

Pan African Thoracic Society Spirometry Training

One of the specific aims of the Pan African Thoracic Society (PATS) is the promotion of education and training initiatives to strengthen respiratory health across Africa. In line with this, PATS is delighted to announce the launch of a PATS-accredited certificate of competence in foundational spirometry training course. This three-day course is aimed at all medical personnel working in, or wanting to work with spirometry. The course has been developed for Africans with a particular focus on our unique African settings and challenges.

The primary purpose of the spirometry training is to increase knowledge and awareness of spirometry on the continent. We hope to achieve this by teaching strategies not only in the theoretical and practical application, measurement and interpretation of spirometry but also on how to incorporate spirometry testing systematically into routine clinical practice in primary health care through to tertiary institutions.

Teaching methods are blended to include theoretical concepts via eLearning followed by face-to-face on-site learning through power point presentations, group work, case studies and practical mentored exercises. Following formal training attendees will have the opportunity to have portfolios of their work evaluated by the training team, offering ongoing initial support and certification of skills acquired. The course will soon be CPD accredited.

Courses are arranged in host-countries for groups. Training opportunities are offered for individuals who would like access to further training to become future spirometry trainers and spirometry champions in host countries.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the European Respiratory Society for the generous donation of equipment and funding for this project from the European Lung Foundation. For those interested there is a limited amount of course facilitation grants available. For more information with regard to spirometry courses please contact the PATS Spirometry Administrator at patsspirometry@gmail.com for further information.

Tackling air pollution in sub-Saharan Africa

The University of Portsmouth is helping to tackle air pollution and its harmful effects in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Researchers from the University's Faculty of Creative and Cultural Industries are part of the AIR (Action for Interdisciplinary Air Pollution Research) Network that has received funding from the Medical Research Council (MRC) and Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Global Challenges Research Fund Partnership Award.

The AIR Network is one of 12 Partnership Awards that have received over £2 million to bring together arts and humanities and medical research to address issues



of public health in developing countries.

The AIR network, led by Dr. Cressida Bowyer, Research Fellow (Enterprise and Innovation) at the University, will develop an interdisciplinary research partnership of African and European researchers and African community members. The long-term aim is to create innovative solutions to air

pollution and its effects on human health in low-resource settings in sub-Saharan Africa.

Air pollution is a significant contributor to respiratory and cardiovascular disease and is recognised as a major global health concern. The World Health Organization estimates that outdoor and indoor air pollution causes 6.5 million deaths every year. Particulate matter (PM) is the mostly invisible particles in the air, including ash, smoke, soot, dust and fumes. Every breath a person takes contains PM and PM is the type of air pollution that most commonly causes ill health.

In the developing world, exposure to indoor pollution, due to cooking, lighting and heating using cheap and dirty fuels, contributes to 4.3 million deaths a year. Outdoor and indoor PM concentrations are particularly high in Africa's informal settlements, which are often located close to roads and industry. In Africa, fine PM is associated with 920,000 premature deaths a year and causes chronic lung disease in adults (mainly women) and pneumonia in children.

The AIR team will visit informal settlements in Nairobi and work with local communities to gain understanding of the concerns and challenges that residents face with regard to air pollution. A mixture of methods will be used to engage and communicate, including theatre, visual arts, mobile phones, games and music. Researchers will explore opportunities to co-create viable, sustainable and culturally relevant interventions to reduce exposure to PM. By the end of the 18-month project, the AIR network will have identified a future programme of work for AIR, including specific initiatives where we can work with citizens to improve public health, and AIR will identify and apply for further funding.