

ISPM News Archive 2019

CAS in Sex- and Gender-Specific Medicine - Registration open



18.12.2019 – The first course of advanced studies in Sex- and Gender-Specific Medicine starts in May 2020. Registration is now open at www.gender-medicine.ch.

The first CAS in gender medicine in Switzerland teaches the concepts of sex- and gender-specific medicine and the impact that biological sex and sociocultural gender have on health and health care. It is aimed at people with a master's degree in medicine or a related field who want to deepen their knowledge of the sex- and gender-specific differences within medicine and keep their work in line with the latest evidence.

The CAS was launched jointly by the Universities of Bern and Zurich. On behalf of the Department of Visceral Surgery and Medicine, Inselspital Bern, ISPM is responsible for the program coordination. [Professor Oscar Franco](#), Director of the ISPM, [Professor Nicola Low](#), and [Dr. Taulant Muka](#) will also be teaching in the course.

For more information please visit the website: www.gender-medicine.ch

[Flyer «CAS in geschlechtsspezifischer Medizin » \(PDF, 1.0 MB\)](#)

ESTHER Switzerland is opening a new Call for Proposals

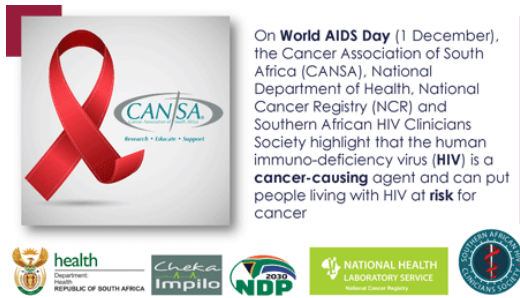


18.12.2019 – ESTHER Switzerland is a network that engages Swiss hospitals and other health institutions in effective and sustainable North-South partnerships. Since 2016, the ESTHER Switzerland Secretariat is hosted by the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM) in Bern.

Since 2011, Switzerland is member of the European ESTHER Alliance that promotes institutional health partnerships worldwide. The Alliance defines institutional health partnerships as “collaborative relationships between at least two institutions based on trust, equity and mutual interest to work as peers towards common objectives. They contribute to the improvement of health services through reciprocal institutional strengthening, capacity building and health workforce development”. ESTHER partners work mostly in low and middle-income countries (LMIC) to tackle priority issues for health and help achieve the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs). The focus lies on SDG 3 and 17.

For more information please visit the website: www.esther-switzerland.ch/grants

Highlighting HIV and cancer in commemoration of World AIDS Day



10.12.2019 – Results from a collaborative research between the ISPM and the South African National Cancer Registry has resulted in a nationwide campaign on HIV and cancer in South Africa.

The research article titled; «The burden of cancers associated with HIV in the South African public health sector, 2004-2014; a record linkage study» has been used as the central information source for the campaign. The results from the study highlighted that people living with HIV were at a higher risk of Kaposi sarcoma, non-Hodgkin lymphoma, cervical cancer, conjunctival cancer, other anogenital cancers and squamous cell carcinoma of the skin. South Africa has a high burden of HIV with approximately 7.1 million people currently living with HIV. This is a large proportion of the population with a unique pattern of cancers. The main objective of the HIV and cancer campaign is to communicate to people living with HIV the additional cancer risk that they have and the signs and symptoms associated with these cancers.

This is a great example of how research can be translated to action that can impact the health outcomes of the people under study, in this case people living with HIV.

[CANSA HIV and Cancer Infographics 2019 \(PDF, 899KB\)](#)

Uniform and complete cancer registration in Switzerland



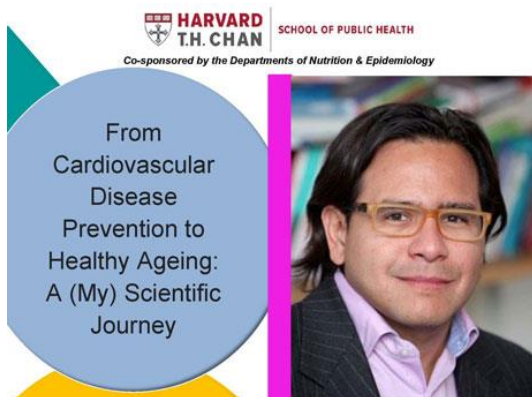
09.12.2019 – The Cancer Registration Act enters into force on 1 January 2020. Press release of the National Agency of Cancer Registration (NACR) and the Childhood Cancer Registry (ChCR).

We are almost there. The Cancer Registration Act (CRA, RS 818.33) comes into force on 1 January 2020. It stipulates the uniform and complete registration of cancer in Switzerland. Such a systematic registration contributes to a better understanding of cancer and helps to optimise cancer treatment. The NACR and ChCR media releases contain further interesting information on the new Cancer Registration Act.

Links to the media releases

- [Krebserkrankungen in der Schweiz einheitlich und vollständig erfassen](#)
- [Cas de maladies oncologiques en Suisse répertoriés de manière uniforme et exhaustive](#)
- [Registrazione uniforme e completa delle malattie tumorali in Svizzera](#)

Strengthening the cooperation ISPM, Bern and Harvard



09.12.2019 – On December 11, 2019, [Oscar Franco](#), Director of ISPM Bern will be giving a seminar at the [Harvard T.H. Chan school of Public Health](#), co-sponsored by the departments of epidemiology and nutrition. During his visit he will strengthen the cooperation between ISPM, the University of Bern, and Harvard.

Innovative Teaching at ISPM



04.12.2019 – ISPM not only does innovative research, but innovative teaching, too. The ISPM Teaching Office joined the University of Bern's Promoting Innovative Teaching (FIL) project and received funding to develop and implement an adaptive online quiz for medical students in their fifth year.

[Nicole Steck](#) and [Julia Bohlius](#) developed its content, and the Institute for Medical Teaching supported the ISPM Teaching Office in the technical implementation. The resulting e-learning tool checks knowledge in clinical epidemiology and diagnostics in an interesting way.

Surmounting some unrelated technical issues, the start of the quiz in the Repetitorium in Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the end of November went well. The students liked the quiz and were motivated to answer questions on study types, effect sizes, confidence intervals, and the interpretation of diagnostic testing. In the coming weeks, more students in small groups will test their knowledge in the adaptive online quiz and proceed at their own pace. A tutor will be available not only for individual questions, but also can see online where the students struggle most and discuss common difficulties with the groups.

[More information about Promoting Innovative Teaching](#)

CAS in Clinical Research in Health Care Organisations – registration open



02.12.2019 - The next course of advanced studies in clinical research starts with the kickoff meeting on the 23rd of April 2020.

Registration is now open on
www.cas-clinicalresearch.ch/enrolment

In the CAS in Clinical Research you will learn to plan and conduct clinical research projects for a well-defined re-search question, to describe data from clinical studies, and to apply statistical methods and regression models commonly used in clinical research. The CAS also covers prognostic research and systematic reviews of multiple studies and meta-analyses of their results. You will also learn how best to communicate the results of clinical research.

The program involves approximately 450 hours of work in modules that are generally 3-day courses. Completion of the CAS usually takes 2 years, but it can be done in 1 or 3 years, and leads to the acquisition of 15 ECTS points. Participants also have the opportunity to attend elective modules according to their particular interests.

Flyer

[Flyer «Certificate of Advanced Studies in Clinical Research in Health Care Organisations» \(PDF, 292KB\)](#)

Links

[Factsheet page «CAS Clinical Research» on ISPM website](#)

[«CAS Clinical Research» website](#)

GHS Symposium 2019 Best Poster winner

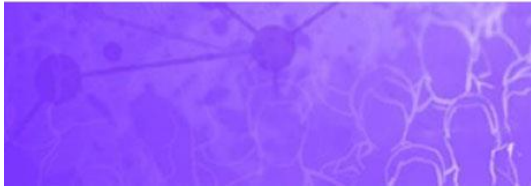


25.11.2019 – Virginia Chiocchia, PhD student in the Evidence Synthesis Methods group at the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM), won the Prize for Best Poster at the 11th Symposium GHS held at Parkhotel Gunten on 19th and 20th November 2019.

The Graduate School of Health Sciences (GHS) organizes an annual Symposium which offers PhD candidates an opportunity to present their research work to their peers. All students are required to participate twice during their doctoral period with a poster and an oral presentation. Every year a prize for the best poster and one for the best talk are awarded.

Virginia's poster gave an overview of her PhD project, including some initial results. Her work, supervised by Prof. Georgia Salanti and funded by SNSF, focuses on methods for ranking competing treatments in network meta-analysis.

Four ISPM Professors among the list of Highly Cited Researchers 2018



22.11.2019 – Professors Georgia Salanti, Matthias Egger, Marcel Zwahlen and Oscar H. Franco from ISPM Bern have been included in the 2018 list of world's most influential researchers.

This list recognizes world-class researchers selected for their exceptional research performance demonstrated by production of multiple highly cited papers that rank in the top 1% by citations for field and year in *Web of Science*.

Further details can be found here: hcr.clarivate.com

Two new PhD students in Sexual and Reproductive Health



31.07.2019 – Diana Buitrago won a Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship and a SSPH+ GlobalP3HS Fellowship to study «The science of prevalence». Ranjana Gigi won a Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences MD-PhD award to study «Genital tract infections, the vaginal microbiome and preterm birth in South Africa».

Diana Buitrago, from Colombia, aims to develop an evidence-based tool to assess the risk of bias in prevalence studies. Prevalence is a widely used measurement in the field of epidemiology that describes the frequency of a condition in a defined group of people at a given time. Many decisions made in public health, and in the daily practice of healthcare are based on information derived from prevalence studies. But there is no universally accepted tool that researchers can use to assess the risk of bias in studies of prevalence. Diana will develop the concept for an initial Risk of Bias in prevalence studies tool, examine empirical evidence for risk of bias in a meta-epidemiological study, and then refine the tool, based on her findings. Diana already has experience of systematic reviews from her masters thesis in clinical epidemiology and her work with the Cochrane Collaboration. [Prof. Nicola Low](#) at ISPM Bern will be Diana's main supervisor. Prof. Georgia Salanti will provide support for statistical aspects of this project.

Ranjana Gigi will complete her final examinations in medicine at the University of Zurich in September 2019. She will investigate the role of vaginal and cervical reproductive tract and sexually transmitted infections, and their co-occurrence with vaginal microbiota, in preterm birth (<37 weeks of gestation). Ranjana will conduct a cross-sectional study at Frere Hospital in the Eastern Cape in South Africa. Amongst this population, about 1 in 5 women has a preterm birth, 1 in 3 women has HIV infection and reproductive tract and sexually transmitted infections are very common. Prevention of the burden of disease from preterm birth is a global health priority, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Ranjana's study addresses gaps in the evidence base about the descriptive epidemiology of genital tract infections in pregnancy and their association with preterm birth in the era of molecular methods for the detection of pathogens, pathobionts and microbiota. Prof. Nicola Low at ISPM Bern will be Ranjana's main supervisor. Prof. Janneke van de Wijgert at Utrecht Medical Center, the Netherlands and the University of Liverpool, UK is her co-supervisor.

For more information about the award schemes:

[Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships](#)

[SSPH+ Global P3HS programme](#)

[Swiss National MD-PhD programme](#)

Network meta-analyses: why, what, and how.



05.11.2019 – Do you know why network meta-analyses (NMA) is important? Do you wonder what steps are included in NMAs? In today's episode, Alexander Schacht and Benjamin Piske from The Effective Statistician discuss with Georgia key assumptions for network meta-analyses, tools to run an NMA and resources at the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine.

Listen to this episode to know more about how you can leverage NMAs and share this with others who might learn from it!

<https://theeffectivestatistician.com/network-meta-analyses-why-what-and-how/>

The new Climate Change & Health research group at ISPM has just started



04.10.2019 – Our new research group on Climate Change and Health, led by Ana M. Vicedo-Cabrera, has just been launched. The group will investigate the impacts of climate change on health, with particular focus on the evaluation of adaptation strategies, mitigation policies and air pollution co-benefits.

The new interdisciplinary [research group on Climate Change and Health](#) will study the impacts of climate change on health, including the effects of temperature, urban heat island, extreme weather events, air pollution and vector-borne diseases on several health outcomes in Switzerland and overseas. Research activities and output of the group will be mainly focused on the assessment of potential adaptation and mitigation strategies, and their translation into health impact projections. A novel research line will also address the etiological mechanisms explaining the association between heat and specific health outcomes, such as cardiometabolic diseases.

The research group is led by [Ana M. Vicedo-Cabrera](#), an environmental epidemiologist with expertise in studies on temperature-related health impacts, air pollution effects and development of epidemiological methods. She has previously worked at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute in Basel, and more recently as Assistant Professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

The group is also part of the Oeschger Center for Climate Change Research of the University of Bern. It will help bridging the gap between epidemiology and public health and climate sciences, and will provide an excellent platform for collaboration between different disciplines working on climate change research.

SSPH+ ScienceFlashTalk Winner



10.09.2019 – Serra Lem Asangbeh, PhD student at the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM), won the 2019 SSPH+ ScienceFlashTalk Award at the Swiss Public Health Conference in Winterthur on 28 August 2019.

The SSPH+ ScienceFlashTalk aims to strengthen students' skills to communicate their research to a broad audience.

Following a short training in speed-talking, each of the 15 SSPH+ PhD students who participated produced a 3-minute video on their research topic. A jury consisting of journalists and PR professionals selected eight finalists who presented their speed-talks to an audience, and a winner was chosen.

Serra's PhD is embedded in an [international research project](#) funded by the R4D program (www.r4d.ch) to improve cervical cancer screening in women living with HIV, PI Julia Bohlius.

Watch Serra's video here:

Georgia Salanti was elected president of the Society for Research Synthesis Methodology



President-Elect

Georgia Salanti



Georgia Salanti studied Mathematics in Greece, Epidemiology in Belgium and Sociology in the UK. She has a PhD in Statistics from the Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich in Germany. She is now associate professor in Biostatistics and Epidemiology at the University of Bern in Switzerland.

22.08.2019 – The Society for Research Synthesis Methodology is a cross disciplinary society that supports and promotes the development and use of innovative and robust methods of research synthesis. SRSM publishes the journal Research Synthesis Methods. Together with Matthias Egger they will also organise the 15th annual meeting of the Society for Research Synthesis Methodology in Bern from June 30 through July 2, 2020.

To find out more about the Society for Research Synthesis Methodology visit

<http://www.srsm.org>

For the journal Research Synthesis Methods visit

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/17592887>

SNSF Ambizione Grant on upper airways disease in Primary Ciliary Dyskinesia



22.08.2019 – Myrofora Goutaki has been awarded a Swiss National Science Foundation Ambizione grant to characterise and provide first evidence for the management of upper airways disease in patients with primary ciliary dyskinesia in a large multi-national project. Primary ciliary Dyskinesia (PCD) is a rare genetic, multi-organ disease, which affects primarily the airways. Almost all PCD patients suffer from upper respiratory symptoms (ear-nose-throat, ENT) that are often severe, yet research related to the upper airways is scarce.

Myrofora will characterise ENT disease in PCD patients of all ages, study how it is associated with lower respiratory disease, and identify determinants of disease prognosis. To achieve this, she will develop and analyse data from EPIC-PCD (ENT Prospective International Cohort of PCD patients), a prospective multi-centre cohort embedded in routine clinical care. In addition, in collaboration with PCD experts in several European centres and with the Clinical Trials Unit in Bern, she will lead a multi-centre clinical trial to provide first evidence for the management of chronic rhinosinusitis in PCD patients, one of the most common problems of these patients that affects severely their quality of daily life. During the project, she will also collaborate closely with the PCD patient organisations in Europe.

This project aligns with national and European efforts to intensify collaborative research in rare diseases, focusing on an important area of PCD where more efforts are needed. It combines observational and interventional approaches to understand ENT disease in PCD and provide new, robust, clinically relevant evidence to better inform medical management of patients.

[Myrofora Goutaki](#)

Read this before it's out of date: Zika Open Access Project in @NatureIndex



**Zika Open
Access Project**



02.08.2019 – Living systematic reviews can keep up to date with research on Zika virus, a fast-moving field. Journalist Jon Brock features the PhD project of ISPM PhD student [Michel Counotte](#) «Zika virus: causality, open science and risks of emerging infectious diseases»

Jon Brock reports that our first systematic review examining evidence for the causal link between Zika virus and neurological complications of microcephaly and Guillain-Barré syndrome was out of date by the time it was published. 'The team set to work again and just over a year later published a second Zika systematic review. Knowing that this would also be immediately obsolete, they announced that they were transitioning to a «living systematic review».'

Our project on the Zika virus causality evidence is an open access, open science project. The living systematic review follows the definition developed by Prof. Julian Elliott of the Transforming Evidence project in Australia as «high quality, up-to-date online summaries of health research, updated as new research becomes available, and enabled by improved production efficiency and adherence to the norms of scholarly communication.» Prof. Elliott, an ISPM collaborator and former seminar speaker, is also featured in the article.

[Nature Index article](#)

[SNF project](#)

[Living systematic reviews](#)

[Zika Open Access Project on Twitter](#)

[Jon Brock on Twitter](#)

[Nicola Low on Twitter](#)

National Strategy against Cancer – «every number is being used»

Nationale Strategie gegen Krebs |
Stratégie nationale contre le cancer

2014 – 2020

23.07.2019 – The Swiss Childhood Cancer Registry (SCCR) – a success story since its foundation in 1976. A challenge with the cancer registration law coming into force in 2020.

Co-leaders Claudia Kühni and Verena Pfeiffer report on commitment, wishes and concerns for the restructuring.

[Newsletter message «National Strategy against Cancer»](#)

[Interview with Claudia Kühni and Verena Pfeiffer](#)

on www.nsk-krebsstrategie.ch

Professor Oscar H Franco appointed as Adjunct Professor at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health



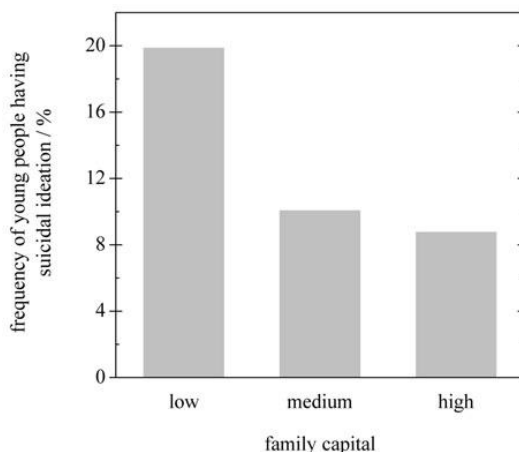
10.07.2019 – Professor Oscar H Franco, Director of the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM) in Bern, has been appointed as Adjunct Professor at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

This will further strengthen the link between ISPM and the [T.H. Chan School of Public Health](https://www.hs-niederrhein.de/t_h_chan_school_of_public_health) at Harvard.

Suicide ideation continues to be high in Swiss young adults



08.07.2019 – Suicide ideation is a well-known risk factor contributing to early mortality in young adults. The long-term project, «Young Adult Survey Switzerland» (YASS) 2014/15 has shown that the proportion of Swiss young men with suicidal thoughts has since 2010/11 remained fairly stable, and high, at about 12%.



Positive educational experiences appear to be an important resource for mental health. But suicidal thoughts occur especially frequently in young men who feel overwhelmed not only in their work but in education or training that involves repeating school years or assignment to special classes. Family capital – an aggregate of the economic, cultural, and social resources in the family – is also associated with suicidal ideation, which is higher among young adults in families with low family capital than it is among those whose families have high family capital.

Mental health problems are social problems. Policy and planning in all relevant sectors, in particular education and training, should address this fact and implement measures to reduce the prevalence of suicidal ideation. The findings of YASS offer a foundation on which to build successful youth policy.

ISPM is one of the core participants in the YASS consortium. Among its other contributions, ISPM has contributed questionnaire development and data analysis, and Thomas Abel has led the YASS topic «Health and Sport».

[Young Adult Survey Switzerland 2019 – Band 2 \(PDF, 9.5 MB\)](#)

Agreement on joint academic and scientific activities focused on cardiovascular disease prevention

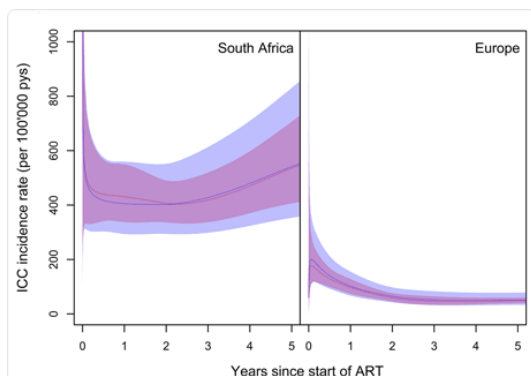


26.06.2019 - The Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM) and the University of Bern signed an agreement with the Federal State Budgetary Organization National Cardiology Research Center of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation. The objective of this agreement is to develop joint academic and scientific activities mainly focused on cardiovascular disease prevention.

On the picture:

- Sergey A. Boytsov – General Director
- Nana V. Pogosova – Deputy General Director for Research and Preventive Cardiology
- Oscar H Franco – Director ISPM
- Hugo Saner – Adjunct Professor ISPM

Global disparities in cervical cancer rates among women with HIV



24.06.2019 – A study by an international group of researchers led by a team at the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Bern, found that the incidence rates of cervical cancer are particularly high among women living with HIV in South Africa or Latin America.

For this study recently published in the International Journal of Cancer, researchers used data from a collaboration between global HIV cohort research networks to compare cervical cancer rates in 45 countries across Europe, South Africa, Latin, and North America among women living with HIV who initiated antiretroviral therapy between 1996 and 2014. Among 64,231 women included in the analysis, 356 incident cervical cancer cases were diagnosed. At 5 years after initiation of antiretroviral therapy, cervical cancer rates were more than double in Latin America and 11 times higher in South Africa than in Europe, but similar in North America. Older age and advanced immunodeficiency at initiation of antiretroviral therapy increased the risk of developing cervical cancer.

The researchers noted that improving access to early antiretroviral treatment and effective cervical cancer screening among women living with HIV should be key parts of efforts to reduce global cancer-related health disparities.

[Read the abstract on PubMed](#)

Figure adapted from Rohner E, Bütikofer L, Schmidlin K, et al. Cervical cancer risk in women living with HIV across four continents: A multicohort study. Int J Cancer. 2019 Jun 19. doi: 10.1002/ijc.32260.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Zeltner joins ISPM as Honorary Professor



13.06.2019 – Prof. Dr. Thomas Zeltner has an outstanding career in public health. Since 1992 he has been Professor of Public Health at the University of Bern and is a Visiting Scientist at the Harvard School of Public Health (Boston). He serves as Deputy Chair of the University Council of the Medical University of Vienna (Austria).

He chairs the Swiss Research Institute for Public Health and Addiction (Zürich) and the Advisory Board of the Global Health Center at the Graduate Institute in Geneva. From 1991 to 2009, he was Director-General of the Federal Office of Public Health of Switzerland, the National Health and Public Health Authority, and Secretary of State for Health of Switzerland.

[Prof. Dr. Thomas Zeltner](#) is now joining the ISPM Team. We look forward to profit from his wide experience.

Primary prevention of cardiovascular diseases for Albanian-speaking migrants living in Switzerland



12.06.2019 – In the framework of a new pilot project between the Research Group on Migration and Health and [Diaspora TV Switzerland](#), we produced a video on the primary prevention of cardiovascular diseases for Albanian-speaking migrants living in Switzerland, with the collaboration of Dr. Taulant Muka, Leader of the [Research Group on Cardiometabolic Health](#).

Videos «by migrants for migrants» to address directly the information and prevention needs of migrant's communities is an effective way to spread information about important health issues, in particular NCDs, where relevant information has been insufficient so far. With Diaspora TV Switzerland we plan to produce more similar videos in the future.

ISPM PhD student Carmen de Jong wins prize for best oral presentation



12.06.2019 – Carmen de Jong won the prize for best oral presentation of the SwissPedNet Translational & Clinical Research session with her talk «Diagnosing asthma accurately in school-aged children suspected to have asthma» at the Swiss Conference for Pediatrics (SGP).

There are little data on the usefulness of different tests to diagnose asthma in children.

We assessed the contribution of a detailed history and a variety of diagnostic tests for diagnosing asthma in children.

We studied children aged 6-16 years referred consecutively for evaluation of suspected asthma to two pulmonary outpatient clinics in Basel and St. Gallen. Symptoms were assessed by parental questionnaire. The clinical evaluation included skin prick tests, measurement of fractional exhaled nitric oxide (FeNO), spirometry, bronchodilator reversibility and bronchial provocation tests (BPT) by exercise, methacholine, and mannitol. Asthma was diagnosed by the physicians at the end of the visit. We assessed diagnostic accuracy of symptoms and tests by calculating sensitivity, specificity, positive and negative predictive values, and area under the curve (AUC).

Of the 111 participants, 80 (72%) were diagnosed with asthma. The combined sensitivity and specificity (sensitivity/specificity) was highest for reported frequent wheeze (>3 attacks/year) (0.44/0.90), awakening due to wheeze (0.41/0.90), and wheeze triggered by pollen (0.46/0.83) or by pets (0.29/0.99). Of the diagnostic tests, the AUC was highest for FeNO measurement (0.80) and BPT by methacholine (0.81) or exercise (0.74), and lowest for FEV1 (0.62) and FEV1/FVC (0.66), assessed by spirometry.

This study suggests that specific questions about triggers and severity of wheeze, and measurement of FeNO and BPT by methacholine or exercise contribute more to the diagnosis of asthma in school-aged children than spirometry, bronchodilator reversibility and, skin prick tests and other BPTs.

This research was funded by Swiss National Science Foundation: 32003B_162820, AstraZeneca (Switzerland), the Lung League St. Gallen and the Schmidheiny Foundation (Heerbrugg, St. Gallen).

[Awards 2019 overview on swisspednet.ch](https://www.swisspednet.ch/Awards2019)

Two members of the ISPM staff nominated Fellows of SSPH+



20.05.2019 – Two members of the ISPM staff have been nominated Fellows of SSPH+: [Taulant Muka](#), Leader of the [Research Group on Cardiometabolic Health](#), and [Luciano Ruggia](#), Leader of the [Research Group on Migration and Health](#).



The title SSPH+ Fellow is granted ex officio to the public health sciences professors recruited by the Foundation universities (= SSPH+ faculty) as well as to the academic directors of the SSPH+ training programs (PhD, MAS, DAS, CAS, and seasonal schools). Upon request of an SSPH+ Fellow, experts active in the SSPH+ fields of public health can be granted the title of SSPH+ Fellow.

See the complete list of SSPH+ Faculty members and Fellows [on the SSPH+ website](http://www.ssp-h.ch).

Inauguration of the Bern Center for Precision Medicine (BCPM)



17.05.2019 – Precision medicine “tailored” to individual patients is regarded as the medicine of the future. The new Bern Center for Precision Medicine will exploit synergies and strengthen the medicinal location in Bern. The Bern Center for Precision Medicine is an initiative founded by the Canton, the University, and the University Hospital of Bern.

Precision medicine strives to identify the right patient and therapy at the right time. The BCPM will establish the regulatory, technical, clinical, ethical, and economic framework to create a robust precision medicine approach to treating our patients in health and disease.

The Bern Center for Precision Medicine is headed by the management board (Zentrumsleitung). Members are:

- Prof. Dr. Mark Rubin: Director of the Department for Biomedical Research (DBMR) and head of the management board. Prof Rubin was the founding director of the Engländer Institute for Precision Medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine and co-leader of the All of Us program (U.S. National Precision Medicine Program) for New York City before being recruited to Bern.
- Prof. Dr. Claudia Kuehni: Head of a research group at the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM). Member of the management board.
- Prof. Dr. Tosso Leeb: Head of the Institute of Genetics at the Vetsuisse Faculty. Member of the management board.
- Prof Dr. Carlo Largiadèr: Vice Director of the Institute of Clinical Chemistry at the Inselspital; Bern university hospital. Member of the management board.
- Dr. Rémy Bruggmann: Head of the Interfaculty Bioinformatics Unit. Member of the management board.

The management board is supported by Timo Staub, MSc, chief operating officer of the Bern Center for Precision Medicine.



Management board of the BCPM (from left to right): Prof. Dr. Tosso Leeb, Prof. Dr. Mark A. Rubin, Prof. Dr. Claudia Kühni, Prof. Dr. Carlo Largiadèr, Dr. Rémy Bruggmann. Image: BCPM, University of Bern

The Bern Center for Precision Medicine (BCPM) of the University of Bern and the Inselspital, University Hospital Bern, will be officially opened on Monday, May 20, 2019.

[«Einladung zur Einweihung des Bern Center for Precision Medicine»](#)

Link to the official media release

A photograph of two broken cigarettes lying on a reflective surface against a dark background. The cigarette on the left is broken at the bottom, with the filter and the lower part of the paper separated from the rest of the cigarette. The cigarette on the right is broken in the middle, with the filter and the lower part of the paper separated from the rest of the cigarette. Both cigarettes are lit, with a small flame visible at the bottom of the filter. The reflective surface shows a clear reflection of the cigarettes.

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Read the articles in [Le Temps](#) and [NZZ](#)

Teacher of the year 2018 in Master of Public Health

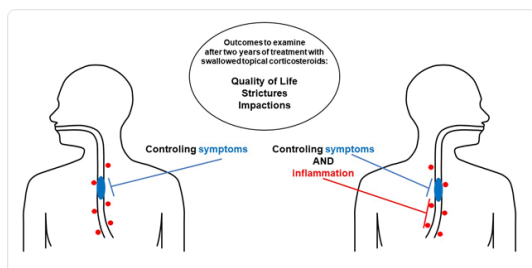


06.05.2019 - [Julia Bohlius](#) has been awarded as «Teacher of the year 2018» in the [three University MPH program](#) for her course «Einführung in systematische Reviews und Meta-Analysen».



Julia's comment: «I am very grateful and I am happy to say that my course on systematic reviews and meta-analyses is one of many courses offered at the Public Health inter-university program that received very high scores from the students. This underscores the high teaching quality of many of the courses offered in the different modules, certificates of advanced studies and the overall Master of Public Health program. I am proud to be part of a thriving program and a faculty, that is keen to share their knowledge and teach the next generation of leaders in public health.»

SNSF Grant on quality of care in eosinophilic esophagitis



05.04.2019 - [Ekaterina Safroneeva](#) has been awarded a Swiss National Science Foundation grant to develop process-of-care measures and identify long-term treatment targets for adults with eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE). Increasingly recognized though not commonly seen, EoE is a chronic, immune-mediated disease in which untreated inflammation leads to esophageal remodeling with stricture formation and food bolus impactions.

Patients with diseases such as EoE may not always receive optimal quality of care as they pass through the care continuum. In the first part of her project, Ekaterina will work with other international EoE experts to develop quality indicators of process of care that are consistent with clinical practice guidelines. She then will assess the current standard of care among adults with EoE who are enrolled in the Swiss EoE Cohort Study

Although it is important to know when clinical care deviates from indicated, evidence-based care, it is even more important that the care leads to good patient outcomes. Clinicians need to know whether EoE treatment targeting inflammation and symptoms yields better long-term outcomes than symptom-driven treatment alone.

Thus, in the second part of the project Ekaterina will collaborate with the Clinical Trials Unit and gastroenterologists at various Swiss university hospitals to identify appropriate target(s) of treatment that lead to favorable long-term outcomes for EoE patients. In a two-year randomized CONSEIL (CONtrolling Symptoms and EsoPhageal InFLammation) trial of swallowed topical corticosteroid maintenance treatment in adult EoE patients, outcomes will be compared in two groups: those in whom symptoms alone and those in whom both inflammation and symptoms will be controlled.

If Ekaterina's hypothesis is correct, targeting both inflammation and symptoms will result in better outcomes, including improved quality of life and fewer strictures and food impactions, than symptom-driven care alone. This study will pave the way for precision medicine approaches to tailor and individualize EoE therapies based upon the best level of evidence possible and much needed definitions of long-term treatment outcomes in EoE.

Teacher of the year 2018



02.04.2019 - [Thomas Abel](#) has been selected as «Teacher of 2018» in the three University MPH program for his course «Grundlagen der Gesundheitswissenschaft und Sozialepidemiologie».

Thomas's comment: "I feel honored however, I think this reward should go to the whole teaching team and the students who were ready to so strongly engage in the theories and evidence we addressed. This 3-days course has a focus on Equity and Health: it stresses a comprehensive understanding of health and its determinants, with the aim to promote just and fair opportunities for health and well-being for all populations. This appears ever more important today, at a time when those principles of Public Health are increasingly at stake."

Each year the program directors honor teachers responsible for the modules evaluated as outstanding by the students.

Report about Medicus Mundi Switzerland (MMS) in Television



25.03.2019 - MMSs new manifesto [«Health for all in one generation»](#) as well as the work of the network MMS attracted the attention of Ticino television and was presented in a multi-minute report by the broadcaster Il Quotidiano. ISPM is one of the 50 organizations members of the MMS network.

Luciano Ruggia of the ISPM and Board Member of MMS, Kaspar Wyss (Swiss TPH) and Martin Leschhorn (Managing Director of MMS) report how the close cooperation between Swiss research institutions and non-governmental organizations in the MMS network improves access to health care for disadvantaged groups in Switzerland and around the world. The commitment of network members to the right to health and greater equity in global health is central to the work of Medicus Mundi Switzerland.

[View the report on www.rsi.ch](http://www.rsi.ch)

(Luciano Ruggia/ISPM speaking from 3:00)

ISPM2030 – Vision, Aim, Mission

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Vision, Aim, Mission

2018 report



ISPM2030 builds upon the Institute's strengths and already existing excellence in teaching and research to further capitalize on these assets.

ISPM2030 is less a charter for change than it is for addition, transformation, and conscientious development that builds greatness upon greatness to maintain excellence.

[ISPM2030 – Vision, Aim, Mission \(PDF, 3.9 MB\)](#)

Portrait article about Matthias Egger in journal «The Lancet. Infectious diseases.»



14.03.2019 - A portrait article about [Matthias Egger](#) was published in the March issue of the journal «The Lancet. Infectious diseases.». In the same issue, the publication [«Drug susceptibility testing and mortality in patients treated for tuberculosis in high-burden countries: a multicentre cohort study»](#) was also published.

Links

[«Matthias Egger: a man with a method»](#)

Portrait in «The Lancet. Infectious diseases.»

[«Drug susceptibility testing and mortality in patients treated for tuberculosis in high-burden countries: a multicentre cohort study»](#)

Publication profile article on PubMed

CAS in Clinical Research in Health Care Organisations – application deadline



15.02.2019 - One month left to sign up for the next course of advanced studies in clinical research – application deadline March 15, 2019.

Flyer

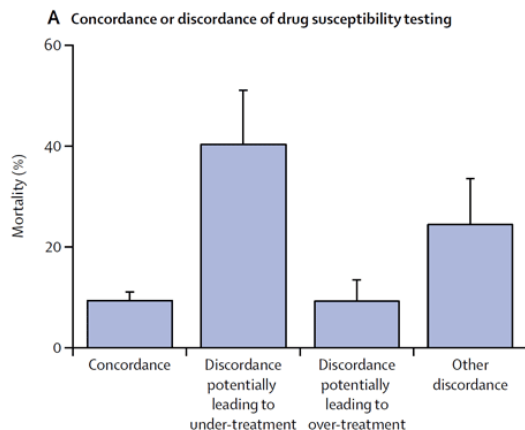
[Flyer «Certificate of Advanced Studies in Clinical Research in Health Care Organisations» \(PDF, 279KB\)](#)

Links

[Factsheet page «CAS Clinical Research» on ISPM website](#)

[«CAS Clinical Research» website](#)

Drug-resistant tuberculosis: high mortality rate due to inaccurate tests



08.02.2019 - Inaccurate tests carried out on tuberculosis patients in developing countries often fail to reliably detect resistance to drugs, leading to incorrect treatment and a higher mortality rate. These are the results of a study by an international group of researchers led by a team (Kathrin Zürcher, Marie Ballif, Lukas Fenner, Matthias Egger) at the University of Bern published today.

Around ten million people around the world develop tuberculosis every year and 1.5 million people die from tuberculosis each year. 87% of those affected live in or come from developing countries. According to WHO, resistance to drugs used to treat tuberculosis—as well as the proliferation of multi-resistant tuberculosis strains—is one of the most pressing global health problems. WHO sees an urgent need to improve quality and coverage of diagnosis and treatment of drug-resistant tuberculosis.

This was the starting point for a comparative study led by the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine (ISPM) at the University of Bern, Switzerland. The study compared the results of tests to detect drug resistance in patients done in developing countries with the results of testing at the Swiss tuberculosis reference laboratory in Zurich. For the first time, researchers were able to demonstrate that many cases of drug resistance remain undetected due to inaccurate tests, and that this led to patients being treated incorrectly and, thus, to more deaths. The results were published in the prestigious journal *Lancet Infectious Diseases* today.

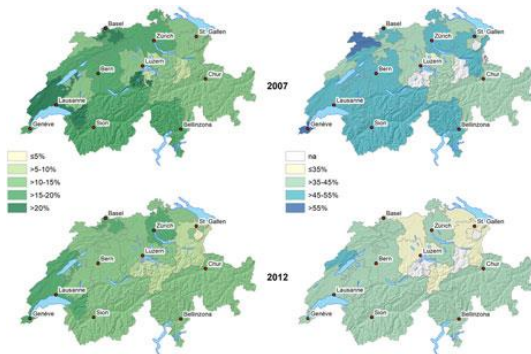
[Media Release «Drug-resistant tuberculosis: high mortality rate due to inaccurate tests»](#)

[Medienmitteilung «Tuberkulose: Hohe Sterblichkeitsrate wegen ungenügender Tests»](#)

[Drug susceptibility testing and mortality in patients treated for tuberculosis in high-burden countries: a multicentre cohort study](#)

Publication in «Lancet Infectious Diseases»

Trends in influenza vaccination uptake in Switzerland: Swiss Health Survey 2007 and 2012



28.01.2019 - It's influenza (flu) season again in Switzerland, and this week the virus reached the epidemic threshold. Flu takes more lives than any other infectious disease in Europe, but a simple and effective yearly vaccine can reduce the chance you will catch it. Unfortunately, fewer people overall, and especially fewer elderly people, are opting to be vaccinated for seasonal flu.

When ISPM researchers analysed data from the 2007-2012 Swiss health surveys, they found that only around 15% of the Swiss population had been vaccinated; the percentage was the same among healthcare staff. Among those aged 65 or older, about 40% had been vaccinated, and, among those with chronic illnesses, only about 50%. In those 65 and older, living in French-speaking region and in urban areas, history of smoking, poor self-reported health status, health insurance that covers private/semiprivate hospital stays, and working in healthcare professions was associated with more people being vaccinated within the last year. These numbers indicate the urgent need to promote flu vaccination in Switzerland.

[Article «Trends in influenza vaccination uptake in Switzerland» \(PDF, 692KB\)](#)

[Appendix «Trends in influenza vaccination uptake in Switzerland» \(PDF, 692KB\)](#)

[Trends in influenza vaccination uptake in Switzerland: Swiss Health Survey 2007 and 2012](#)

Original article on Swiss Medical Weekly website

Swiss Epidemiology Winter School

Each January the Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine brings eminent speakers to the Swiss ski resort Wengen for an intensive week of courses in epidemiology. PhD students, academics and representatives of industry come from all over the world to attend three-day classes and to benefit from networking opportunities. Classes are offered in the mornings and evenings, with an extended break in the afternoon for sport or social events.

Read more about the Winter School at www.epi-winterschool.org

