

# Lung health study published in top respiratory journal

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A team of investigators led from LSTM has published findings from a lung health study to determine the prevalence of lung disease among adults in Malawi, in the leading international respiratory journal, the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*.

LSTM's Dr Kevin Mortimer led the research, working with Professor Stephen Gordon, Director of The Malawi-Liverpool-Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Programme (MLW), and Professor Moffat Nyirenda, Director of the Malawi Epidemiology and Intervention Research Unit (MEIRU). Dr Mortimer said: "We found that over 40% of the 1059 Malawian adults we included in our population based study in the city of Blantyre had abnormalities in their lung function as well as a high burden of exposure to biomass smoke and HIV. Taken together these findings have major public health implications for Malawi and other countries in sub Saharan Africa"

The work addresses one of the major research priorities identified through the 2014 CAHRD consultation process to conduct studies to determine the community burden of chronic respiratory diseases in low and middle income countries. The proceedings of the consultation were published in BMC proceedings in January.

The work highlights the extent to which people living in Malawi are exposed to smoke from household burning of biomass (crop residues, wood, charcoal) for their day-to-day cooking needs. Around the world four million people die every year as a result of inhalation of this smoke

which increases the risk of heart and lung diseases.

The same team of [investigators](#) are leading the Cooking and Pneumonia Study (CAPS) in Malawi which will report at the end of 2016. The two year study is largest of its kind anywhere in the world and is tracking children who live in randomised villages in Chikhwawa and Chilumba. The homes of the children involved in the study have been supplied with two clean cookstoves to see if the new stoves, which can reduce emissions by up to 90%, will stop the children getting pneumonia, a major cause of death in this age group.

This latest study forms part of a wider body of research carried out at LSTM under the theme of Lung Health and TB. The breadth of scientific expertise in the area of lung health is part of the reason that LSTM is closely associated with the 47th Union World Conference on Lung Health, which is being staged in Liverpool in October this year.

**More information:** Jamilah Meghji et al. Non-communicable Lung Disease in Sub Saharan Africa: a Community-based Cross-sectional Study of Adults in Urban Malawi, *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* (2016). [DOI: 10.1164/rccm.201509-1807OC](https://doi.org/10.1164/rccm.201509-1807OC)

Provided by Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine

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