

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) during pregnancy and lactation period: Policy implications in South Africa and other countries in the region



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Dr. Joseph Davey is an Infectious Disease Epidemiologist with extensive experience in the design, management and evaluation of HIV prevention and sexual, reproductive health programs. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine, Infectious Diseases and Epidemiology at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is based in Cape Town, South Africa where she is an Honorary Associate Professor in Epidemiology at the University of Cape Town. She is the Principal Investigator on several epidemiologic and implementation science studies on sexually transmitted infections, HIV prevention and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) in pregnant and breastfeeding women in South Africa

Pregnant and breastfeeding populations are at substantial risk of acquiring HIV in some settings, yet are underrepresented in clinical trials of new pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) agents. Several PrEP formulations are in development (e.g., vaginal rings, long-acting injectables, and other modalities). Pregnant and breastfeeding populations are typically excluded from initial clinical trials. We identified 14 PrEP trials of novel agents in non-pregnant or non-breastfeeding populations, and six phase 1-3 trials and open label extensions among pregnant and breastfeeding populations, that are currently ongoing or complete. A framework shift is needed to consider the ethical costs of excluding pregnant and breastfeeding populations at risk for HIV in PrEP clinical trials and promote inclusion to maximise the benefits from PrEP tools in the pipeline. Research on new PrEP agents should include pregnant and breastfeeding populations to avoid delays in reaching those who could benefit from PrEP after efficacy is established.

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12:45 pm - 2 pm SAST

Location: CSSR Seminar Room, Robert Leslie Social Sciences Building, UCT