

Optimising ART October 2017

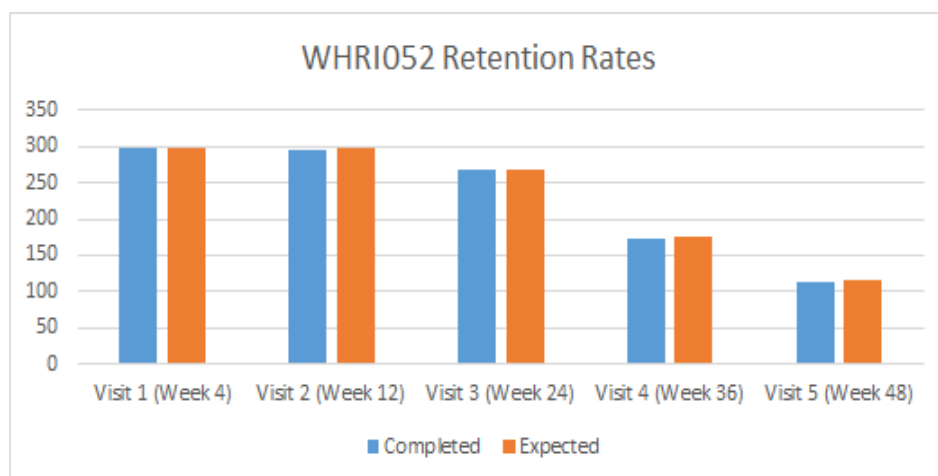
This is a monthly update shared with all members involved in projects aimed at optimising ART, and is meant to provide a short update of major achievements, challenges, and plans for the future. Please submit any inputs to Celia Serenata before the 1st Wednesday of every month.

On 21 September, an exciting announcement was made during the UN General Assembly – that with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UNAIDS, Unitaid, the Global Fund, CHAI, DFID and USAID/PEPFAR, and the governments of South Africa and Kenya, an innovative pricing agreement has been brokers to accelerate access to generic TLD (tenofovir, lamivudine, dolutegravir) at US\$75 per year. The pharmaceutical partners in this deal are Mylan and Aurobindo. read more at <https://unitaid.eu/news-blog/new-high-quality-antiretroviral-therapy-launched-south-africa-kenya-90-low-middle-income-countries-reduced-price/#en>.

Major Achievements from September 2017

LOW-DOSE DARUNAVIR STUDY, Wits RHI

- No major achievements reportable for September 2017. Participant visits are ongoing with good retention rates per visit as illustrated below.
- Discussions around post-trial access and standard of care monitoring of participants who exit from the study are underway.



Upcoming Events

16 Oct: USAID Year 2 Annual Progress Report (APR) due from all consortium members

25 Oct: USAID Y2 APR submitted

Important Contacts

Celia Serenata, Wits RHI,
cserenata@wrhi.ac.za

Jo Sharp, University of Liverpool,
joanne.livermore@liverpool.ac.uk

Kellen Thomas, Mylan,
Kellen.Thomas@mylan.com

Allison Zerbe, ICAP,
az2258@cumc.columbia.edu

Lauren Jankelowitz, SAHCS,
lauren@sahivsoc.org

Noma Rangana, TAC,
noma.rangana@tac.org.za

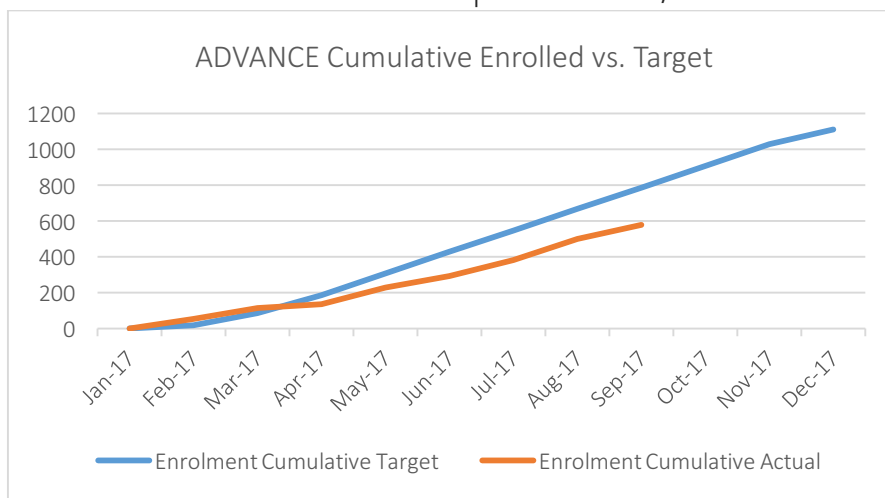
Polly Clayden, HIV i-Base,
polly.clayden@i-base.org.uk

Emily Hutton, SSAT,
Emily.Hutton@ststcr.com

Yao Cheng, MPP,
ycheng@medicinespatentpool.org

ADVANCE STUDY, Wits RHI

- 579 participants have been enrolled as at 30 September 2017, 8 of which are adolescents.



- Various stakeholder meetings have been conducted throughout the month to identify and address the bottlenecks with recruitment. Meetings were also held with senior clinic staff to reinforce the objectives of ADVANCE and to troubleshoot a way forward with the clinics to ensure that they are able to track and follow up patients' linkage to care.
- A testing campaign was conducted to target adolescents, however yielded very little due to the low prevalence among those adolescents tested.
- Protocol Version Amendment#3 was finalised and shared with stakeholders and donors, including the DSMB.
- Outcomes data submitted to study statistician for pre-liminary review in preparation for DSMB meeting in November 2017.

2nd LINE ADHERENCE STUDY, Wits RHI

- First draft of the data analysis has been completed and submitted for internal review.

EFAVIRENZ 400mg TB PK STUDY (SSAT062), Mylan (St. Stephen's AIDS Trust)

- Recruitment in the UK has been completed, and now the focus is on the ongoing monitoring activities.
- IRB approval has been received for the phase II study to commence in Uganda. The DSMB has given the go-ahead for the Uganda phase to commence.

TAF-RIF TB PK STUDY (RIFT), St. Stephen's AIDS Trust¹

- Final subject enrolled, enrolment now closed.

¹ Funded by Gilead

DTG-RIF TB PK STUDY (RADIO), St. Stephen's AIDS Trust

- Ethics approval received on 25 September 2017.
- Set-up activities taking place, including site initiation and activation planning, creation of CRF, document finalisation and vendor contract execution.

NANOTECHNOLOGY, University of Liverpool

- Multiple dose DRV/r 8:1 in vivo experiments for lead candidate.
- Multiple dose ATV in vivo experiments.
- Mass spectrometer methods being developed.
- ATV/r in vitro experiments started.

MARKET ACCESS AND PRODUCT INTRODUCTION, ICAP

Global activities

- ICAP finalized the new product implementation toolkit, including a checklist and tools and resources to support implementation.
- ICAP finalized the anchor case study on first-line ARV transitions to align with the country product introduction framework, and will continue to collaborate with the USAID PSM team to develop a manuscript on ARV transitions for peer-reviewed publication.
- Revised and updated the market shaping intervention report.
- Created objectives for an ART optimization training curriculum and started the creation of a training package based on training content developed in Kenya.
- Drafted an FAQ document on optimized ARVs for ICAP country teams to support in-country discussion around national ART guideline revisions.

Zimbabwe

- ICAP completed a series of facility visits to gather feedback on the initial rollout of TLE400, and has shared a draft report, including suggestions for the MoHCC to consider to support the ongoing transition to TLE400 at the national level. The draft report has been shared with the MoHCC and the USAID Mission for feedback.

Kenya

- ICAP shared the finalized protocol for enhanced monitoring activities with NASCOP, Palladium and USAID for review and feedback.
- Held a Connectathon workshop with Palladium to develop the enhanced data system and continued to collaborate with NASCOP and other partners to finalize enhanced monitoring activities, including site selection, development of monitoring indicators, and strategize the phase-out of NNRTI-containing regimens.
- Completed interviews for the Kenya situational analysis to evaluate the program's readiness for transition, with a particular emphasis on pharmacovigilance systems; draft report is pending.

- Finalized training materials on optimal new ARVs, and delivered trainings to master trainers, and county health management teams.
- Finalized a facility assessment tool to be used as part of the enhanced monitoring activities.

Mozambique

- The ICAP Mozambique country team liaised with the USAID mission to share the Needs Assessment, and begin planning for a larger dissemination meeting with the MoH.

DEMAND CREATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, HIV i-Base

- Attended TAC training in Johannesburg in September 2017. Updated TAC on new developments in ART optimization and worked on content for new materials, particularly to support the recent pricing agreement and upcoming transition to TLD in SA and several LMICs.
- Met with SAHCS to plan widening distribution of Fit for Purpose and HTB South nationally and regionally.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, TAC

- A second national training of trainers took place from 18 - 22 September 2017. The training was attended by 7 provincial trainers and 8 district organisers. The focus of the training was to refresh the trainers on the latest developments on HIV treatment, HIV science and issues around policy and advocacy, with the goal of them going back to their provinces and covering the same topics in their provincial trainings, scheduled for the end of October.
- The training, facilitated by Luckyboy Mkhondwane and Lotti Rutter (TAC), Francois Venter (Wits RHI), Polly Clayden (HIV i-Base), and Samara Ragaven and Leonora Mathe, covered several topics, including the NIX TB trial, advocacy, National Health Insurance, intellectual property, treatment optimisation, HIV self-testing, research methods and skills, and sexuality and gender.
- The training was a success, and the participants were grateful on the information that they received.

CLINICIAN/HEALTH WORKER ENGAGEMENT, Southern African HIV Clinicians Society

- The 2017 AWACC Conference took place in Durban at the Elangeni on 7 & 8 September 2017. Dr Munira Khan presented on Optimisation in TB. 200 new Adult ARV Guidelines were distributed to delegates at the conference.
- Optimisation CME provided to 34 doctors in Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape on 30 September 2017.
- Academic HIV Meeting took place in Limpopo on 16 September 2017– Treatment Optimisation session presented by Prof Remco Peters to approximately 20 general practitioners (mainly private).
- Rural Health Conference in Taung, North West Province was held from 21 – 25 September 2017, attended by approximately 100 rural doctors and healthcare workers. Treatment Optimisation' was presented by Dr Trevor Majoro and an exhibition stand was shared between the SA HIV Clinicians Society and the Stop Stock Outs Project. North West Health

MEC Dr Magome Masike visited the stand where discussions about the importance of better drugs and the challenges of medicine shortages took place.

- Meeting held with HIV i-Base on 14 September 2017 to discuss distribution of “Fit For Purpose”.

Major Plans for October 2017

LOW-DOSE DARUNAVIR STUDY, Wits RHI

- Expected outstanding delivery of study drugs from supplier.
- Finalisation of post-trial access extension to the current study protocol.

ADVANCE, Wits RHI

- Use of outsourced Mobile Clinic resources to aid with testing in areas previously not accessed for recruitment.
- Review of results of statistical analysis “validation run”.
- Receipt and inventory of 6-monthly order of study drugs.

EFAVIRENZ 400mg TB PK STUDY (SSAT062), Mylan (St. Stephen's AIDS Trust)

- Submission of CTA (NDA) in Uganda for study approval. The package has been reviewed and is pending the addition of the finalised protocol Version 7.0.
- Completion of the remaining enrolled participants in the UK.
- Protocol Version 7.0 submission to the regulatory authorities in the UK and Uganda for approval.

TAF-RIF TB PK STUDY (RIFT), St. Stephen's AIDS Trust²

- Preliminary data for first 11 subjects to be reported.

DTG-RIF TB PK STUDY (RADIO), St. Stephen's AIDS Trust

- Awaiting local study approvals.
- Set-up activities ongoing and site initiation on 17 October 2017.
- First participant first visit planned for end October/early November 2017.

DTG 2ND LINE SWITCH STUDY, Wits RHI

- The study concept is being submitted to the Wits RHI Research Review Committee (RRC), in preparation for a full Ethics (HREC) submission on 7 November, and MCC submission on 3 November 2017.

² Funded by Gilead

NANOTECHNOLOGY, University of Liverpool

- ATV/r in vitro experiments progressing.
- Validation of mass spectrometry methods.
- Move EFV work forwards.
- Spray drying of DRV/r formulation.
- Preparation for TSC and PAC in November.

MARKET ACCESS AND PRODUCT INTRODUCTION, ICAP

- Mozambique: Finalize plans with the USAID Mission to discuss next steps for project OPTIMIZE including dissemination meeting for the Needs Assessment findings in collaboration with USAID, MOH, and other key stakeholders. Will also continue to share the most up-to-date evidence and implementation experiences around the use of DTG-based regimens.
- Kenya: Incorporate new training content on optimal ARVs into national ART training curriculum and develop training content for facilities participating in the pilot of the Enhanced Data System.
- Zimbabwe: Finalize report on early introduction of TLE400 in conjunction with MoHCC and plan ongoing support for optimization activities with USAID and other stakeholders.
- Global: finalize content for training package; collaborate with USAID on manuscript for peer-reviewed publication on ARV transitions; complete and refine additional tools to support the introduction of optimal new ART regimens; deliver presentations on Optimization opportunities for pediatrics and adolescents at the PATA Continental Summit and CQUIN Learning Network meeting.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, TAC

- Trainers to conduct provincial trainings covering the content disseminated at the provincial Training of Trainers conducted in September 2017.

CLINICIAN/HEALTH WORKER ENGAGEMENT, Southern African HIV Clinicians Society

- SAMA (South African Medical Association) treatment optimisation training will be conducted on 28 October in Pretoria. Dr Sarah Stacey will present on "Treatment Optimisation and Dosing with TB", Dr Oscar Radebe present on new Adult ARV Guidelines and Dr Coceka Mnyani on "Treatment Optimisation in Pregnancy".
- Planning for the next CMEs, scheduled for November 2017.
- Planning continues for International HIV-Drug Resistance Workshop, November 2017 <http://www.hivresistance2017.co.za/>
- Planning continues for the 2018 SA HIV Clinicians Society conference (www.sahivsoc2018.co.za)

Staffing Changes

- Welcome to Dr Tessa Elizabeth Walton, an additional sub-investigator who will be supporting the sites recruiting for adults on ADVANCE.

- Wits RHI also welcomes Dr. Tom Boyles who starts with OPTIMIZE as of mid-October as a senior researcher. He will be working directly with Prof. Francois Venter.

Outputs

List any articles, manuscripts submitted for review; abstracts submitted; presentations given.

(Also provide electronic version of such products for the Dropbox – see

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/OPTIMIZE%20Technical%20Steering%20Committee/Calendar+Events>)

Also, to assist with all communication, branding and marketing opportunities, please find relevant guidance and documents in the Dropbox at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/OPTIMIZE%20Technical%20Steering%20Committee/Communications+Branding+Marketing>

Papers published

- 31 August, Lancet Commentary: The triumph of HIV treatment: another new antiretroviral. Commentary from Marta Boffito and Francois Venter.

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)32297-3/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)32297-3/fulltext)

Talks Given

- ART Optimization presentations provided by Dr Michelle Moorhouse at the Namibian HIV Clinicians Society TB/HIV International Conference on 21 September 2017, and in Port Elizabeth on 30 September 2017 for the SAHCS CME on treatment optimisation and new guidelines.
- Update on DTG rollout presented by Dr Michelle Moorhouse at National HIV Think Tank on 3 October 2017.

Online Posts

- None

Media Coverage

- 21 September: Unitaid press release – New high-quality antiretroviral therapy to be launched in South Africa, Kenya and over 90 low- and middle-income countries at reduced price. <https://unitaid.eu/news-blog/new-high-quality-antiretroviral-therapy-launched-south-africa-kenya-90-low-middle-income-countries-reduced-price/#en>
- 21 September: Exclusive: Africa to get state-of-art HIV drugs for \$75 a year. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-aids-medicines-exclusive/exclusive-africa-to-get-state-of-art-hiv-drugs-for-75-a-year-idUSKCN1BW169>
- 26 September: Prof Francois Venter on Power FM Breakfast Show – New HIV drug safer, more effective and cheaper. <https://soundcloud.com/powerfm987/new-hiv-drug-safer-more-effective-and-cheaper?in=powerfm987/sets/power-breakfast-1>

The pricing agreement also received extensive coverage in the local press, with Prof Francois Venter quoted extensively (some of the stories are from the same writer, but picked up by different local papers). There were also stories in the same time period on the launch of the HIV self-testing initiative.

- Landmark UNAIDS pricing deal to accelerate HIV treatment
<https://www.medicalbrief.co.za/archives/landmark-unaid-pricing-deal-accelerate-hiv-treatment/>
- New ARV drug a 'major step forward' in fight against HIV
<https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/new-arv-drug-a-major-step-forward-in-fight-against-hiv-11373759>
- New ARV boosts treatment <http://limpopoonline.co.za/?p=13885>
- New ARV boosts treatment <http://showme.co.za/pretoria/news/new-arv-boosts-treatment/>
- New ARV boosts treatment <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/health-and-sex/2017-09-26-new-arv-boosts-treatment/>
- The new HIV pill proves to be safer, more effective and cheaper <http://kasidaily.co.za/the-new-hiv-p/>
- New HIV drug safer, more effective and cheaper <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2017-09-25-new-hiv-drug-safer-more-effective-and-cheaper/>
- New HIV drug safer, more effective and cheaper
<http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2017/09/25/new-hiv-drug-safer-more-effective-and-cheaper>
- New HIV drug safer, more effective and cheaper
<http://www.heraldlive.co.za/news/2017/09/25/new-hiv-drug-safer-effective-cheaper/>
- World's largest HIV self-testing initiative moves to South Africa
<https://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/health/worlds-largest-hiv-self-testing-initiative-moves-to-south-africa-11373225>
- World's largest HIV self-testing initiative moves to South Africa
<http://www.safica24.com/lifestyle/worlds-largest-hiv-self-testing-initiative-moves-to-south-africa/24459-news>
- New single-day pill for HIV treatment promises more bang for less buck
<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2017/09/new-single-day-pill-hiv-treatment-promises-more-bang-less-buck>
- New high-quality antiretroviral therapy to be launched in South Africa, Kenya and over 90 low- and middle-income countries at reduced price
http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/pressreleaseandstatementarchive/2017/september/20170921_TLD
- Africa's new affordable HIV treatment deal under threat from US budget cuts
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa-hiv-aids-drugs-treatment-deal-under-threat-us-budget-cuts-a7960391.html>
- Single-pill HIV treatment to save SA R11 billion – health ministry
<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/single-pill-hiv-treatment-to-save-sa-r11bn-health-ministry-20170922>
- Health Minister sees new ARV drug as breakthrough in fight against HIV
<https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/development/health-minister-sees-new-arv-drug-as-breakthrough-in-fight-against-hiv-11435093>

- New Single-Tablet Treatment for HIV Infection Advantageous to Standard Therapy <http://www.infectiousdiseaseadvisor.com/hivaids/new-single-tablet-treatment-for-hiv-infection-advantageous-to-standard-therapy/article/690475/>
- Breakthrough as single-dose HIV treatment deal announced <https://www.avert.org/news/breakthrough-single-dose-hiv-treatment-deal-announced>
- Africans to get state-of-art HIV drugs for less than \$100 a year <http://www.smh.com.au/world/africans-to-get-stateofart-hiv-drugs-for-less-than-100-a-year-20170923-gyncbo.html>

Other articles that could be of interest:

- Higher rates of neuropsychiatric adverse events leading to dolutegravir discontinuation in women and older patients. HIV Medicine journal. Volume 18, Issue 1. January 2017. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hiv.12468/full#>
- The relationship between efavirenz as initial antiretroviral therapy and suicidal thoughts among HIV-infected adults in routine care. JAIDS Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes. http://journals.lww.com/jaids/Abstract/publishahead/The_relationship_between_efavirenz_as_initial.96883.aspx
- Medicines Patent Pool and Gilead Sciences Sign Licence for Bictegravir, a novel, once-daily, single-tablet HIV treatment which could offer new option for people living with HIV in LMICs. <https://medicinespatentpool.org/mpp-media-post/the-medicines-patent-pool-and-gilead-sciences-sign-licence-for-bictegravir/>

Useful Websites

- USAID page on ART optimisation: <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/hiv-and-aids/technical-areas/antiretroviral-therapy-optimization>
- UNITAID page on ART optimisation: <https://www.unitaid.eu/project/safer-robust-less-expensive-first-line-antiretroviral-therapy-advance-trial/> (for the grant with Wits RHI, see associated grants below that)

Future Conferences/Trainings

- 24-27 October 2018: 4th Southern African HIV Clinicians Society Conference, Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand. www.sahivsoc2018.co.za

Acknowledgements

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is a proud supporter of OPTIMIZE. OPTIMIZE is led by the Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute (Wits RHI) and founding members include ICAP at Columbia University, Mylan Laboratories, the University of Liverpool, and the UNITAID-funded Medicines Patent Pool. As an expanding partnership aimed at harnessing multiple stakeholders' collective efforts, OPTIMIZE also includes the University of Cape Town (UCT) and contributions from private sector partners. USAID is a key implementing agency of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for

AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and is responsible for over half of all PEPFAR programs with activities focused in 35 priority countries and regions, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. For more information, please visit: www.usaid.gov

Unitaid finds new and better ways to prevent, test and treat HIV, tuberculosis and malaria quickly and more affordably. It takes game-changing ideas and turns those into practical solutions that can help accelerate the end of the three diseases. Established in 2006 by Brazil, Chile, France, Norway and the United Kingdom, Unitaid plays an important part in the global effort to defeat HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. For more information, please visit: www.unitaid.org

