

Partnership Helps Track and Analyze TB and HIV Data, Inform Health Policies in South Africa

Twinning Center partners at University of the Free State and the State University of New York Downstate Medical Center are working together to build South Africa's capacity to use HIV and TB-related data to develop more appropriate clinical interventions and better inform healthcare policy.

The Centre for Health Systems Research and Development at Free State provides information, data, and other resources to regional and national health departments and various institutions involved in the provision of healthcare and related services. These institutions rely on the Centre's research and analyses to develop policies and clinical protocols on health conditions including HIV/AIDS, ART, reproductive health and STIs, and TB, as well as health economics, human rights, health information systems, and facility management.



Free State partners Christo Heunis and Gert van Zyl (standing from left) and Anita van der Merwe and Letitia Moja (seated from left) with SUNY partners David Odegaard and Jack DeHovitz (standing at right) and the Twinning Center's John Capati (seated right).

With funding from PEPFAR and CDC, partners are working together to strengthen research and data management skills among Centre staff, improve their capacity to translate research into policy and practice, and enhance their teaching and mentoring skills. Partners are also developing a multi-faceted intervention that will provide HIV counseling and testing for TB patients.

"Given their extensive experience in Eastern Europe and very active work with marginalized populations in New York, our US partners have much to contribute toward enhancing our capacity to better integrate HIV-TB control in South Africa," says Dr. Christo Heunis, senior researcher at the Centre.