

£2 million grant for sepsis research in Africa

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Sepsis is a life-threatening condition that arises when the body's response to infections causes injury to its own tissues and organs. It affects more than 31 million people each year resulting in 6 million deaths worldwide.



Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine is to lead a new multinational project on sepsis following a £2 million award from the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR).

The African Research Collaboration on Sepsis (ARCS) has been set up as a Global Health Research Group and is led by LSTM's Dr Shevin Jacob and Dr Jamie Rylance, working across Malawi, Uganda and Gabon, working with academic, clinical and government partners in each country. Dr Rylance said: "ARCS is about bridging Africa and UK clinical research outfits and establishing long-term and equitable partnerships. It's very exciting to be involved at the very start of this process for such an important public health problem."

Sepsis is a life-threatening condition that arises when the body's response to infections causes injury to its own tissues and organs. It affects more than 31 million people each year resulting in 6 million deaths worldwide. ARCS brings together African and UK expertise across the applied health spectrum to tackle this common problem, learning from the UK's experience in reducing sepsis mortality through the NHS focus on quality of care and patient safety.

Creating sustainable partnerships between research and clinical organisations, Ministries of Health, on-government organisations, and commercial sectors, ARCS will establish a network across the three countries and focus on the following four aims: to deliver high quality sepsis research training; to establish commonly agreed sepsis care quality indicators for Africa which could form the bedrock of monitoring and evaluation programmes; to pilot test innovative sepsis care interventions; and to test the feasibility of novel clinical trial platforms for answering key sepsis questions for Africa.

Dr Jacob said: "Due to multiple factors including a high burden of infection, diminished health system capacity, and limited awareness of how best to recognize and treat sepsis, Africa shoulders the greatest burden of sepsis in terms of global morbidity and mortality. We are thrilled that NIHR has funded ARCS to help build African research capacity on sepsis and, ultimately, add to our growing knowledge of how best to identify and treat sepsis within the African context."