

# ImpENSA

## *Capacity Building to Improve Early Nutrition and Health in South Africa*



### LETTER FROM THE TEAM

Keith Godfrey and Sunhea Choi (UoS)

Our **ambition for the ImpENSA programme** is to train healthcare professionals in South Africa on the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively support pregnant women, mothers and family to optimise intake of key micronutrients during the first 1000 days of life.

The **programme is structured** to achieve this goal and consists of **three core modules and an additional Train-the-Trainer module**:

- **Module 1** (eLearning): Optimising micronutrient nutrition during the first 1000 days of life
- **Module 2** (eLearning): Communication to support behaviour change
- **Module 3** (Face-to-face): Healthy Conversation Skills to support behaviour change
- **Train-the-Trainer module** (Face-to-Face): Training trainers to deliver the ImpENSA programme

Utilising the fast increasing availability of Internet in South Africa and the strengths of digital technologies for training, the ImpENSA programme is designed to offer a **technology-enabled and enhanced training** with a combination of eLearning and face-to-face modules. Based on **scenario-based design**, module 1 will offer interactive guided learning on the importance and optimisation of micronutrient nutrition during the first 1000 days of life. Module 2 will focus on principles of behaviour change, factors that affect health and influence change, and empowering person-centred approach to support behaviour change. Module 3 will be face-to-face and offers practical skills training in face-to-face.

The approach to training applied by the ImpENSA programme will widen the access to many who may otherwise find it difficult to get the necessary training in micronutrient nutrition during the first 1000 days of life. The availability of the interactive guided learning materials, particularly from modules 1 and 2, will continuously support the trained healthcare professionals in applying the knowledge and skills gained from the programme to their clinical practice.

After completing the ImpENSA programme, we expect that the trained **healthcare professionals will have**:

- An in-depth understanding of the importance of optimising micronutrient nutrition during the first 1000 days of life.
- Evidence-based knowledge, including the current South African and global micronutrient nutrition policy environment, to best support mothers, families, and caregivers during the first 1000 days.
- The relevant knowledge to support the individuals with whom they work to change their health behaviours.
- A set of skills to increase their own confidence and competence in supporting individuals to change their health behaviours in order to improve their health and well-being.



### CONNECT WITH US



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Twitter: @EarlyNutrition #ImpENSA

- Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich (LMU)
- University of Southampton (UoS)
- Medical University of Warsaw (Poland)
- Association for Dietetics South Africa (ADSA)
- North-West University (NWU)
- University of Cape Town (UCT)
- Stellenbosch University (SUN)
- Nutrition Society of South Africa (NSSA)

## RECENT MOVEMENTS

### 1st Biannual Meeting

*Christine Taljaard-Krugell (ADSA)*

Following the ImpENSA kick-off meeting during February 2019, the 1st biannual meeting was held five months later in Munich, Germany. The meeting was hosted by partners from LMU and took place from 29 July to 1 August 2019.

As the project consists of various partner institutions, these face-to-face meetings serve the purpose to provide feedback from various task teams, to address challenges and to celebrate the progress that has been made. During this meeting, an update on the current training landscape in South Africa was provided and preliminary focus group results were shared. In addition to the discussions that focused on the various work packages, a half day training was conducted by Dr Wendy Lawrence to all Consortium Partners on Healthy Conversation Skills. Dr Lawrence presented the training brilliantly and provided new insight to partners on the topic.

Germany is well known for its rich culture and the partners had the privilege to experience a part of this in the beautiful city of Munich. The beautiful green English Garden, Marienplatz and bratkartoffeln (German fries) are just some of the memories that accompany our visit to Munich.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### ImpENSA second biannual meeting

*Kerry Sexton (UCT/SUN)*

The sun is blazing, the wind has calmed, and the white sands of Clifton and the Atlantic waters are glistening. The scene is set and the UCT partners are gearing up to welcome the ImpENSA consortium to the 2nd biannual meeting from the 25th to the 28th February 2020. Preparations are underway to host our partners from LMU, MUW and UoS, and to offer a brief respite from the European winter's chill. They'll join the South African partners from NWU, SUN and UCT, NSSA and ADSA, at Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital in Rondebosch.

It's officially year 2 of the project and after a festive season hiatus, the consortium is hard at work on the next phase of the project, which is finalising the training programme content. The 2nd biannual meeting provides an opportunity for all the partners to meet, to workshop and exchange ideas, and to consolidate the way forward for a successful project. And of course we may have to squeeze in some time to share some of the unique and beautiful experiences Cape Town has to offer!

### What else we have to show for our hard work

*Lize Havemann-Nel (NWU)*

The preliminary results of the focus group discussions (FGDs) were presented in an oral presentation at the first National Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) conference, on 19 August 2019 and in poster format at the Grow Great Seminar on 18 October 2019, both in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The results of the FGDs were also presented in an oral presentation at the 10th Child Health Priorities Conference held in Potchefstroom, South Africa on 28 November 2019.



## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

### ImpENSA Programme development

*Sunhea Choi (UoS) and Estelle Strydom (NWU)*

Conceptualisation of the ImpENSA Training programme and writing content are part of Work Package 2. The core team members are: Prof Keith Godfrey and Dr Sunhea Choi (coordinating programme/modules conceptualisation); Dr Jeannine Baumgartner, Estelle Strydom and Prof Lize Havemann-Nel (module 1 design and content writing); Dr Selma Omer, Dr Wendy Lawrence and Daniella Watson (module 2 design and content writing); and Dr Wendy Lawrence (Modules 3 and 4 design). The writing teams are supported by valuable internal review teams consisting of members from all partner institutions. A Curriculum Implementation Panel (CIP) has provided critical input on the training programme and module descriptors and content outline.



## REACHING TOWARDS THE SAME GOAL...

*Estelle Strydom (NWU)*

Have a look at some other excellent initiatives from all around the world. Together we can reduce malnutrition and improve the physical and mental development of the future children of South Africa.

### INPreP

INPreP (Improved Nutrition Pre-conception, Pregnancy and Post-delivery) is a research project funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) using UK aid from the UK Government to support global health research.

This NIHR Global Health Research Group is leveraging improved nutrition preconception, during pregnancy and postpartum in Sub-Saharan Africa to tackle the double burden on malnutrition before and during the first 1000 days of life. Led by the nutrition team at the University of Southampton, UK (Director Associate Prof Kate Ward; Deputy Director Prof Keith Godfrey), the project includes training and capacity development to improve and sustain the nutrition and health of communities in Burkina Faso (with the Clinical Research Unit of Nanoro), Ghana (with the Navrongo Health Research Centre) and South Africa (with the University of the Witwatersrand).

INPreP aims to improve the nutrition and health of women and children before, during and after pregnancy by:

- Engaging with communities to understand the needs from their point of view.
- Reviewing the current policies and interventions aimed at improving maternal and child nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Putting together an economic case for intervening pre-conceptionally.
- Developing and implementing cost-effective interventions that will be designed in consultation with the communities and other stakeholders.

For more information visit <https://www.southampton.ac.uk/global-health/research/lifecourse-epidemiology/inprep/about-us.page>.



Meet our newest  
ImpENSA team member



Another important output from this project, and certainly the cutest one, is little Marco, born on 17 December 2019 to very proud Mom (Rungrawee Loipimai, LMU) and Dad.



### Grow Great

Grow Great is a campaign that is mobilising all South Africans towards national commitment to zero stunting by 2030.

Stunting is a form of under-nutrition that disrupts a child's physical and mental growth. It is defined as shortness for age, and can only be diagnosed by comparing a child's measurements to standardised growth charts. 1 in 4 of South Africa's children under the age of five years old is stunted. Stunted children on average perform worse at school, are more likely to be unemployed as adults, are at higher risk of getting diseases like diabetes and hypertension and are vulnerable to being trapped in inter-generational cycles of poverty.

Grow Great uses a social franchise model Flourish to provide access to antenatal and postnatal classes that support, celebrate and empower pregnant & new mothers through the critical first 1000 days of a child's life and supporting and empowering community health workers through a National Community Health Worker Club and community of practice.

Grow Great is also inspiring the public through mass media campaigns to increase public awareness on stunting and promote exclusive breastfeeding and the addition of eggs to young children's diets (from 6 months old) and mobilizing policy makers through data-driven advocacy.

For more information visit <https://www.growgreat.co.za/>.

### Bukhali (HeLTI)

HeLTI (Healthy Life Trajectory Initiative) is an international trial led by Prof Shane Norris from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. The South African sub-study is called BUKHALI (Building knowledge, optimising health and nutrition and setting up healthier life trajectories in South Africa) and the overarching objective is to assess and optimise the micronutrient and anaemia status among women of reproductive age, during pregnancy and postnatally in a randomised controlled trial in Soweto, South Africa.

For more information visit <http://ahd.ca/our-projects/helti-south-africa/>.

### Bukhali



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WILL ALSO  
SEE US NEXT:

The International  
Congress of Dietetics  
South Africa  
15 - 18 Sept 2020