



Sharing all the latest news from the AWACAN-ED programme

Hello and a warm welcome to the second AWACAN-ED Newsletter of the year. 2023 has been a very productive year for the programme and we hope you enjoy the updates below on our Research and Capacity Building activities, as well as an introduction to one of our team members.

***May we take this opportunity to wish you all
a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.***

AWACAN-ED is an NIHR-funded Global Health Research Group that builds on the previous African Women Awareness of CANcer (AWACAN) project. AWACAN-ED started in October 2021 and runs for 4 years. The team includes a multidisciplinary group of researchers from South Africa, Zimbabwe and the United Kingdom working together with collaborators to improve care-seeking and address barriers to early cancer diagnosis in Southern Africa. The programme focuses on cervical and breast cancer in women and colorectal cancer in both men and women. Via our twice yearly newsletters we aim to keep everyone involved and up-to-date with the latest activities and news.



Research Update

Participant recruitment for our Cross Sectional Survey in Workstream 1 completed on 30th November in both South Africa and Zimbabwe. This was very successful with 1042 of the target 1134 patients recruited – 92%. Target was reached for breast cancer in both South Africa & Zimbabwe and for cervical cancer in Zimbabwe & in Cape Town. Recruiting colorectal cancer patients proved the most challenging and we reached 78% of target.

All of our Health Facility Assessments are complete in both countries - these look at infrastructure, resources and technology within primary, secondary and tertiary settings. Our In-depth Interviews with health care practitioners are almost finished with 54 of the target 60 completed.

Blogs written by two of our field co-ordinators about their experiences collecting data in South Africa and Zimbabwe will be available soon on our website.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank our amazing field teams as well as our collaborators who have facilitated recruitment in their clinics. They have all done a fantastic job in getting us to this significant milestone in the programme.

Capacity Development Update



The second AWACAN-ED Southern African School for Cancer Research was held in Harare, Zimbabwe in late November 2023 and was a great success. A series of masterclasses were delivered across the week by AWACAN-ED's Principal and Co-investigators covering topics such as Career development and Preparing grants. Teaching sessions delivered by team members covered a wide range of subjects such as Quantitative & Qualitative methods, Health Economics and Systematic reviews. Senior team members also gave updates on topics such as Cancer burden & policy in Southern Africa and Developments

in cancer screening, detection & diagnosis. Prof Jen Moodley's talk about the Lancet Commission on women, power and cancer was a real highlight!
Attendees were asked to sum up the week in one word - see the results below:

Beneficial Incredible
Inspiring Eye-opening Insightful
Exceptional Relational
Educative
Excellent

Those attending the School included our AWACAN-ED students plus additional invited attendees from South Africa and Zimbabwe. The AWACAN-ED students all gave impressive updates on their research progress and the photo below shows the two PhD students from Zimbabwe (Grant Murewanhema and Simba Chinyowa) with the AWACAN-ED PIs. Blogs from our AWACAN-ED students about their research will be available on our website soon.

The third AWACAN-ED School is planned to be hosted in September 2024.



Meet the Team

Say hello to Dr Sarah Day. Sarah is a public health researcher at the University of Cape Town and serves as the Senior Research Officer on AWACAN-ED. Her main activities on the project include supervision of the South African field team, conducting data collection, analysing data and contributing to publication write-up.

Sarah works particularly at the intersections between cancer, gender, race and broader socioeconomic contexts. She is an emerging public health researcher with expertise in community-based participatory research processes, mixed methods research and creative research methodologies. Throughout her research career, Sarah has demonstrated her commitment to social justice, criticality and innovative research practice.



To find out more visit our website www.awacan.online
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