

# ISPM News Archive 2018

## Open Day Uni Mittelstrasse



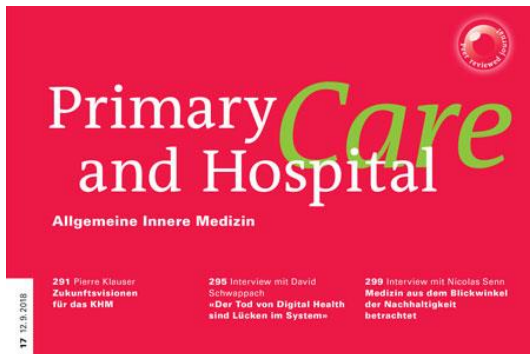
05.10.2018

The Uni Mittelstrasse will open its doors on Saturday, 27 October 2018, 10-18 pm.

The University of Bern cordially invites all interested parties to take a look at the new working environment of a diverse user community - with guided tours, lectures, games, presentations for young and old, workshops, science speed dates, handicrafts, interactive exhibitions, as well as food and drinks.

You can find us [like this](#).

# Interview on digital transformation in the healthcare sector in «Primary Care and Hospital»



01.10.2018

The digital transformation is fundamentally changing the professional world of health workers. Prof. David Schwappach explains the risks and opportunities of technological trends in the healthcare sector and explains the advantages and disadvantages of electronic patient records.



Prof. Schwappach is the scientific director of the Swiss Patient Safety Foundation and a professor of patient safety at the Institute for Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM) at the University of Bern.

The interview is available in German and French:

[«Der Tod von Digital Health sind Lücken im System»](#)

Interview mit Prof. Dr. David Schwappach, Patientensicherheit Schweiz

[«Un système lacunaire est fatal pour la cybersanté»](#)

Entretien avec Prof. Dr. David Schwappach, Sécurité des patients Suisse

# Preventing preterm birth and neonatal infections in Papua New Guinea



14.11.2018

ISPM Professor Nicola Low has been visiting the WANTAIM project in Papua New Guinea. «Wantaim» means «once» or «together» in Tok Pisin creole. It is a perfect fit for the research project, «Women and Newborns Trial of Antenatal Intervention and Management».

The WANTAIM project is evaluating the use of new point-of-care tests so that pregnant women can receive same-day treatment for sexually transmitted chlamydia, gonorrhoea and trichomonas infections. If untreated during pregnancy, these infections can result in preterm birth, low birth weight, and eye and lung infections in the newborn.

The WANTAIM project is a cluster-randomised crossover trial in Madang and East New Britain provinces. ISPM researchers Professor Nicola Low and Dianne Egli-Gany, with funding from the Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development (r4d), lead the newborn infection part of the trial. Dr. Andrew Vallely and Dr. William Pomat of the Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research and University of New South Wales, Australia lead the overall trial, funded by the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council and the UK Joint Global Health Trials Scheme of the Department for International Development, Medical Research Council and Wellcome Trust.

## Links

- [WANTAIM project website](#)
- [SNSF p3 database](#)

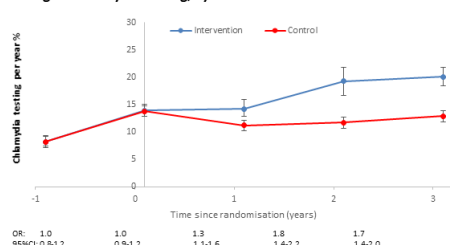
# Chlamydia screening trial prompts rethink about control strategy

13.11.2018

Opportunistic testing for the sexually transmitted infection, chlamydia, amongst young adults attending general practices, did not reduce prevalence after three years.

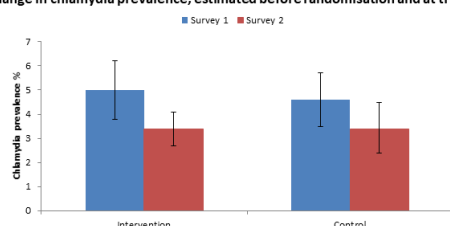
The research, published in [The Lancet](#), found that although general practitioners (GPs) were able to increase testing among 16 to 29 year olds by 150% over a three-year period, it did not reduce the overall proportion contracting chlamydia. «This trial shows that evidence-based control of chlamydia and its complications will need more than just increased testing. Better clinical management of people with diagnosed chlamydia, treatment of sexual partners, and prevention of re-infection, are also needed», says ISPM's Professor Nicola Low, the senior author of the report.

Change in chlamydia testing, by time since randomisation



The Australian Chlamydia Control Effectiveness Pilot (ACCEPt) is the world's largest and most comprehensive trial of opportunistic chlamydia testing in primary care. Professor Jane Hocking at the University of Melbourne led the trial, with collaboration from Professor Nicola Low at the University of Bern, and from Monash University, University of New South Wales and Deakin University in Australia. The trial involved 130 rural GP clinics in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia, over 1200 GPs and more than 90 000 people aged 16-29.

Change in chlamydia prevalence, estimated before randomisation and at trial end



Chlamydia is the most commonly reported sexually transmitted infection in Switzerland. It is hard to control because most people do not have symptoms and are unaware they have it. It is treated with a course of antibiotics. If left untreated, chlamydia can cause serious infections of the fallopian tubes and uterus (pelvic inflammatory disease - PID) in women, which can lead to hospital admission in severe cases and can ultimately cause infertility. Health departments in many high-income countries recommend testing young adults for chlamydia infection. «Opportunistic» testing means testing any young sexually active person visiting a GP or gynaecologist for any reason, whether or not they have symptoms.

[Press release «Studie mit Berner Beteiligung empfiehlt neues Vorgehen gegen Chlamydien» \(PDF, 74KB\)](#)

# New ISPM presentation video

31.10.2018

The new ISPM presentation video is online.

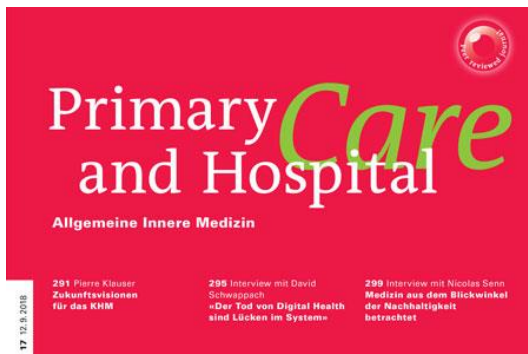
[Continue reading](#)



# Open Day Uni Mittelstrasse

05.10.2018

The Uni Mittelstrasse will open its doors on Saturday, 27 October 2018, 10-18 pm. [Continue reading](#)



# Thomas C Chalmers award for ISPM's Adriani Nikolakopoulou



24.09.2018

[Adriani Nikolakopoulou](#) of ISPM's [Evidence Synthesis Methods research group](#) won the [Thomas C Chalmers award](#) for the best oral presentation at the [Cochrane Colloquium](#) in 16-18 September 2018 in Edinburgh.

The award is given at each Cochrane Colloquium to the principle author of the best oral and best poster presentation addressing methodological issues related to systematic reviews given by an early career investigator. Presentations must demonstrate originality of thought, high quality research, relevance to the advancement of the science of systematic reviews and clarity of presentation.

In her presentation entitled 'The emerging evidence synthesis tools: Actively Living Network Meta-Analysis', Adriani described the concept of an actively living network meta-analysis which combines ideas of living systematic reviews, network meta-analysis and evidence-based sample size calculations. The suggested framework resulted from research on the project [Evidence-based planning of clinical research \(EBAR\)](#) which received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the [Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement no 703254](#). The research team included Sven Trelle, Matthias Egger and Georgia Salanti.

# Better understanding, research and treatment of childhood cancer



Schweizer Kinderkrebsregister  
Registre Suisse du Cancer de l'Enfant  
Registro Svizzero dei Tumori Pediatrici  
Swiss Childhood Cancer Registry

17.09.2018

The Swiss Childhood Cancer Registry (SCCR) at the University of Bern has been collecting data on children and adolescents suffering from cancer in Switzerland for over 40 years. Now, on behalf of the Confederation, the registry will be converted into a Federal Childhood Cancer Registry, which will further improve the documentation, diagnosis and treatment of cancer in children and adolescents.



Prof. Kuehni Claudia

Until now, however, there was no nationwide obligation to report new cancers to the SCCR. This is now changing with the new Cancer Registration Act, which comes into force on 1 January 2020. The law provides for a children's cancer register kept by the Confederation. The [Swiss Childhood Cancer Registry](#) at the ISPM has applied together with the SPOG for this federal task and has now been assigned it by the federal government.



Dr. Pfeiffer Verena

The Swiss Childhood Cancer Registry is directed by [Claudia Kuehni](#) and [Verena Pfeiffer](#).

[Medienmitteilung Bundeskinderkrebsregister \(PDF, 79KB\)](#)

[Communiqué de presse Registre Suisse Cancer de l'Enfant \(PDF, 117KB\)](#)



# SRF Tagesgespräch: Matthias Egger and Michael Hagner on Open Access



14.09.2018

Open Access aims to make scientific research freely accessible to all and thus to counteract the major publishers and their business model. In the SRF «Tagesgespräch», Matthias Egger of the Swiss National Science Foundation and the science historian Michael Hagner discuss Open Access.

Read more about the topic and listen to the podcast on the [SRF «Tagesgespräch» website](#) or listen to the talk directly here below.

[Tagesgespräch: Matthias Egger und Michael Hagner über Open Access \(MP3, 12.7 MB\)](#)



# Workshop on Open Science and Biomedical Research in Bern on Friday, Sep 28th, 2018



12.09.2018

The Biomedical section of Bern university library, on behalf of the [Swiss biomedical libraries commission](#), would like to invite you to a workshop on Open Science and biomedical research on Friday, Sep 28th, 2018.

This full day workshop is meant for all those involved in Open Science (researchers, funders, publishers, librarians, and technologists). Its aim is to consider and explore open practices, discuss norms and culture and involve everyone in shaping the conditions to make the most of the opportunities that open science offers.

The session is facilitated by two specialists from Utrecht University, Bianca Kramer and Jeroën Bosman ([101 Innovations In Scholarly Communication](#)).

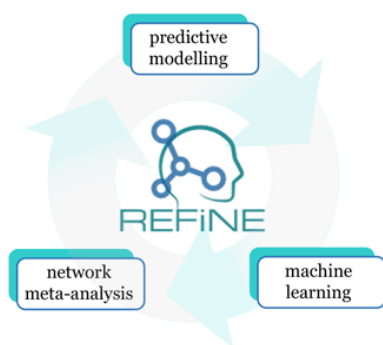
Venue: University of Bern, Main Building, Room 033, Hochschulstrasse 4, Bern

Time: 9:30 am – 5 pm

More information and registration : [www.unibe.ch/ub/biomedresearch](http://www.unibe.ch/ub/biomedresearch)

For any inquiries or questions: [Isabelle.de-Kaenel@chuv.ch](mailto:Isabelle.de-Kaenel@chuv.ch)

# New Ambizione grant to be funded by the SNF



11.09.2018

[Orestis Efthimiou](#) has been awarded an Ambizione grant to develop methods for personalizing treatment choices.

Multiple treatment options are available for many diseases. A treatment that performs very well for one patient might not be effective or safe for another. Choosing the right treatment for each patient is thus of crucial importance. Yet current approaches to personalizing the choice of treatment do not fully utilize routinely collected data such as disease history and patient characteristics.

The project «Predicting the real-world effectiveness and safety of medical interventions» (REFiNE) will develop new methods for personalizing treatment to account for the individual characteristics, needs, and preferences of patients using evidence from multiple randomized clinical trials and data collected in clinical practice.

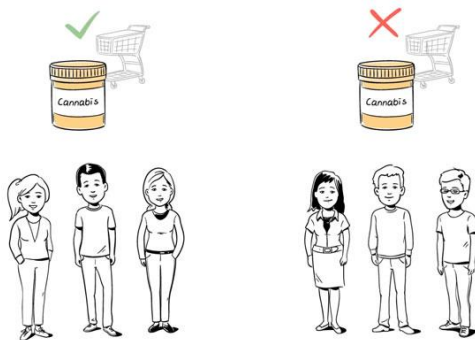
The primary objectives of REFiNE are to

- Develop and test a range of methods for making patient-specific predictions about the effects of medical interventions
- Develop easy-to-use online software tools that will utilize all methods to enhance the decision-making process in everyday clinical settings

Our work will help clinical practice move away from the one-size-fits-all approach to treating patients by using evidence-based methods to choose the best treatment for each individual patient.

Orestis collaborated with Matthias Egger and Marcel Zwahlen in developing this proposal. The project will also fund a PhD student.

# The Federal Council submitted a draft legislation article for cannabis pilot trials for consultation



16.07.2018

The Federal Council submitted a draft legislation article for cannabis pilot trials [for consultation](#). This article and a corresponding act regulates the conduct of scientific studies in the field of recreational cannabis use. The article does not affect regulations of cannabis use outside of such scientific studies.

The SCRIPT study, planned by the ISPM and the CTU Bern, could possibly be conducted under this article, after its initial rejection by the Federal Office for Public Health. [The objective of the SCRIPT study](#) is to evaluate the effects on the consumers, the market and the society, if cannabis could be bought in pharmacies in a regulated way.

*[German text version]*

## Pilotversuchsartikel wird vom Bundesrat in die Vernehmlassung geschickt

16.07.2018

Der Bundesrat hat am 04.07.2018 einen (Cannabis-) Pilotversuchsartikel [in die Vernehmlassung geschickt](#). Dieser Artikel und eine dazugehörige Vernehmlassung gestatten wissenschaftliche Studien im Bereich vom Freizeitcannabiskonsum, ändern aber nichts am allgemeinen Verbot des Cannabiskonsums ausserhalb dieser Studien.

Die vom ISPM und CTU Bern geplante SCRIPT Studie könnte, trotz initialer Ablehnung durch das Bundesamt für Gesundheit, unter diesem Artikel durchgeführt werden. [Ziel der SCRIPT Studie](#) ist es die Auswirkungen auf die Konsumierenden, den Markt und die Gesellschaft zu untersuchen, wenn Cannabis reguliert in Apotheken verkauft würde.

# Epidemiology Winter School 2019 in Wengen - registration now open!



15.07.2018

The next Winter School will take place from January 21st to 26th 2019, during the week following the International Lauberhorn ski race, when Wengen is calm, with few people on the slopes.

Each course runs over three days and consists of lectures, group work and computer practical sessions. Students stay on site and work hard in the mornings. Then they have an extended break to review course materials, catch up on emails or (more likely) go skiing or snowboarding. They reconvene at 4:30 pm for computer or practical sessions.

We offer 8 courses in 2019 which run for 3 days, either from Monday to Wed or Thurs to Sat. Each course earns 1 ECTS.

- *Causal inference in observational epidemiology*  
Prof. Miguel Hernan, Prof. Marcel Zwahlen
- *Assessing Bias in Randomized and Non-Randomized Studies: New Approaches, New Tools*  
Prof. Jonathan Sterne, Prof. Julian Higgins
- *Advanced Methods in (Network ) Meta-Analysis – A Practical Course in R*  
Prof. Georgia Salanti, Dr. Guido Schwarzer
- *Prognostic Research: Concepts and Models*  
Prof. Margret May, Prof. Matthias Egger
- *Statistical Analysis with Missing Data Using Multiple Imputation and Inverse Probability Weighting*  
Prof. James Carpenter, Prof. Marcel Zwahlen
- *Digital Epidemiology and Participatory surveillance: Methods and Applications*  
Dr. Daniela Paolotti, Dr. Ciro Cattuto
- *Mendelian randomization: moving from the one-sample to two-sample approach*  
Prof. George Davey Smith, Dr. Rebecca Richmond
- *Parametric Competing Risks and Multi-state models*  
Prof. Paul Lambert, Dr. Michael Crowther

Our website is now [open for bookings](#). The number of participants is limited – book early to avoid disappointment.

# Federal Council appoints Martina Hirayama as new SERI State Secretary



06.07.2018

The Federal Council has appointed Martina Hirayama as the new State Secretary for Education, Research and Innovation, effective 1 January 2019, to replace retiring Mauro Dell'Ambrogio.

Martina Hirayama will draw upon a broad background in research, teaching, entrepreneurship, and administration to lead the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI). She currently is president of the Institute Council of the [Federal Institute of Metrology](#), a member of the [Swiss National Science Foundation's](#) Foundation Council, vice president of the board of [Switzerland's innovation promotion agency Innosuisse](#), and since 2011 has been dean of the [Zürich University of Applied Sciences School of Engineering \(ZHAW\)](#), where she also is head of international affairs.

After obtaining her doctorate in technical sciences at the ETH Zürich and doing further graduate work in economics, Hirayama was a group leader at the Institute of Polymers at the ETH. She also cofounded and was CEO of a new coating technologies start-up through 2008. In 2003 she began teaching at ZHAW, where she developed and headed the field of polymer materials, and developed the Institute of Materials and Process Engineering.

As State Secretary for Education, Research and Innovation, Hirayama will lead the secretariat that must bring together the Confederation, cantons, professional organisations, and others to maintain and strengthen vocational and professional education and training, and academic education, and equip Switzerland's ERI system for the digital future.

## SERI press release

- [Federal Council appoints Martina Hirayama as new SERI State Secretary](#)

# SSPH+ Global PhD Program in Public Health Sciences (GlobalP3HS)



02.07.2018

Doctoral fellowships in public health sciences available for talented students from all over the world: first call launched on July 2, 2018.

[GlobalP3HS](#) is an innovative Swiss doctoral program designed to competitively recruit exceptionally talented students from all over the world. Young scientists interested in proposing, learning, and performing cutting-edge research in public health sciences and keen to become the next generation of public health leaders in both the academic and non-academic sector, are invited to apply for one of, in total, 50 doctoral fellowships of up to 42 months in duration.

Particularly welcomed and encouraged are applications under the sandwich model - a successful model to build sustainable research capacity in low and middle income countries (LMIC). The model includes a LMIC partnership for the PhD thesis, shared supervision, fieldwork and/or research stays in the LMIC.

## Conditions for participation

- Applicants must hold a Master's degree
- Applicants must fulfil the mobility rules of MSCA (coming from abroad)
- Applicants must find an SSPH+ Faculty member who agrees on acting as PhD supervisor
- Applicants must be eligible for a PhD at the Swiss university of their chosen supervisor

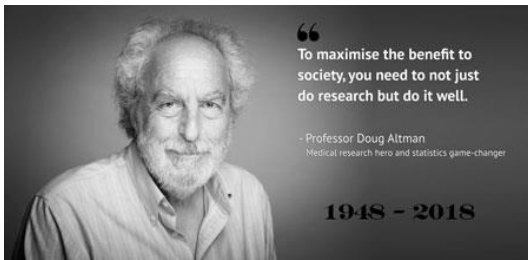
## Selection procedure

A total of 50 students are competitively selected based on an international review process. Applications are welcome from:

- 2 July to 12 October 2018 (Call 1)
- 3 December 2018 to 1 February 2019 (Call 2)
- 1 April to 28 June 2019 (Call 3)

Continue reading and/or apply on the [GlobalP3HS online platform](#).

# Doug Altman of Oxford University has died



06.06.2018

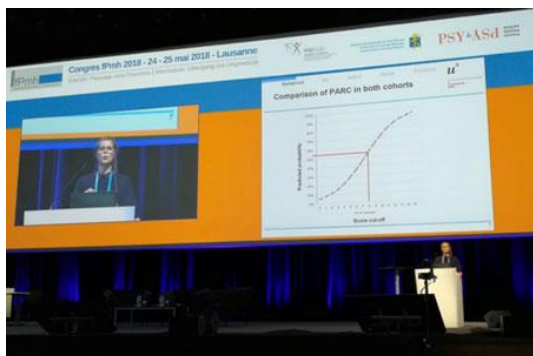
Doug Altman, founder of the Centre for Statistics in Medicine at Oxford University, the EQUATOR Network and driving force behind CONSORT, sadly passed away on Sunday 3 June 2018.

Matthias Egger (ISPM), Sven Trelle (CTU), Myriam Cevallos (coordinator of STROBE) and others at University of Bern collaborated with Doug over many years, most notably on the second and forthcoming third edition of "Systematic Reviews in Health Care", the CONSORT and STROBE statements and methodological research. "Doug hugely improved the methods and reporting of clinical research. He was a brilliant and generous statistician, and great company. He will be sorely missed" said Matthias.

Memories of Doug can be shared at <https://www.ndorms.ox.ac.uk/csm/memories-of-doug>.



# ISPM PhD student Eva Pedersen wins prize for best oral presentation



04.06.2018

[Eva Pedersen](#) won the prize for best oral presentation in the Swiss PedNet Sessions for Clinical Research in Paediatrics with her talk "The 10-item PARC tool to predict childhood asthma – an external validation."

The Predicting Asthma Risk in Children (PARC) tool uses information on respiratory symptoms in preschool children to predict occurrence of asthma at school age. It was developed using data from the Leicestershire Respiratory Cohort and Eva externally validated it in an independent cohort, the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC). The external validation showed that PARC had the same ability – that is, similar sensitivity and specificity – to distinguish sick from healthy children in the validation cohort. This suggests that the simple, noninvasive PARC tool is now ready to be tested in clinical practice. We are doing this in the Swiss Paediatric Airway Cohort ([www.spac-study.ch](http://www.spac-study.ch)), which includes respiratory outpatients from children's hospitals in Switzerland.

This validation study was funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, the Lung League St. Gallen, and the Allergiestiftung Gierok-Müller.

# Interview with Myrofora Goutaki and Rahel Kasteler for the Lung League Bern



25.05.2018

Myrofora Goutaki and Rahel Kasteler were interviewed by the Lung League Bern for their annual report.

[Dr. Goutaki](#) and [Dr. Kasteler](#) are post-doctoral research fellows and epidemiologists in the [research group for Child and Adolescent Health](#). Both work on different aspects of lung health. Their current project focuses on the harmonisation of follow-up care guidelines for pulmonary health surveillance after childhood cancer treatment. The Lung League Bern supported the project generously and focused the interview on their project work and on being a young researcher at the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine at the University of Bern.

[Interview with Myrofora Goutaki and Rahel Kasteler \(PDF, 387KB\)](#)

Read the full [Lung League Bern annual report](#).

## Julia Bohlius Teacher of the Year for the fourth year in a row



06.06.2018

For the fourth year in a row [Julia Bohlius](#) has been selected as «*Teacher of the Year*» in the three University MPH program.

Each year the program directors honor teachers responsible for the modules evaluated as outstanding by the students. For 2017, it was for the course «Einführung in systematische Reviews und Meta-Analysen».

# Ebola vaccine in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Matthias Egger in the Sonntagszeitung

SonntagsZeitung // «Paper» Leserangebote Leserreisen Leserbriefe Monatsquiz Abonnieren

## Ein Pieks gegen das Killervirus

Erstmals hilft ein Impfstoff, eine Ebolaepidemie einzudämmen. Schweizer haben ihn mitentwickelt.



Immunisiert wird jeder, der mit einem Ebola-kranken in Kontakt kam. Ein Mitarbeiter der Weltgesundheitsorganisation bereitet die Impfkampagne in Mbandaka im Kongo vor. Foto: AFP

### Artikel zum Thema

#### Ebola erreicht den Kongo-Highway



Mbandaka in der Demokratischen Republik Kongo hat einen Fall der tödlichen Krankheit gemeldet. Mehr...

Bernd Dörries, Bernd Uhlmann, 14.05.2018

#### 17 Tote bei Ebola-Ausbruch im Kongo

In mehreren Proben konnte in der Demokratischen Republik Kongo das Ebola-

05.06.2018

Ebola vaccination was begun last month as part of the swift international response to the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

President of the research council of the Swiss National Science Foundation and former ISPM director Matthias Egger, who was involved in the successful trials of the vaccine that began in late 2014 in Geneva and then in Guinea, explained the historic nature of the vaccine and its rapid deployment to contain the recent outbreak in the DRC to the *Sonntagszeitung*.

Read the full *Sonntagszeitung* article [«Ein Pieks gegen das Killervirus»](#) (in German)

Read the related publication [«Efficacy and effectiveness of an rVSV-vectored vaccine in preventing Ebola virus disease: final results from the Guinea ring vaccination, open-label, cluster-randomised trial \(Ebola Ça Suffit!\)»](#).

# ISPM assessment tool ready to be used in China



02.05.2018

An assessment tool to measure health literacy in youth populations that was developed by [Thomas Abel](#) and his ISPM colleagues (HLAT-8) has been translated into Chinese (c-HLAT-8).

Originally developed by combining health promotion theory and Swiss data, it was tested and found to be a reliable, valid, feasible instrument for measuring functional, interactive, and critical health literacy among Chinese students.

[Shuaijun Guo et al. 2018](#)

The HLAT is now available in five major languages: English, German, French, Italian and Chinese.

# The ISPM is moving



27.04.2018

After elaborate preparations the ISPM is finally moving to the newly renovated University building located at Mittelstrasse 43.

The move will take place in groups of approximately 20 people per day and the moving activities will take place in the following two periods:

- 30.4. – 4.5.2018
- 22.5. – 24.5.2018

The new location of the ISPM can be found as follows:

# News from the teaching office



06.04.2018

Thomas Abel has been selected as «*Teacher of 2017*» in the three University MPH program and an ISPM digital learning project has been selected for development.

[Thomas Abel](#) has been selected as «*Teacher of 2017*» in the three University MPH program for his course «*Grundlagen der Gesundheitswissenschaft und Sozialepidemiologie*». Each year the program directors honor teachers responsible for the modules evaluated as outstanding by the students.

The digital learning project «*Motivations- und Effizienzsteigerung beim Repetieren: Einführung von mehrstufigen Online-Quizen im Repetitorium in klinischer Epidemiologie und Biostatistik*» has been selected for development by the «*Förderung innovative Lehre*». Together with [Julia Bohlius](#) and [Nicole Steck](#), the teaching office will develop new online tools for fifth year medical students to refresh and deepen their knowledge in clinical epidemiology and biostatistics.



# New ISPM research project funded by SNF



04.04.2018

What works best? SNF funds the Research Synthesis Methods Group to develop advanced methods for ranking medical treatments (RaT)

The most critical question raised by patients and clinicians at the point of care is “what is the drug of choice for the given condition?”

To answer such a question, researchers perform a comparative effectiveness review by collecting, appraising and synthesizing all studies that compare treatments for the same disease. While clinicians and guideline developers unanimously agree that a treatment hierarchy is essential for public health decisions, methodologists currently debate several issues underpinning the ranking methods (primarily in the form of statistical models).

Georgia Salanti’s proposal to enhance the statistical methodology for Ranking Treatments (RaT) was developed in collaboration with Adriani Nikolakopoulou and Theodore Papakonstantinou. The SNF scheme “Projects” will fund two postdoctoral and one doctoral post for three years, starting in June.

The project aims to

- a. extend the existing statistical methodology to produce treatment hierarchies that account for multiple health outcomes and reflect clinically important treatment effects
- b. provide methods that appraise the robustness of the treatment hierarchy in the presence of compromised quality of the included studies.

The RaT project will address an urgent need to develop fit-for-purpose ranking metrics to generate treatment hierarchies for a variety of research and clinical questions and evaluate their robustness. It will extend the decision-making arsenal of evidence-based health care and public health with tools that support clinicians, policy makers and patients to make better decisions about the best treatments for a given condition.

# ISPM sets up a new Research Group on Migration and Health



In order to better coordinate on-going activities and to develop new projects, the ISPM is setting up a new Research Group on Migration and Health.

14.03.2018

Migration is a growing challenge and concern in our modern societies, especially if we consider public health related issues. In order to better coordinate on-going activities and to develop new projects, the ISPM is setting up a new Research Group on Migration and Health.

[Read more about the research Group on Migration and Health](#)

# Interview with Mazvita Sengayi at the CROI in Boston



14.03.2018

leDEA researcher Mazvita Sengayi (National Cancer Registry, National Health Laboratory Service, South Africa) was interviewed at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Boston.

Dr. Mazvita Sengayi, a senior epidemiologist at the National Health Laboratory Service in South Africa, completed her PhD degree at the ISPM in 2016. Mazvita collaborates with Professor Matthias Egger and Dr Julia Bohlius to study the epidemiology of HIV-related malignancies in South Africa. She received the Young Investigator Award at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in 2013 for work she did as a PhD student at the ISPM. She was recently interviewed at CROI 2018 on her journey from the time she received the award and how her research career has evolved since then.

# ISPM supports position statement against Federal Act on Tobacco Products



13.03.2018

The ISPM decided to support this initiative of SSPH+ concerning the Tobacco Products Act Consultation 2018.

We encourage all of you to send in a personal rejection.

Please send in this initiative of SSPH+ by March 23 to [dm@bag.admin.ch](mailto:dm@bag.admin.ch) and [tabakprodukte@bag.admin.ch](mailto:tabakprodukte@bag.admin.ch) with cc to: [vernehmlassungtabak@ssphplus.ch](mailto:vernehmlassungtabak@ssphplus.ch) as a rejection of the proposed Federal Act on Tobacco Products.

If you want to read up on this 2nd proposal of the Federal Council here is [the link to the official documents](#).

Statement templates

[Vorlage Stellungnahme "Tobacco Products Act Consultation 2018" \(WORD, 121KB\)](#)

[Modèle prise de position "Tobacco Products Act Consultation 2018" \(WORD, 129KB\)](#)

[Modello presa di posizione "Tobacco Products Act Consultation 2018" \(WORD, 130KB\)](#)

# ESTHER Switzerland News



05.03.2018

New Swiss projects and a new ESTHER Global Alliance web page.

## **New Round of ESTHER Switzerland Projects**

ESTHER Switzerland is continuing in its engagement of promoting institutional health partnerships. The new projects supported by ESTHER Switzerland are now published online: <https://www.esther-switzerland.ch/partnerships/>

The proposals of the 2017 Call were submitted to three independent external reviewers and to a rigorous selection process. For each project, you will find the title and partners, but also a more detailed factsheet that will help you to better understand the aims and scope of each project and the contact information to get in touch with the project's partners.

## **A new webpage for the ESTHER Alliance**

We also would like to draw your attention to the completely renovated webpage of the ESTHER Alliance for Global Health Partnerships: [www.esther.eu](http://www.esther.eu). On this webpage, you can learn more about the Alliance activities and about its members.

An important feature of the new Alliance webpage is its new online database of projects: [https://esther.eu/index.php/partnership\\_and\\_projects](https://esther.eu/index.php/partnership_and_projects). You can navigate the map, select a country and find out what projects are running (or are completed) in a country from various ESTHER partners. This database should help to learn about similar institutional health partnerships. The database will grow and include more projects with time. The new round of Swiss projects will be put online in the Alliance database during the next weeks.

For any information, please contact Mr Luciano Ruggia: [luciano.ruggia@ispm.unibe.ch](mailto:luciano.ruggia@ispm.unibe.ch)

# Network meta-analysis course in Kea island Greece



19.02.2018

We are happy to announce that registration for our network meta-analysis course in Kea April 28th – 30th is now open.

The Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine of the University of Bern organises a course on Network Meta-Analysis:

**Network meta-analysis – A project-based course using R April 28th – 30th, 2018 Kea Island | Greece**

## Course objectives

By the end of this 2.5 days course participants will be able to:

- Write a protocol for a network meta-analysis project
- Understand the assumptions underlying a joint synthesis of data from a network of trials
- Describe the role, potential and limitations of network meta-analysis
- Understand the principles, steps and statistical methods involved
- Undertake network meta-analysis using R
- Appraise the credibility of the results using a structured system
- Write a network meta-analysis article

## Course location

The course will take place in the small town Korissia, the port of the island of Kea. Korissia is easily accessible from Athens International Airport (approximately 2 hours).

## Faculty

Prof. Matthias Egger, Prof. Georgia Salanti, Dr. Dr. Orestis Efthimiou, Dr. Adriani Nikolakopoulou, Dr. Theodore Papakonstantinou University of Bern, Switzerland  
Dr. Anna Chaimani Paris Descartes University, France

More information, fees and registration

[nma-course.ispmbern.ch](http://nma-course.ispmbern.ch)

# ISPM's new director

14.02.2018

ISPM announces the appointment of its new director, Oscar H. Franco.



Prof. Franco obtained his MD at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá in 1998. He moved to the Netherlands to complete MSc and DSc degrees in clinical epidemiology and a PhD in public health and cardiovascular disease prevention (2005) at the Erasmus University Medical Center. Following a postdoc at Erasmus MC, he moved to the UK where he was a senior public health epidemiologist at Unilever England, assistant professor of public health at the University of Warwick, and then director of the MPhil program and clinical lecturer in public health at the University of Cambridge.

In 2012 Prof. Franco returned to Erasmus University Medical Center where he is a professor of preventive medicine and the principal investigator of the cardiovascular epidemiology group. He also founded and directs the Rotterdam Intergenerational Ageing Research Center, ErasmusAGE ([www.erasmusage.com](http://www.erasmusage.com)), and he is a cofounder and the CEO of Erasmus Epidemiology Resources ([erasmusepidemiologyresources.com](http://erasmusepidemiologyresources.com)).

A fellow of, inter alia, the European Society of Cardiology and St Edmunds' College at the University of Cambridge, Prof. Franco was awarded the Dutch national public health prize of 2005. Prof. Franco is widely published with well over 500 publications and, not surprisingly, an H-index of 62.

We are excited that Oscar Franco will formally begin his ISPM directorship on 1 June, 2018, and welcome him to Bern.



# Enrolment for new CAS in Clinical Research is open



24.01.2018

We are happy to announce that enrolment for our new CAS in Clinical Research is now open!

The first cohort will start April 26, 2018. [Continue reading](#)

# Think before you submit

## horizons

The Swiss Research Magazine

23.01.2018

Column by ISPM Director Matthias Egger in the December 2017 issue of *Horizon*.

*By Matthias Egger*

In an email today, the International Journal of Research on Neuroscience has invited me to submit an article in order to make the results of my “groundbreaking” research accessible to a broad readership. Open access, of course. In the eyes of the journal’s editors, I’m an “esteemed researcher” and a “leader in the field”, even though I’ve never actually done any research in the neurosciences.



It’s obvious that we’re dealing here with a ‘predatory journal’ employing an exploitative open-access publication model. It charges a fee to publish articles, though without any serious peer review or editorial support by competent editors. Today, there are some 8,000 such fraudulent ‘journals’ across the world, and they produce more than 400,000 articles every year. They are not just a nuisance in your inbox, but a threat to scientific integrity and to the open-access publication model that the SNSF and other funding institutions are trying to promote.

Contrary to popular opinion, these journals are not just a problem in Africa, China or India. A new study in *Nature* has investigated almost 2,000 biomedical articles from over 200 predatory journals, and it turns out that roughly a quarter of the corresponding authors are from the USA and other Western countries. The funding agencies mentioned most often are the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The authors of this study are calling for research funding institutions to refrain from giving any money for publishing in such fraudulent journals. They also believe that the publication lists of funding applicants should not include any articles published there.

Are Switzerland and the SNSF also affected? Almost certainly. For this reason, we are examining our own data to this end, and we will also study the publicly accessible data contained in the abovementioned study. The SNSF is in a position to keep a check on such matters, and is keen to do so. But in my opinion, the responsibility lies primarily with the authors, who ought to recognise and avoid such predatory journals. One important resource in this regard is the website [thinkchecksubmit.org](http://thinkchecksubmit.org), which provides a checklist to help less experienced researchers choose suitable, trustworthy journals for their articles. You too can help to make this initiative better known: download their poster, and put it on the notice board of your break room.

[Matthias Egger](#) is the President of the National Research Council and an epidemiologist at the University of Bern.

Here you can find [the original article](#).