondag-Thull started her career in blood transfusion in the donor collections area and worked around the country. She has been in blood transfusion throughout her working life in parallel with a university career and a job at the Belgian Red cross as director of the Blood Transfusion Service. Transmission of knowledge is very important to Daniele. She succeeded in creating a Specialized Master's degree in Transfusion Medicine eleven years ago and obtained grants for Medical Directors from developing countries. Although officially retired, Daniele continues as Scientific Adviser to the Blood transfusion Service. She also works in developing E-learning educational programmes.

Pay your membership fees using PayPal!

Good news for members – you are now able to pay your membership fees via the AfSBT website, using PayPal. Attached to this issue of the newsletter is a set of instructions that were very kindly prepared by our Website Officer, Bright Mulenga. We suggest that you read through these instructions (in the pdf attachment) to help you have a good experience with the PayPal payment process. We would love to have your feedback – tell us how it worked, or tell us if you experienced hiccups.

AfSBT is making a Positive Difference to National Blood Programmes in Africa

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Upcoming events



IPFA: <http://www.ipfa.nl/events/ipfa-asia-pacific-workshop-on-plasma-quality-and-supply-yogyakarta-indonesia-march-2017>: Technological, regulatory and organizational tools to produce plasma for fractionation:
2-3 March 2017, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

IPFA/PEI 24th International Workshop on "Surveillance and Screening of Blood-borne Pathogens" 16-17 May 2017, Zagreb, Croatia: <http://www.ipfa.nl/events/ipfa-pei-24-international-workshop-zagreb>

IPFA/BCA 3rd Global Symposium on The Future for Blood and Plasma Donations, 11-12 September 2017, Atlanta, GA, USA: <http://www.ipfa.nl/events/ipfa-bca-3-global-symposium-on-the-future-for-blood-and-plasma-donations-2017-usa>

ISBT: 27th Regional Congress in Copenhagen, Denmark: 17-21 June 2017: <http://www.isbtweb.org/copenhagen/>

ISBT: 28th Regional Congress in Guangzhou, China: 25-28 November 2017

****Check the AfsBT website, at www.afsbt.org for more news items and alerts****

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https://www.facebook.com/afsbt/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

Why not go to Facebook to access photos and news of other blood services in Africa? All you need to do, in the Facebook search screen, is to type in the name of the country, followed by the words blood service. There is a wealth of information to be found.

*"The heart of the wise man lies
quiet like limpid water"
~ Cameroon proverb*

