

# NEW MODEL FOR REHABILITATION OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

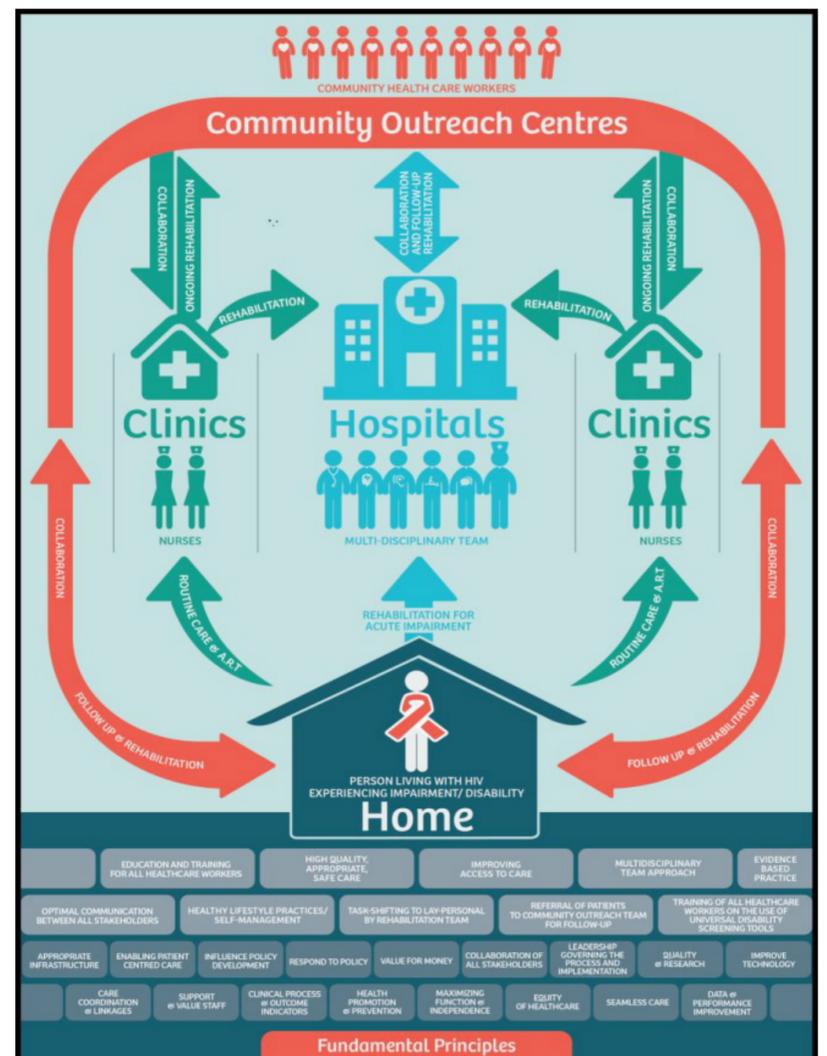
UKZN in collaboration with the SAMRC and Wits University has developed a model of care to improve rehabilitation services for people living with HIV in resource-limited settings. The study assessed the degree and impact of functional limitations/disability in people living with HIV using long term ART.

The developed model supports the current government initiative to strengthen disability and rehabilitation services addressing the gap in healthcare and linkages to care. South Africa remains the epicentre of the HIV pandemic where we still see the burden of the virus on healthcare systems and our population at large. Rehabilitation is crucial to address the impairments and subsequent disabilities experienced by people living with HIV in South Africa. Recent research led by Verusia Chetty, a post-doctoral fellow in UKZN's DRILL programme, has developed a model of care for such people living in resource-limited contexts.

A surge in the disabling effects of HIV, related complications, and anti-retroviral therapy has raised the need for a model of care to guide effective responses to these challenges and integrate rehabilitation into the clinical care for people living with HIV.

The development of the model fell into three phases. First, a review of international rehabilitation models, leading to a framework that synthesized the key aspects needed to understand the local situation. Second, engagement with local stakeholders, which revealed barriers to implementation such as transport, physical access, financial constraints, and sub-optimum teamwork among stakeholders. Third, building consensus among experts on the essential elements needed for effective implementation: improved access to care, optimal communication between all stakeholders, education and training for health care workers, and home-based rehabilitation.

The model, once developed, was reviewed for its fit with existing rehabilitation policies. This new model aims to provide evidence which



will facilitate practical implementation. South African legislation is supportive of the necessary changes, but practice is lagging.



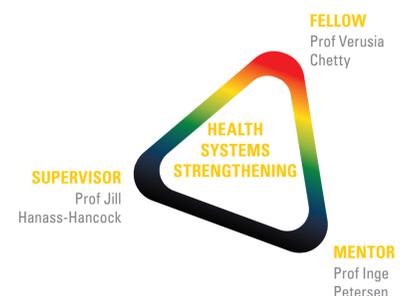
## Towards Research Leadership

Prof Verusia Chetty is the academic leader for teaching and learning in the School of Health Sciences, an associate professor in Physiotherapy at UKZN and a post-doctoral fellow on the DRILL programme. Chetty's study was recently included in the UNAIDS report on Disability and HIV, 2017.

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Developing Research Innovation, Localisation and Leadership (DRILL) is a health sciences training programme producing research excellence in South Africa. DRILL creates a triad of support for emerging researchers.

**Chetty, V. (2015).** A model of care for the rehabilitation of people living with HIV in a semi-rural South African setting. *South African Health Review* 2014/15, 183.



Research poster developed in collaboration with Jive Media Africa, research communication specialists. [www.jivemediaco.co.za](http://www.jivemediaco.co.za)

