

Community Practice for HepB Birth Dose Introduction in the African Region

Meeting 1 March 17-18th: Speaker Bios



Danjuma Adda, MPH

**Executive Director, CFID Taraba and Chagro-Care Trust
President Elect, World Hepatitis Alliance**

Danjuma is a Nigerian prince and accomplished Public health expert on a mission to raise awareness about Hepatitis. Danjuma was infected with Hep B while in clinical rotations and then lost his own mother to the disease several years later. Even though hepatitis kills more people per year than HIV/AIDS, it receives just a fraction of the global health funding. Danjuma is a leading voice for Hepatitis patients in Nigeria and uses his platform to advocate for the most vulnerable populations across Africa. He wants to change the narrative about hepatitis and raise awareness about the deadliness of the disease. Danjuma K. Adda is a native of Taraba state, Nigeria. He is married with four kids. He has a background in microbiology, and an MPH, with over 15 years-experience in public health and advocacy. Danjuma is the current President elect of the World Hepatitis Alliance (WHA), the first African to hold that position.



Nafiisah Chotun, MSc, PhD

Lead of Endemic and Neglected Tropical Diseases, Division of Disease Control and Prevention, Africa CDC

Nafiisah Chotun, MSc, PhD, is a public health professional working at the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), which is the specialized technical health agency of the African Union. Dr. Chotun currently leads the unit of endemic and neglected tropical diseases in the newly-established Division of Disease Control and Prevention at Africa CDC where she is overseeing the implementation of a 4-year funded programme on the prevention and control of viral hepatitis on the African continent. She holds a PhD in Medical Virology from the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa and has over 10 years of experience in African public health issues, particularly in the areas of viral hepatitis, cancer, and epidemiology. Dr. Chotun is also an experienced science communicator, having worked as a scientific editor and reviewer for the past 5 years, and more recently as a Section Editor for the Journal of Public Health in Africa.



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Shalini Desai, MD

Medical Officer, Focal Point for Hepatitis B Birth Dose Vaccination, Department of Immunizations, Vaccines and Biologicals WHO

Dr. Shalini Desai is a pediatric infectious diseases specialist by training. She is currently working in the Immunizations, Vaccines and Biologicals Department at the WHO as the focal point for Hepatitis B Birth Dose vaccination.

Oriel Fernandes

Associate Director, CHAI Viral Hepatitis Program

Oriel Fernandes joined the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) in February 2013 and resides in Kigali, Rwanda. In her role as the Associate Director of CHAI's Viral Hepatitis program, Oriel leads program planning and operations across seven focal countries in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa and manages the program's hepatitis B prevention of mother to child transmission (HBV PMTCT) strategy. Oriel also supports several cross-program initiatives at CHAI, including leading the development of CHAI's Triple Elimination strategy, together with CHAI's HIV, SRHMNCH and Vaccines teams. Prior to joining the Viral Hepatitis program, Oriel supported the Ministry of Health in Lao PDR to address long-term gaps in medicine availability across the health system through the scale-up of a supply-chain reform strategy at 186 health facilities and supported health financing projects in Malawi and Vietnam. Before CHAI, Oriel worked at the International Monetary Fund in Washington D.C. as a Research Assistant supporting macroeconomic and fiscal policy research.



Julien Kabore, DDS, MPH

Hepatitis B Immunization Officer, WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO)

Dr. H. Julien Kabore is the Hepatitis B Immunization Officer at the WHO regional office for Africa based in Brazzaville. He is working with Ministries of Health, local and international partners to control hepatitis B through immunization in the African region. His work includes supporting countries for the introduction of the hepatitis B birth dose in the routine immunization schedule, the implementation of serosurveys to estimate the burden of mother to child transmission as well as the burden of Hepatitis B among children.

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Maud Lemoine, MD, PhD

Professor and Consultant of Hepatology at St Mary's Hospital, Imperial College London

Maud Lemoine is Professor and Consultant of Hepatology at St Mary's hospital, Imperial College London, UK. She is the head of the PROLIFICA programme, which is focused on prevention and management of viral hepatitis in sub-Saharan Africa.



Shevanthi Nayagam, MBBS, PhD

Clinical Academic and Honorary Consultant Hepatologist, Imperial College London

Dr. Shevanthi Nayagam is a Clinical Academic and Honorary Consultant Hepatologist at Imperial College London. Her research interests combine clinical research, epidemiology, applied modelling and health economics in guiding public health policy towards the elimination of viral hepatitis, with a focus on low-and middle-income countries. She co-leads the Imperial College Viral Hepatitis Applied Modelling group, is a research member of the PROLIFICA team (Prevention of Liver Disease and Cancer in Africa) and has worked with many countries to support their national hepatitis strategies. Since 2012 she has also worked with WHO in various advisory roles (including guidelines development) and is a member of the Vaccine Impact Modelling Consortium.



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Henry Njuguna, MD Epidemiologist, Coalition for Global Hepatitis Elimination

Dr. Henry Njuguna completed his medical and MPH degrees in Kenya. After a brief stint in clinical practice, he started his career in Public Health, where he has worked for the last 15 years. He worked for the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Kenya in an active population based infectious disease surveillance program located in one of Kenya's largest informal settlement, Kibera, Nairobi. In his capacity as the research doctor and surveillance clinic in-charge, he coordinated routine surveillance for acute febrile illnesses, respiratory diseases, diarrheal diseases and diseases presenting with jaundice. Later on he joined the Influenza Program, CDC Kenya as a medical epidemiologist. Working in collaboration with the Kenya Ministry of Health, he coordinated hospital based routine sentinel surveillance for influenza in multiple hospitals within Kenya. He was also the Principal Investigator for the Pediatric Respiratory Disease Etiology Surveillance Study (PRESS), a postmortem study investigating the etiologies of pediatric respiratory disease deaths. Henry completed his EIS training fellowship at the Washington State Department of Health. During his EIS training, he participated in several field investigations for both communicable and non-communicable disease clusters and outbreaks including a large healthcare facility-associated outbreak of hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection that was linked to narcotic drug diversion by a healthcare worker. Henry has also worked for CDC's Global Immunization Division, supporting the uptake of hepatitis B vaccine birth dose. He has also been deployed to support COVID-19 outbreak investigations in Utah and Louisiana. Most recently, Henry worked for the CDC Foundation supporting CDC's Global Non-Communicable Disease Control in developing training material and supporting the Field Epidemiology and Training Program's residents on cardiovascular disease epidemiology. Henry has published 38 peer reviewed publications, including 12 first author publications. He has also presented oral and poster presentations in local (Kenya) and international conferences.



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Yusuke Shimakawa, MD, PhD **Senior Epidemiologist, Institut Pasteur**

Dr. Yusuke Shimakawa is a senior epidemiologist at the Institut Pasteur, Paris, an expert on viral hepatitis control in Africa. He obtained a medical degree from the Jikei University, Japan and Ph.D. in epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). He currently leads several research projects in Africa including the Néovac (neonatal vaccination against hepatitis B) and HBV LAMP (simplified management of chronic hepatitis B virus infection).



Stephen Sosler, PhD, MPH **Epidemiologist and Immunization Senior Technical Advisor, Gavi**

Stephen Sosler is an epidemiologist and Immunization Senior Technical Advisor for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance based in Geneva, Switzerland. In this role Dr Sosler provides guidance, expertise and leadership on a range of immunization programme and vaccine issues associated with Gavi's support for routine and stockpiled vaccines for 17 infectious diseases. In addition, Dr Sosler leads Gavi's broader engagement with the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) and is responsible for support to strengthen national immunization technical advisory bodies. With the emergence of SARS-CoV-2 and the COVID-19 pandemic, he is also engaged in the COVAX facility and ongoing efforts to support equitable access and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines.



Before joining Gavi in 2012, Dr. Sosler held key positions at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, seconded to the World Health Organization as the Deputy Project Manager for India's National Polio Surveillance Project, coordinating immunization strengthening, measles control and new vaccine introduction activities supported by the Project's central team and network of 300+ Surveillance Medical Officers posted throughout the country (2009-2012). Prior to India, he was seconded as a CDC Epidemiologist to the WHO Central Africa Inter-country Support Team in Libreville, Gabon (2004-2009), where he served as the Accelerated Disease Control Officer providing technical assistance to 11 central African national immunization programmes and WHO and UNICEF country offices to strengthen immunization delivery, vaccine preventable disease surveillance and outbreak response activities. Dr. Sosler has a PhD and Master of Public Health in International Health-Epidemiology from the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

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Peyton Thompson, MD

Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina

Peyton Thompson is an Assistant Professor of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. She completed her medical education at Virginia Commonwealth University followed by a residency in pediatrics and fellowship in pediatric infectious diseases at UNC. Her research has focused broadly on the promotion of infant health through vaccination in low-resource areas, and specifically on hepatitis B prevention through vaccination in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During her fellowship, she launched the AVERT-HBV study, which partnered with the HIV PMTCT and EPI framework to provide hepatitis screening and treatment of HBV+ pregnant women and birth dose vaccination for exposed infants in Kinshasa. She is now overseeing three additional HBV studies: a birth dose immunogenicity study, a household transmission study and an NIH-funded career development award evaluating HBV transmission among Congolese children. She is passionate about promoting universal HBV birth dose vaccination in the DRC and throughout sub-Saharan Africa.



Rania Tohme, MD, MPH

Team Lead of the Hepatitis B and Tetanus Team, Global Immunization Division, U.S. CDC

Dr. Rania Tohme is the Team Lead of the Hepatitis B and Tetanus Team in the Global Immunization Division at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). She provides technical expertise in the development and implementation of hepatitis B vaccination strategies to achieve global and regional hepatitis B control and elimination goals. Her team supports countries introduce hepatitis B birth dose vaccine in their national immunization schedule, improve hepatitis B immunization coverage, and implement hepatitis B serosurveys to generate the evidence on the impact of vaccination on hepatitis B disease burden in children and track progress towards the achievement of regional hepatitis B goals. Dr. Tohme is a technical advisor to the Western Pacific Region Hepatitis B Immunization Expert Resource Panel and serves on the regional verification panels for hepatitis B in the South-East Asia, Eastern Mediterranean and European Regions. Dr. Tohme has published over 60 papers and book chapters.



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John W. Ward, MD

Director, Coalition for Global Hepatitis Elimination, Task Force for Global Health

Dr. John W. Ward created and directs the Coalition for Global Hepatitis Elimination of the Task Force for Global Health. Modelled after other Task Force programs to eliminate disease, the Coalition is a community of practice strengthening the capacity of national and sub-national hepatitis elimination programs through funding, advocacy, technical assistance, operational research and monitoring progress toward hepatitis elimination in >190 countries. Globally, Dr. Ward is an advisor to African Union Hepatitis Technical Working Group, and WHO including the PAHO technical advisory committee on disease elimination and the WPRO Hepatitis B Expert Resource Panel. Dr. Ward chairs the AASLD Task Force for Hepatitis Elimination. Over a 13-year tenure, Dr. Ward directed the US CDC Division of Viral Hepatitis with responsibilities for viral hepatitis surveillance, prevention, and research. At the national level, Dr. Ward developed recommendations for hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccination, hepatitis B and hepatitis C screening, authored the first action plan for viral hepatitis prevention. Dr. Ward initiated the US Academies of Sciences recommendations for viral hepatitis elimination and guided the launch of pioneer HCV elimination programs. Earlier Dr. Ward was Editor of the CDC MMWR and assisted in the CDC response to large outbreaks including SARS and the anthrax attacks after 9/11. As a medical epidemiologist in the CDC HIV/AIDS program, Dr. Ward identified new routes of HIV transmission, evaluated the first HIV tests to protect the nation's blood supply and led national HIV/AIDS surveillance. Dr. Ward has authored over 150 publications of scientific work in viral hepatitis and HIV and edited *Silent Victories*, a history of public health in the 20th Century published by Oxford University Press. Dr. Ward received his medical training at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and University of Washington, Seattle. Dr. Ward is a Professor in the Hubert Department of Global Health, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University, Atlanta.



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Marcel Yotebieng, MD **Associate Professor, Albert Einstein College of Medicine**

Marcel Yotebieng is an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. Previously, he has held teaching and research positions in the Department of Epidemiology at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) and in the College of Public Health at the Ohio State University. He began his professional career in Cameroon as a physician, and has worked on research programs in South Africa and in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He has almost two decades of experience implementing and conducting health service delivery research on HIV PMTC. He currently serves as the Principal Investigator on multiple NIH-funded projects across Central Africa.

