



Background

Lifestyle Diseases is a Research Entity within the Faculty of Health Sciences at North-West University (NWU). This six monthly newsletter is rooted in our vision, which is to be recognised nationally and internationally in research and CE activities aimed at the prevention and reduction of risks of impairments, disability, and premature death from chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

The most common types of NCDs are cardiovascular diseases (such as heart attacks and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma), mental disorders and diabetes. It is clear from the above information that the focus of our entity is to conduct research and increase awareness in rural African communities regarding the six pillars of lifestyle medicine, which are plant-based nutrition, stress management, restorative sleep, social connections, physical activity, and avoidance of risky substances.



Members of the Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity, Mr Gopolang Gause (left) and Prof. Leepile Sehularo (right) represented the entity at the Centre for Teaching and Learning Substance Abuse Awareness event which emanated from Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Femicide on 24 February 2024. Substance Abuse and GBV are serious Lifestyle issues. The first session of the event started with a short-distance walk from the North-West University (NWU) main gate to Megacity. In our entity we believe that walking is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. The second session was a formal programme of deliberations between different stakeholders on GBV and femicide with an exhibition by different departments and organisations.



On 15 April 2024 the Director of the Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity, Prof. Leepile Sehularo (centre), was excited to welcome Dr Helen Olagundoye (right), a postdoctoral fellow who is a developmental psychologist. On the left is our entity's Research Assistant, Mr Samuel Oluwagbenga Inuyomi, who started on 1 June 2024 and will be with us until 30 November 2024. He holds a Master's degree in Health Physics and Environment and is a doctoral student (PhD in Physics) in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences.



Some of the Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity staff members who attended the research retreat and strategic meeting on 11–13 April 2024 in Sports Village on the Potchefstroom Campus of the NWU.



The research professor in the Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity, Prof. Ushotanefe Useh, leading an aerobics session during Bipolar and Autism Awareness Day at the New Bophelong Psychiatric Hospital (BPH) on 26 April 2024. In our entity we believe that exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.



Some of the members of the community, North West College of Nursing students, BPH staff, Kgatelopele Wellness Centre staff and Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity staff who were present during the collaborative Bipolar and Autism Awareness Day at the New BPH on 26 April 2024. The theme of the event was 'Bipolar and Autism together in making awareness, acceptance, and appreciation: #MovingFromSurvivingToThriving'.



Director of the Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity, Prof. Leepile Sehularo, giving a presentation on '*Lifestyle medicine for mental disorders*' during the Bipolar and Autism Awareness Day at the New BPH on 26 April 2024. Prof. Sehularo emphasised that six pillars of lifestyle medicine are a solution to mental disorders, namely: eating healthily, physical activity, mental wellbeing, healthy relationships, good-quality sleep, and minimising harmful substances such as alcohol and dagga.



Using laughter as a lifestyle medicine: Profs Useh and Sehularo after a farewell function for one of the Lifestyle Disease Research Entity's staff members, Dr Hlengiwe Mbongwa (centre), who left the NWU for the University of KwaZulu-Natal at the end of April 2024.



The Principal of Stadt Primary School, Lifestyle Disease Research Entity and COMPRESS staff members during a visit at the school on 19 April 2024. The visit came about after the unfortunate event of one of the learners committing suicide. In our entity we believe in an African proverb “Ngwana Sejo Wa Tlhakanelwa”, meaning “A child belongs to the mother, the family and the community at large”. Lifestyle Diseases and COMPRESS entities assisted the school learners, educators, School Management Team and members of the School Governing Body with comprehensive interventions for bio-psychosocial challenges they experienced. This remodelled our belief that indeed Lifestyle Medicine is the solution to all bio-psychosocial problems.



Members of the Lifestyle Diseases and COMPRESS Research Entities who attended the parents' meeting at Stadt Primary School on 25 April 2024. From left to right: Prof. U. Useh (Deputy Dean for Community Engagement and Stakeholder Relations in the Faculty of Health Sciences), Prof. V. Mabvurira, Mr E. Mohlatlole, Dr M. Lekganyane, Ms R. Lefifi, Ms E. Tlhojane, and Ms T. Shophi.



2024 Publications

The research conducted by members of the entity is in line with the North West University’s (NWU) strategic plan Taking the NWU forward – 2024 and beyond. In our entity, the researchers are encouraged to publish in high-impact factor international journals that have an agreement with the university for staff members and students to publish without paying Article Processing Charges.

PUBLISHED ARTICLES FROM JANUARY – JUNE 2024			
No.	Authors & Year	Title	Journal
1.	Adejare, A. & Useh, U. 2024	Effectiveness of interprofessional care on hypertension in low- and medium-income countries of Africa	<i>African Journal of Biomedical Research</i>
2.	Mabasa, S.M.K., Matsipane, M.J. & Useh, U. 2024	Utilisation of partogram at a district in the North West Province, South Africa	<i>Health SA Gesondheid</i>
3.	Muhammad, M., Loong, S.K., Khor, C.S., Mohd-Azami, S.N.I., Kafle, A., Useh, U., Bello, B., AbuBakar, S. 2024	Sunlight exposure might account for the relatively low COVID-19 morbidity and mortality in tropical countries	<i>Tropical Medicine</i>
4.	Fawole, H.O., Idowu, O.A., Osadiaye, O.A., Akinrolie, O., Ibekaku, M., Ojo, M., Kolawole, F.O., Adandom, I., Oyeyemi, A.L., Useh, U. & Riskowski, J. 2024	A systematic review on the effects of non-pharmacological interventions for fatigue among people with upper and/or lower limb osteoarthritis	<i>Rheumatology Advances in Practice</i>
5.	Keikabile, T., Matlakala, F.K. & Mapaling C. 2024	A scoping review on the psychosocial effects of sexual abuse on the girl child in sub-Saharan Africa	<i>E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences</i>
6.	Chilwalo, N., Rantho, K., Hasheela, M. & Matlakala, F.K. 2024	Being there: A scoping review on psychosocial challenges faced by adolescents during bereavement in the Southern African Development Community	<i>Environment and Social Psychology</i>
7.	Ngcobo, S.J., Makhado, L. & Sehularo, L.A. 2024	Managerial factors influencing the implementation of NIMART services in the mobile health clinics of eThekweni Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal	<i>International Journal of Africa Nursing Sciences</i>
8.	Gause, G., Sehularo, L.A. & Matsipane, M.J. 2024	Coping strategies used by undergraduate first-year nursing students during transition from basic to higher education: a qualitative study	<i>BMC Nursing</i>
9.	Ngcobo, S.J., Makhado, L. & Sehularo, L.A. 2024	Registered nurses’ experiences regarding operational factors influencing the implementation of HIV care services in the mobile health clinics of eThekweni Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal	<i>BMC Nursing</i>
10.	Shophi T. 2024	A narrative review on psychosocial factors associated with suicide amongst youth	<i>EUREKA: Social and Humanities</i>



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No.	Authors & Year	Title	Journal
11.	Zhou, P.S. & Matlakala F.S. 2024	Challenges faced by caregivers raising children left by deported migrant parents in Johannesburg, South Africa	<i>Cogent Social Sciences</i>
12.	Gause, G., Sehularo, L.A. & Matsipane, M.J. 2024	Factors that influence resilience among first-year undergraduate nursing students: A cross-sectional descriptive study	<i>Nursing Reports</i>
13.	Molefe, L.L., Sehularo, L.A. & Koen, D.	Support needed by workers providing care to children with cognitive disabilities: A systematic review	<i>Journal for New Generation Sciences</i>
14.	Smith, B., Chukwuere, P.C. & Sehularo, L.A. 2024	Exploring presence practices: a study of unit managers in a selected Provincial Hospital in Free State Province	<i>BMC Nursing</i>
15.	Gause, G., Lebese, R.T., Mulaudzi, F.M., Matsipane, M.J., Moloko-Phiri, S.S. & Tshivhase, S. 2024	Communication of health messages using theatre: Appreciative inquiry from Ubuntu theatre group	<i>Health SA Gesondheid</i>
16.	Chukwuere, P.C., Sehularo, L.A. & Manyedi, M.E. 2024	Conceptual framework for the psychosocial management of depression in adolescents in the North West Province, South Africa	<i>The Open Public Health Journal</i>
BOOK CHAPTERS			
17.	Lekganyane, G.M. 2024	The South African Social Work Policy and the Role of Green Social Work: COVID-19 and beyond	IntechOpen



Conferences

The Director of the Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity, Prof. Leepile Sehularo, with his final-year PhD students Mr G. Gause and Mrs O. Mpheng at the Southern African Association of Health Educationalists (SAAHE) Conference, which was held on 25– 28 June 2024 at the Gateway Hotel in Umhlanga, Durban. The theme of the conference was ‘Decoding and recoding to transform for contextually relevant Health Professions Education’. Mr Gause’s oral presentation was on ‘Coping strategies used by undergraduate first-year nursing students during transition from basic to higher education: a qualitative study’, while Mrs Mpheng’s oral presentation was on ‘A practice model to strengthen the implementation of the policy guidelines on 72-hour assessment of involuntary mental health care users in South Africa’. Prof. Sehularo and Mr Gause together with the Ubuntu team also participated in a Campfire titled ‘Storytelling, songs and dances: Innovative methods for infusing health messages in African communities’.



International collaboration

Research Professor in the Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity, Prof. Ushotanefe Useh, during an international visit to the University of Heidelberg, Germany on 15–20 January 2024. Prof. Useh also visited the University of Tilburg in The Netherlands from 21 to 26 January 2024. The purpose of these visits was to establish international collaboration. During the visits a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the above-named universities and the NWU.

Prof. Useh is pictured with his colleagues at the University of Heidelberg, Germany.



Prof. Useh is pictured with colleagues from the University of Tilburg in The Netherlands.



Prof. Useh recently presented a paper on ‘Job creation an outcome of NCDs research’ at the 9th International Symposium on Service Learning held on 30 May 2024 at the University of Indianapolis in the United States of America.



Dr Frans Koketso Matlakala conducted a scoping review workshop from 20 to 25 May 2024 at the University of Namibia (UNAM). The workshop aimed to equip early-career researchers in the Department of Psychology and Social Work with the skills and insights necessary to navigate the complexities of scoping reviews. He facilitated the workshop alongside esteemed colleagues Ms Namoonga Chilwalo-Masule from UNAM, and Ms Rantho (a contract worker for SACERT and formerly with the University of Limpopo). The workshop served as an opportunity to enhance the professional development of early-career researchers, empowering them to conduct rigorous scoping reviews that contribute meaningfully to the fields of psychology and social work. The team is expecting to publish 4 articles from their collaboration.

Awards



In the month of June, the Sunday World aimed to recognise young people who have had an impact in their society using their qualifications. The individual who receives the recognition must be nominated, and Dr Matlakala was nominated and was recognised as an 'unsung hero'. The newspaper was published on 7 July 2024, and is available in digital format at <https://sundayworld.co.za/unsung-heroes-2024-digital-supplement/> All Lifestyle members are proud of this achievement.



Upcoming events

Systematic Review and Meta-analysis Workshop. Presenter: Prof. Bashir Bello (Extraordinary Professor in Lifestyle Diseases Research Entity), 9–11 September 2024.

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