Sudan Bans the Word Cholera, Despite 15,000 Infections

Sudan’s Ministry of Health has been suppressing reporting on an epidemic of cholera for the last month, arresting those who try to raise awareness of the disease. The UN cannot officially refer to the outbreak as cholera due to a lack of official testing and is currently reporting the disease as “acute water diarrhoea” (AWD), it has emerged. On 1 June, Sudan’s health minister, Bahr Idriss Abu Garda, told parliament that 292 people had died of AWD and 14,659 people were reported infected between August 2016 and May 2017. Yet the government appears more concerned in fighting the reporting of the epidemic than the cause of the disease itself.

June 13, 2017 - albawaba

'Monkey Malaria' Is Threatening Farmers in Sabah, Malaysia

Recent research from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, in collaboration with the Department of Health at Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia and Menzies School of Health Research, Darwin, shows that the threat of "Monkey Malaria" to transmit to humans has increased. The health authority in Sabah endeavours to reduce the number of Anopheles mosquitoes that are known for transmitting the Monkey Malaria from monkeys to humans.

June 13, 2017 - The Science Times

Diarrhoea assumes epidemic scale in Gurugram, officials take urgent steps

Measures might have been taken to tackle vector-borne diseases like Dengue and Malaria but the increase in a number of cases of microbial diseases like Diarrhoea and Typhoid has become a major medical challenge in Gurugram. Even before the arrival of the monsoon, there have been over 2000 cases of diarrhoea registered in the city public hospital. Further, a dozen of serious cases of diarrhoea are being reported daily. The district health department has been prompted to collect the water samples from thirteen prominent areas in the city. Shockingly out of the 75 water samples collected 40 have failed the test while the rest have been marked as suspect.

June 13, 2017 - milleniumpost

June 12, 2017 - milleniumpost

Nigeria prey to more deadly meningitis outbreaks amid vaccine shortage

Hit by one of its deadliest meningitis outbreaks in years, with more than 1,000 deaths, Nigeria could struggle to contain future epidemics due to a shortage of vaccines, health experts said. Africa’s most populous country has recorded about 14,500 suspected cases and at least 1,150 deaths so far this year - up from 33 in 2016 - in two thirds of its 36 states, said the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). "This outbreak is not just one of the worst in number of cases and deaths, but in terms of how far it has spread across Nigeria," Miriam Alia, a vaccination and outbreak response adviser at MSF, said. The shortage of vaccines for meningitis C means they can only be used to respond reactively to such outbreaks, rather than to prevent future epidemics in high risk areas, she added.

June 13, 2017 - Reuters

Health department to intensify drive at tribal colonies to avert diseases outbreak

The district health department has decided to take a special drive against communicable diseases in the tribal colonies which fall under the limits of various local self-government bodies to avoid disease outbreaks. The District Medical Officer in-charge has told the officials to submit a detailed report on the status of the tribal colonies and various cases of communicable diseases to chalk out an effective action plan. According to the Integrated Diseases Surveillance Project unit, a total of 91,205 fever cases have been reported in the district from January 1, 2017 to June 12.

June 13, 2017 - Times of India

Calls for Sudan to declare a cholera epidemic

The Sudanese opposition group, the Popular Congress Party (PCP), has called on the Sudanese prime minister to officially declare that the country is suffering from a cholera epidemic, local news outlets reported. Despite some 292 deaths and 14,659 infections since August 2016, the Sudanese government insist that affected patients suffered from an acute form of “watery diarrhoea” and not cholera.

June 13, 2017 - Middle East Monitor, Allafrica, Dabanga

Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) - Saudi Arabia

Between 1 and 10 June 2017, the national IHR focal point of Saudi Arabia reported 35 additional cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infection including three fatal cases and one death among previously reported cases. One cluster is in Riyadh city with 23 cases. The second cluster is in a Riyadh hospital related to the 1st cluster. The third cluster is in a third hospital in Riyadh city.

June 13, 2017 - WHO.int
### Gonorrhoea on the up
The latest infectious disease surveillance data shows more than 100 notified cases of gonorrhoea in the Barwon south west region in the year to June 11, and almost 200 in the past 12 months. The number of reported cases is more than double that from the same period in 2015, and an increase on those figures from last year. The Victorian Health Department data showed Geelong’s gonorrhoea rate of infection was the highest non-metro rate in all of Victoria
June 13, 2017 - The Mercury

### Six people rumoured to have Congo fever admitted in Bhavnagar
Six persons from Dambhalia village of Umrala taluka in Bhavnagar were admitted to the Sir T Hospital in Bhavnagar after they were suspected of having the Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) or Congo Fever. However, doctors at the hospital claim the six patients are suspected of having H1N1 (swine flu) and for now doctors have ruled out Congo Fever. Of the six persons admitted to the hospital from the same family, cluster and community, one may have dengue. They have undergone virology tests and the blood reports show that it is not CCHF. But a conclusive picture will emerge only after the reports come in later in the week
June 12, 2017 - Ahmedabad Mirror

### Man diagnosed with anthrax, admitted to hospital in Romania
A 47-year-old Romanian man diagnosed with anthrax was admitted to the Botosani County Hospital in northern Romania. Health authorities confirmed the diagnosis after lab tests, and other samples were sent for re-evaluation at the Cantacuzino Institute in Bucharest, reports local News.ro. The man is currently hospitalized in the Department of Infectious Diseases of the County Emergency Hospital, according to representatives of the Botosani Public Health Directorate. He contracted the disease from one of his cows
June 13, 2017 - Romania-Insider.com

### WHO confirms Congo polio outbreaks in new eradication setback
The Democratic Republic of Congo has suffered two separate outbreaks of polio, the World Health Organization said. Confirmation of the outbreaks in Congo`s Haut-Lomami and Maniema provinces came less than a week after the WHO said polio had resurfaced in Syria, in an area partly controlled by Islamic State. Like the Syrian outbreak, the four Congolese cases were caused by circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus type 2, which emerges in areas with only patchy vaccine coverage after being excreted by people who have been vaccinated
June 13, 2017 - Reuters

### Brasilia de Minas registra mais de 500 casos suspeitos de dengue em 2017
Brasilia de Minas, in the north of Minas Gerais, has recorded 548 probable cases of dengue fever in the first five months of this year. In March alone there were 286 suspected cases of the disease and the local municipality has had to work hard to bring the numbers under control
June 13, 2017 - Globo

### Chega a quase 400 nº de casos confirmados de febre chikugunya em RR
The state of Roraima has 398 confirmed cases of chikungunya, however, it only had 23 cases a year ago. Around 99% of the cases are centred on the capital Boa Vista. In 2017 there have been 1,660 suspected cases of chikungunya fever reported during the first six months of the year, far higher than in 2016 when only 282 suspected cases were reported
June 13, 2017 - Globo

### Reportan primer caso de neurodengue en Piura
The local Director of Health explained this type of dengue is characterized by the virus attacking the nervous system, causing intense headaches, loss of consciousness and in some cases loss of ability to recognise loved ones. The woman who died from neuro dengue was 47 and a native of El Chilcal district in the city
June 13, 2017 - RPP Noticias

### Dengue ground zero: 1 malaria inspector for 3.3 lakh people in East Delhi
Sources told The Indian Express that of the 65 posts for malaria inspectors, 54 remain vacant; of the 153 posts for assistant malaria inspectors, 90 remain vacant; of the 420 posts for field workers, 112 remain vacant; and of the 710 posts for domestic breeding checkers, 34 remain vacant. “There are 64 malaria circles, 40 lakh people and just 12 inspectors to monitor the work. Even a full strength of 420 field workers can’t check if all the drains are covered. Money issues mean the area keeps witnessing a surge in infections,” the official said. “We need to take action, but we have very few workers for legal enforcement”
June 14, 2017 - The Indian Express

### Warning system predicts dengue fever risk in south China
Researchers have developed an early warning system to predict the risk of dengue fever infections in southern China`s Guangdong Province, authorities said. The system uses real-time information such as seasonal climate forecasts, infection
**Health systems**

**Hundreds suffer food poisoning at Iraqi camp east of Mosul**

About 800 people fell ill in a mass outbreak of food poisoning at a camp for displaced people east of the Iraqi city of Mosul, officials and aid groups said. More than 300 people were taken to hospital for treatment after breaking their Ramadan fast with an iftar meal on Monday night. About 800 in total were affected.

June 13, 2017 - Trust.org, **ITV**

**Teamwork can solve healthcare’s severe resource constraints**

Over the years, a crippling capacity shortage in South Africa has become increasingly serious and now threatens to have a significant effect on the delivery of healthcare. Since 1994, not a single medical school has been built in SA, although one is due to come on stream in the next few years. The number of doctors and specialists has not kept pace with population growth, which has doubled since 1976. Local medical schools produce about 1,300 doctors a year, when some estimates are that at least 4,000 a year are needed. There is also a severe nursing shortage of between 40,000 and 80,000, depending on which report is referenced.

June 13, 2017 - Business Live

**Cutting foreign aid is a mistake — and the consequences will be severe**

Senator Dan Donovan (New York) discusses the Trump foreign aid budget which is before the House of Representatives House Foreign Affairs Committee, on which he sits as a member. He comments “the drastic decline in “under five” deaths is one of the most unheralded successes in international development. In 2015 alone, 18 million children under five improved their nutritional intake thanks to support from U.S. programs. Children who get the right nutrition early are 10-times more likely to overcome life-threatening childhood diseases. They are also more likely to achieve higher levels of education. Growing evidence also suggests a strong positive correlation between nutrition and lifetime earnings. Think of the impact — for every dollar invested in nutrition, we see a $16 return”

June 13, 2017 - The Hill

**US aid to combat malaria in Africa is associated with reduced risk of childhood mortality**

In a study published in PLOS Medicine, Aleksandra Jakubowski of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, US, and colleagues show that funding from the US President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) in 19 sub-Saharan African countries was associated with a 16% reduction in the annual risk of under-five child mortality in the years following introduction of the
NICE sneak cost-cutting drug announcement through on day of election results

A life-extending drug for people suffering from a fatal lung disease will be withheld from patients until they are on their death bed. The National Institute For Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) announced on the day of the General Election that Pirfenidone would only be used on people suffering from Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF) when they have 50-80% lung capacity left. That means it will only be reserved for people with severe cases of IPF and NOT prescribed on the NHS for people in the early stages of this fatal lung condition.

Number of EU nurses seeking work in Britain drops by 96 percent after Brexit

The number of European Union nurses registering to work in Britain has dropped by 96 percent since July last year, the country’s Health Foundation said, in what it described as a wake-up call to politicians. According to the Nursing and Midwifery Council data, a high of 1,304 EU nurses applied to work in Britain in July last year, shortly after Britain voted to leave the European Union. That number fell to 344 in September and in April this year it was down to 46, it said. “The overall shortage of 30,000 nurses is not a shortage caused by the Brexit vote. The chronic shortage of nurses is the result of years of short-term planning and cuts to training places. A sustainable, long-term approach to workforce planning is desperately needed.”

Medics and school staff forcibly recruited in South Sudan’s war

Staff working in South Sudan’s health centres and schools have been forcibly recruited by armed groups, causing facilities to close, the United Nations said, as it struggles to provide aid in one of the world’s most dangerous war zones. More than 250 aid workers have been relocated because of fighting this year, almost double the number during the same period in 2016, it said. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said at least 14 community volunteers and health workers had reportedly been forcibly recruited by armed groups in Guit county, in the country’s north, as of June 6.

South Africa’s cancer doctor shortage: ‘There is a real crisis’

There are no more public health radiation oncologists left in the entire city of Durban in South Africa. The city sits in coastal KwaZulu-Natal, the South African province with the second-largest population, about 11 million people. Many doctors shifted from the public to private sector because the working conditions in public health care made effectively treating patients nearly impossible. Many of the machines used to diagnose and treat cancer patients were malfunctioning and left in disrepair despite multiple appeals.

World Blood Donor Day 2017: Shocking facts on India’s illegal blood industry

In India there is a huge shortage of blood, despite the large number of blood donation camps. As per a 2012 report by WHO, only 9m blood units are available annually whereas demand is 12m. Blood is illegally sold at a higher price most of the time and not given to patients on the basis of medical conditions, more like an auction. Some hospitals extract plasma out of blood and sell it on to pharma companies. There’s a thriving black market for getting money for donations and selling blood. Blood farms exist where poor people are forced to donate up to 12 times a month, and there is little testing meaning blood is prone to disease and infections.

Transfusions happening in Nepal without testing blood for deadly diseases

No hospital in Nepal has the necessary kit to test blood for HIV during the crucial ‘window period.’ According to NCASC, since July 2016, 116 people have contracted HIV due to transfusion of blood and blood. This figure is 0.4 per cent of the total 28,865 HIV cases in Nepal. “The collected blood should be tested for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, HIV and Syphilis,” NPHL Director Dr Raj Kumar Mahato said.

Africa Not Able To Meet Blood Needs – WHO

The World Health Organisation says Africa still falls short of meeting its blood needs in spite of increase in the number of donors in the region. A 2016 report on the status of blood safety and availability in the region revealed that the number of blood donations between 2013 and 2016 increased from 3.9 million units to 4.5 million units. However, in spite of the progress, the region could only meet 50 per cent of its annual blood needs.

Medical waste piles up, trash timebomb ticks
According to a report, Delhi used to generate 10 tonnes of medical trash per day in 2010. This figure is believed to have touched 100 tonnes per day in the past seven years. With the number of healthcare facilities increasing, Delhi has seen a steep rise in biomedical waste generation in the past few years. However, lack of proper disposal of hospital trash can pose serious risks to people’s health and environment, warn experts

June 13, 2017 - Times of India

Brunei faces challenge of inadequate blood supply: health minister

Facing the challenge of inadequate blood supply, Brunei government encouraged blood donors to come forward and become regular donors to ensure the country’s blood banks supply sufficient, safe and sustainable blood, Minister of Health Haji Zulkarnain said. A total of 13,037 blood donors came forward across Brunei Darussalam last year, including 3,495 new registered donors, Haji Zulkarnain said in his message on the occasion of World Blood Donors Day which carries the theme "What can you do? Give Blood. Give Now. Give Often"

June 14, 2017 - Xinhuanet

Refugees suffer disease outbreaks in Tanzania

An outbreak of diseases has struck Tanzanian camps housing refugees fleeing strife in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some 184 new arrivals composed of 99 Burundian and 85 Congolese asylum seekers have entered the East African country in the past week as the crises in their countries peak. According to the agency the top five medical conditions at the Nyarugusu and Nduta refugee camps are malaria, skin infections, upper respiratory tract infection, HIV and mental disorder

June 15, 2017 - CajNews Africa

EAC short of health specialists: report

The East African Community (EAC) partner states have a serious shortage of qualified medical specialists, a recent minister’s report shows. According to the report, the regional bloc currently has less than 44.5 physicians, nurses and midwives per 10,000 people required to fast-track the attainment of health-related sustainable development goals. As a result of the low number of health specialists, EAC partner states cannot provide quality health care to their citizens without addressing the issue of training of human resources for health, both in terms of quality and quantity

June 14, 2017 - The Citizen, AllAfrica.com

Pfizer, Roche and Aspen face South African probe into cancer drug prices

South Africa’s competition watchdog has launched an investigation into three drug companies accused of over-charging for cancer medicines, the agency’s chief said. Tembinkosi Bonakele, head of the Competition Commission, said the agency would investigate Aspen Pharmacare, Africa’s biggest generic drug maker, U.S. company Pfizer and Swiss-based Roche Holding. The Commission, which investigates cases before bringing them to the Competition Tribunal for adjudication, said it suspected the lung cancer treatment xalkori crizotinib sold by Pfizer had been excessively priced as have the breast cancer drugs Herceptin and Herclon sold by Roche. It also said it would look into whether Aspen, a local company based in Durban, might have over-charged for Leukeran, Alkeran and Myleran cancer treatments in South Africa

June 13, 2017 - Reuters

India proposes stricter quality checks for generic drug manufacturers

The Union Health Ministry’s proposed draft amendments to the Drugs and Cosmetics Act want generic-drug manufacturers to prove that the biological qualities of the new drug are equivalent to the original formulation

June 13, 2017 - Hindustan Times

Communicable diseases

Pfizer to help raise awareness around infectious diseases in the UAE

Pfizer has linked up with the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to improve awareness around infectious diseases. The joint initiative aims to highlight how such diseases can be prevented and combated while also looking at promoting vaccination programs. The scope of the agreement also covers ‘medical professional training as an effective strategy to identify and implement preventive measures and minimize risk exposure’

June 13, 2017 - Healthcare Global, Trade Arabia, Albawaba

Decline in infrastructure, support systems hampering HIV fight in SA

In a new report, UNAIDS cautioned that while new HIV infections had fallen dramatically in the past two decades, especially among children, the trend among adults has stalled and even risen in a number of places over the past five years. Cuts in foreign aid will have an impact on the national fight against HIV/Aids, but the decline in South Africa’s critical infrastructure and support systems has an equally negative effect on eradicating the disease. “Structural issues need to be addressed by government. You can’t do Aids prevention when people are hungry, homeless or unemployed” UNAIDS said
Low levels of vitamin A may fuel TB risk
People with low levels of vitamin A living with individuals sick with tuberculosis may be 10 times more likely to develop the disease than people with high levels of the nutrient, according to research. The findings, published in Clinical Infectious Diseases, are based on an analysis of blood drawn from more than 6,000 household contacts of people diagnosed with TB in Lima, Peru. The study findings do not prove a cause-and-effect relationship between vitamin A levels and TB disease, the researchers caution, but the potent link between the two suggests that vitamin A supplementation might be an important part of controlling the spread of TB.

Johnson & Johnson’s flu drug succeeds in mid-stage trial
J&J said trial data showed that treatment with pimodivir alone resulted in a statistically significant reduction in viral load in patients over seven days from the start of dosing, when compared with a placebo. Adding pimodivir to oseltamivir also resulted in a significantly lower viral load compared to those who received pimodivir alone, the company added. Pimodivir was granted the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s “fast-track” status in March due to its potential to address medication for patients who develop the influenza A infection and are hospitalized, or are at high risk of related complications.

Scientists kill malaria-carrying mosquitoes with genetically engineered fungi
A genetically engineered fungus, designed to produce toxins from spiders and scorpions, could effectively kill malaria-carrying mosquitoes, according to a new study. The fungus involved is known as Metarhizium pingshaensei, a natural killer of mosquitoes that was originally isolated from a mosquito. To boost its deadly power, researchers engineered the fungus with several genes that express neurotoxins from spider and scorpion. "Our most potent fungal strains, engineered to express multiple toxins, are able to kill mosquitoes with a single spore," Brian Lovett, a graduate student in the UMD Department of Entomology and a co-author of the paper, said. "We also report that our transgenic fungi stop mosquitoes from blood feeding. Together, this means that our fungal strains are capable of preventing transmission of disease by more than 90 percent of mosquitoes after just five days.”

Bhutan and Maldives eliminate measles - WHO
Bhutan and the Maldives have eliminated measles, becoming the first countries in their region to eliminate the highly infectious disease that is a major child killer globally, the World Health Organization said. The milestone was reached after no measles cases originating in the Maldives had been recorded since 2009 and none in Bhutan since 2012, the WHO said.

Argonne X-rays used to help identify a key Lassa virus structure
A team led by Kathryn Hastie and Erica Ollmann Saphire at The Scripps Research Institute has solved the structure of the viral machinery that Lassa virus uses to enter human cells. Their study is the first to show a key piece of the viral structure, called a surface glycoprotein, for any member of the deadly arenavirus family, which also includes Ebola virus. The researchers solved this structure of the Lassa virus glycoprotein using a technique called X-ray crystallography.

Non communicable diseases

People with albinism face poverty, abandonment, danger and death
June 13 marks International Albinism Awareness Day, established by the United Nations to bring global attention to understanding albinism and fighting discrimination and stigma. The average person with albinism in East Africa dies by
age 30 from skin cancer, and only 2 percent of people with albinism live to age 40, according to Asante Mariamu, a U.S. organisation that raises awareness of albinism in East Africa. People with albinism also fall victim to ritual attacks in regions where superstition says their body parts bring power, wealth and good luck.

June 13, 2017 - Trust.org

**Early-life exposure to famine increases risk of dyslipidemia in women, but not men**

Exposure to severe famine as a foetus or as an infant significantly increases the chance of having dyslipidemia in adulthood, according to research published in the open access journal BMC Public Health. Dyslipidemia is a risk factor for coronary heart disease and is defined as an abnormal amount of lipids in the blood. Analysis of the prevalence of dyslipidemia in 2,752 people who were exposed to the Chinese famine between 1959 and 1961 revealed that those who were in utero or an infant during this period are over 50% more likely to have dyslipidemia in adulthood. Taking gender into account, this association remained true for women, but not for men.

June 13, 2017 - Eurekalert

**Malaria Drug Shows Promise for Lou Gehrig's Disease**

A drug used to combat malaria has shown great promise in the treatment of ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease). The drug, pyrimethamine (Daraprim), has been used to treat malaria since 1953, but has recently been given a new look for curbing the levels of a toxic protein created by the gene mutation prevalent in ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) sufferers. Dale J. Lange, neurologist and principal researcher at HSS said “There is currently no cure for this devastating disease, but our study represents the first time a drug lowered a protein known to be relevant to disease progression; as such, a slowing of disease progression would be expected.”

June 13, 2017 - Newsline

**J&J diabetes drug shows heart benefit in large safety study**

Johnson & Johnson’s type 2 diabetes drug Invokana significantly reduced the risk of serious heart problems in patients with established heart disease or at elevated risk in a pair of large studies, according to data presented at a medical meeting. The medicine also led to a reduced risk of hospitalization for heart failure and protection against kidney function decline. But the risk of amputations, particularly of toes or feet, was double versus placebo in the studies of 10,142 patients with type 2 diabetes.

June 12, 2017 - Reuters
June 13, 2017 - Pharmacy Practice News, Tech Times

**Study identifies possible earliest stage of Alzheimer’s disease**

A study by the University of Southern California found elevated levels of amyloid plaque in the brain are the first signs in the earliest stage of Alzheimer’s. Researchers at the Keck School of Medicine at USC analysed 10 years of data and found that elevated levels of amyloid plaque, clusters of a sticky protein, found in normal cognitive functioning older adults may be the earliest stage of Alzheimer’s disease. Researchers found the elevated amyloid group was older and less educated, in addition to carrying at least one extra copy of the ApoE4 gene — increasing the odds for developing Alzheimer’s disease.

June 13, 2017 - Gephardt Daily News

**Anti-diabetes drug also 'lessens kidney, heart disease' risk**

An anti-diabetic drug that lowers blood sugar levels for type 2 diabetes sufferers also significantly cuts the risk of cardiovascular and kidney disease, according to a new study. The findings came in a clinical trial of more than 10,000 patients in 30 countries, using canagliflozin. It found the drug reduced the overall risk of cardiovascular disease by 14 percent and reduced the risk of heart failure hospitalization by 33 percent. It was also shown to have a significant impact -- 40 percent less -- on the progression of a serious kidney decline.

June 14, 2017 - Jakarta Post
June 13, 2017 - Renal and Urology News, Alarabiya

**Pre-eclampsia linked to heart disease risk**

Women who suffer from gestational hypertension or pre-eclampsia are significantly at greater risk of future heart disease and should have their heart health monitored post-pregnancy, urge experts. The Heart Foundation says pregnancy is the ‘ultimate cardiac stress test’ and pre-eclampsia, in particular, provides a window into the future heart complications a woman may face in the next decade. In Australia, 30,000 women each year will develop high blood pressure in pregnancy and 10,000 of these will have pre-eclampsia.

June 14, 2017 - Sky News Australia

**Opioid Costs Push Struggling States to Dust Off Tobacco Strategy**

State and local leaders fighting a worsening opioid-abuse epidemic are studying tactics used in the tobacco lawsuits of the 1990s, as they try to claw back billions from the companies who make and sell the powerful painkillers. More than 20 U.S. states, counties and cities have sued firms including Johnson & Johnson, Purdue Pharma Inc., and McKesson Corp. in the past year, claiming they fueled a public-health crisis with misleading marketing and aggressive distribution of opioids.
Attorneys general in Alaska and Tennessee are also considering lawsuits as their health and legal budgets are stretched to a breaking point by the surge in addictions, overdoses and crime

June 14, 2017 - Bloomberg

US mental-health agency’s push for basic research has slashed support for clinical trials

Analysis reveals that the number of clinical trials funded by the National Institute of Mental Health has fallen by 45% since the agency began to focus on the biological roots of disease. An analysis by Nature suggests that the number of clinical trials funded by the NIMH dropped by 45% between 2009 and 2015. This coincides with the agency’s launch, in 2011, of the Research Domain Criteria (RDoC) — a framework for research on the mechanisms of mental illness. The NIMH’s roll-out of RDoC included asking researchers to focus more on the biological bases of behaviour — such as brain circuitry and genetics — than on the broader symptoms that clinicians typically use to define and classify mental illness

June 13, 2017 - Nature

Drug reduces dyskinesia, 'off' times in Parkinson's patients

An experimental extended-release version of the drug amantadine can reduce the duration of the involuntary dancing-like movements seen in people whose long-term use of levodopa has kept their Parkinson’s disease under control. The results may help doctors walk a tightrope in treating the tremors and muscle rigidity of Parkinson’s itself, where the beneficial effects of levodopa wane over time, producing so-called ‘off’ times. When doctors looked at patients’ off times, they found amantadine decreased the duration by about 34 minutes per day compared to placebo recipients, which saw the duration of their unwanted movements increase by about 18 minutes

June 12, 2017 - Reuters

Will AstraZeneca’s SGLT2-favoring data win the class a shot at front-line diabetes use?

A real-world analysis showed that SGLT2 diabetes meds from AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson and the Eli Lilly-Boehringer Ingelheim team could dramatically cut down on heart failure hospitalizations and deaths. Now, new analyses have confirmed those findings—and may make a case for using the class earlier in treatment, AZ’s execs suggest. Researchers separated patients into two groups, one with existing CV disease and the other without. They saw “the same signal, just as robust, in those two different patient populations in terms of the SGLT2 class lowering the risk of hospitalizations for heart failure and death as well,” Jim McDermott, AstraZeneca’s Medical Affairs lead for diabetes, said

June 13, 2017 - Fierce Pharma, PR Newswire

Ghana Records 60,000 Cancer Cases Annually - Dr Joel Yarney

Dr Joel Yarney, the Head of the Medical Centre for Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine at the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, said about 60,000 cancer cases are recorded by Ghana annually. He said out of this figure 2,500 were breast cancer cases, and this requires that urgent action be taken to ensure prevention and treatment, along with improvements in quality of care

June 13, 2017 - Peace FM

Daily aspirin behind more than 3,000 deaths a year, study suggests

Taking a daily aspirin is far more dangerous than was thought, causing more than 3,000 deaths a year, a major study suggests. The study by Oxford University found that those over the age of 75 who take the blood-thinning pills are ten times more likely than younger patients to suffer disabling or fatal bleeds. Researchers said patients of this age who have already suffered heart attacks or strokes should still take the daily tablet, but should also take an extra drug to reduce the risk of bleeding

June 13, 2017 - The Telegraph

In 35 years, obesity doubled among children and tripled in adults: Study

Obesity in India more than doubled in children and tripled in adults between 1980 and 2015, shows an analysis of data from 195 countries from the Global Burden of Disease Study. According to the study, India’s 180 million adults, including 14.4 million children between the ages of two and 19 years, are obese. “The rate at which obesity is growing in children is quite alarming as it means we will be faced with a large number of obese adults, prone to non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and even certain types of cancer,” said Dr VK Bahl, head of cardiology department at AIIMS

June 13, 2017 - Hindustan Times

Nearly 10 million U.S. adults suffer from mental illness

Nearly 10 million American adults have a serious mental illness, and a similar number have considered suicide during the past year, according to a new government report on the nation’s behavourial ills. The report also said that 15.7 million Americans abuse alcohol and 7.7 million abuse illicit drugs. Despite the growing number of Americans with mental health problems, about a third of those who need help aren’t getting it, said SAMHSA researcher Dr. Beth Han

June 13, 2017 - KTTC.com
Promoting health through the life course

Mangroves, coral reefs could cut flood insurance premiums - Lloyd's
Natural coastal habitats such as mangroves, coral reefs and salt marshes protect communities more effectively against coastal storms than seawalls, and insurers should consider this when pricing flood risk, Lloyd’s of London said. Investment to protect natural habitats also makes sense for insurers, a report written for Lloyd’s said, though 30 times more is currently spent around the world on building seawalls than conserving coastal infrastructure
June 13, 2017 - Trust.org

Women abused by partners suffer lifelong health problems – study
First long-term Australian study to investigate impacts of intimate partner violence finds those who have survived abuse ‘recorded significantly poorer health.’ Women who are abused by their partner suffer significant physical and mental health problems that persist throughout their lifetime, the first long-term Australian study to investigate the health impacts of intimate partner violence has found. While health is expected to worsen as people age, the physical functioning and general health of women who experienced intimate partner violence was consistently worse than those who had not experienced it
June 13, 2017 - Guardian

Migrants sent home $445 billion in 2016, lifting millions out of poverty - report
Migrants working in rich countries sent home almost half a trillion dollars in 2016, helping to lift families out of poverty by providing financial stability, access to education, housing and healthcare, according to a global report. The total amount of remittances, which is estimated to reach $450 billion in 2017, has risen by more than 50 percent in the past decade, IFAD said. Total migrant worker earnings are estimated to be $3 trillion annually, of which approximately 85 percent remains in the host countries. The money migrants send home averages less than one percent of their host country’s gross domestic product, IFAD said
June 14, 2017 - Trust.org

Record hunger in Horn of Africa pushes development banks to step in
In an unprecedented move, the World Bank is giving $50 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization to distribute emergency food, water and cash in Somalia. The African Development Bank (ADB) has also announced $1.1 billion to combat drought in six countries, mostly in the Horn of Africa. In a "Grand Bargain", struck at last year’s World Humanitarian Summit, donors promised to make their funding more flexible to respond to growing humanitarian crises globally
June 13, 2017 - Trust.org

‘No place for the poor’ in India’s Smart Cities, campaigners say
Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Smart Cities Mission aims to modernise 100 cities by 2020. An ambitious government plan to upgrade India’s cities risks further marginalising poor and minority communities and hastening slum evictions, while failing to address the reasons villagers move to urban areas, campaigners said. The $7.5 billion plan does not address the needs and rights of poor women and marginalised groups including minorities and migrants, according to a report by New Delhi-based advocacy group Housing and Land Rights Network, India (HLRN). The drive for Smart Cities has already triggered evictions of people from slums and informal settlements in cities including Indore, Bhubaneswar, Delhi and Kochi without adequate compensation or alternate accommodation
June 12, 2017 - Trust.org

Abortion: NI women not entitled to NHS terminations in England
The UK’s highest court has rejected an appeal by a mother and daughter in their legal battle for women from Northern Ireland to receive free abortions on the NHS in England. Terminations are only permitted if a woman’s life is at risk, or there is a permanent or serious risk to her mental or physical health; rape, incest and fatal foetal abnormalities are not circumstances in which abortions can be performed legally in Northern Ireland. Last year, more than 700 women from Northern Ireland travelled to England for an abortion, according to UK Department of Health figures
June 14, 2017 - BBC, The Guardian, Trust.org

Aid agencies urged to help prevent child labour during crises
Syrian refugee children in Lebanon are doing back-breaking labour in potato fields and working with pesticides in baking hot greenhouses, a UN agency said as it called for greater efforts to prevent child labour during crises. "We are trying to help aid agencies working on food security and nutrition to be more child labour sensitive and to have the risks at least on their radar," FAO child labour expert Ariane Genthon said. There are an estimated 168 million child labourers worldwide, 98 million of whom work in agriculture
June 12, 2017 - Trust.org

Falling cocoa prices threaten child labour spike in Ghana, Ivory Coast
A drop in global cocoa prices threatens to undermine efforts to stamp out child labour in Ghana and Ivory Coast, the world’s two biggest growers, as falling incomes could force farmers to send their children to work, charities said. “If these low prices translate into lower incomes for poor families, and household poverty gets worse, we are worried that the risk of child labour will increase,” Nick Weatherill, executive director of ICI, explained. Children could be taken out of school if their families can no longer pay the costs, and many may be made to work on cocoa farms if growers cannot afford to employ labourers, he added.

June 12, 2017 - Trust.org

Climate fund criticized by Trump has slow, complex start
The $10 billion Green Climate Fund that US President Donald Trump said was a waste of tax dollars has fallen behind on its goals, with a biggest pay out so far of just $5 million for a US-led solar energy project. Work at the international fund, which aims to help poor nations cut greenhouse gas emissions and adapt their economies to heatwaves, storms and rising seas has been slowed by legal red tape and the approval process, board members say. The fund also faces legal complexities in starting to work with multilateral lenders such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank or private banks. Once agreements are in place, a flood of disbursements is expected to follow.

June 13, 2017 - Trust.org

Maasai manure helps Kenya’s drought-hit herders fight hunger
Demand for manure collected from Kenya’s rangelands for use as fertiliser is on the rise. Scientists at the Nairobi-based International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) say this manure is richer in nitrogen and phosphorous than that from enclosed livestock which do not graze. Crops need nitrogen to develop vegetation, while phosphorous is essential for root formation and the crop’s structure, said Edward Karanja, project leader with ICIPE, which is working to promote the use of manure as fertiliser in Kenya. ICIPE’s Karanja sees big potential in the manure trade because more Kenyans are investing in agriculture.

June 13, 2017 - Trust.org