

# CREHS NEWSLETTER

JULY 2009

This newsletter focuses on CREHS research that will be presented at the International Health Economics Association 7th World Congress entitled "Harmonizing Health and Economics". It also features research from the SHIELD project - Strategies for Health Insurance for Equity in Less Developed Countries - involving CREHS partners in Tanzania, South Africa and the UK.



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- New challenges in financing health systems in low and middle income countries: details of a research session organised by Kara Hanson.
- Research presentations: A list of CREHS and SHIELD studies that will be presented at the iHEA Conference.

### New challenges in financing health systems in low and middle income countries

Time: Monday 13 July 2009, 10-11am  
Room: No 2. Hall C.

Low and middle income countries face major challenges to their health systems including a high burden of communicable disease and an emerging non-communicable disease burden. Coverage of effective services and interventions is inadequate and in many settings is constrained by funding availability. At the same time the international financing environment is changing rapidly, with new funding streams becoming available in response to the challenges of meeting the MDGs.

These countries as well as donors have taken a diversity of approaches to health care financing policies and programmes to face the old and emerging challenges. This is increasingly accompanied by conceptual and applied research which is contributing to our understanding of how different financing mechanisms can contribute to the overall objectives of a health care system - improving health by facilitating access to health services, ensuring that this access is equitable, containing aggregate

costs, using resources efficiently and effectively and meeting patient needs and preferences.

The three presentations in this session are drawn from a new book edited by Dov Chernichovsky and Kara Hanson "Innovations in Health System Financing in Developing and Transitional Countries" volume 21 of Advances in Health Economics and Health Systems Research. See [www.emeraldinsight.com](http://www.emeraldinsight.com) for information about how to order a copy.

### DEVELOPMENTS IN BRIEF

- The CREHS annual meeting was held in Oxford, UK, from the 29 June - 3 July, 2009.
- A CREHS writing workshop on Scaling Up health policies and interventions was held in Cape Town, 15-18 June, 2009.
- Members from CREHS will be attending the International AIDS Society Conference on the 19-22 July in Cape Town, South Africa.

For more information about these developments and other CREHS outputs go to:

[www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk](http://www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk)



The Consortium for Research on Equitable Health Systems aims to generate knowledge about how to strengthen health system policies and interventions in ways that preferentially benefit the poorest. It is funded by the Department for International Development (DFID) UK.

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## RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Below are a selection of presentations given by members of CREHS. A comprehensive list is available at: <http://ihea2009.abstractbook.org/presentations/>

- **The catastrophic effects of out-of-pocket payment for health care across three African countries**  
The study examines household expenditure for health care in Ghana, South Africa and Tanzania, measuring the extent and distribution of catastrophic spending.  
Monday 13 July, 8.30 am, Room 201a
- **Inequities in acceptability and preferences for different benefit packages for community-based health insurance in southeast Nigeria**  
The study generates new information about the socio-economic and geographic differences in acceptability and preferences for different benefit packages of community-based health insurance.  
Monday 13 July, 11.15 am, Room 308
- **The impact of health insurance on utilisation and health expenditure: evidence from three African countries**  
Research explores the impact of different types of insurance on the use and intensity of use of medical services and out-of-pocket payment in Ghana, South Africa and Tanzania.  
Monday 13 July, 5.45 pm, Room 305b
- **Cost effective analysis of use of RDT, microscopy and clinical examination/history in the diagnosis and treatment of Malaria**  
The study assesses the relative cost-effectiveness of RDTs when compared to usual methods for diagnosing malaria (presumptive treatment and

microscopy) in southeast Nigeria.  
Wednesday 13 July, 11.15 am, 305a

- **Is the utilisation of ART in urban South Africa equitable?**  
Research documents the socio-economic status of those in need of ART services in South Africa and compares this with the users of the service. The findings will inform policy about the importance of explicit strategies to ensure the equitable use of ART resources and the efficient allocation of resources.  
Wednesday 15 July, 11.15 am, Room 201a
- **Coping with the financial burden of illness: a study from a rural region of a less developed district in India**  
The study examines the extent of the financial burden of illness in Tiruvannamalai district in Tamil Nadu, and the coping strategies adopted by the households for financing the health care.  
Wednesday 15 July, 1.15 pm, Room 311a

## POSTER PRESENTATIONS

- **The District Health System in Enugu State, Nigeria: an analysis of policy development and implementation**
- **Assessing the implementation and effects of direct facility funding in health centres and dispensaries in Coast Province, Kenya**
- **A cross-country comparison of nurses' altruistic motives (Kenya, South Africa and Thailand)**
- **Informal payments for treatment of Malaria: differences in expenditures from consumers' and providers' perspectives in southeast Nigeria**

## SHIELD - Strategies for Health Insurance for Equity in Less Developed Counties

SHIELD is a 3 year project which critically analyses alternative approaches to health insurance in Ghana, Tanzania and South Africa as a mechanism for addressing health system equity challenges and in turn contributing to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Research evaluates the distribution of the burden of health care financing between socio-economic groups, and the factors influencing this distribution. The project aims to develop strategies and policy recommendations on health insurance mechanisms that will most appropriately address the identified health system equity challenges.

SHIELD is funded by a grant from the European Union, and is coordinated by the Health Economics Unit at the University of Cape Town. Partners include the Health Research Unit, Ghana Health Service; the Centre for Health Policy, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa; the Karolinska Institute, Sweden; the Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen, the Netherlands; the Ifakara Health Institute, Tanzania; the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK.

For more information go to: <http://web.uct.ac.za/depts/heu/SHIELD/about/about.htm>

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

Our publications are available on the website: [www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk/publications.html](http://www.crehs.lshtm.ac.uk/publications.html)

### Research highlights: Health Sector Reform

A new publication synthesises the research findings and policy recommendations from the CREHS studies on health sector reform.