

SO Stories

Priscilla Mouton (WC)



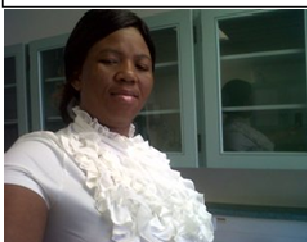
Priscilla Mouton writes about one of the real clinical challenges SOs go through on their daily duties for GERMS-SA and the IPD case-control study. In her story we clearly see the consequences of missing a vaccine: a child with a vaccine-preventable disease can be kept out of school or day-care facilities. A prolonged illness can take a financial toll on the family because of lost time at work, medical bills, or long-term disability care. In comparison, getting vaccinated against these diseases is a good investment, free as part of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) and usually covered by private medical aid.

Story:

11 month old Samson (not his real name) was admitted to RED CROSS HOSPITAL on 24/11/2012 with hot water burns on his face, chest and arms. His mom was preparing a bottle for him when he crawled and pulled the pot from the stove. He was admitted to ICU due to the severity of his injuries and he had a *Streptococcus pneumoniae* lower respiratory tract infection. His mom was a single parent who was working at a vegetable store.

He was transferred to the burns unit. His mother was reluctant to go back to work when he was in the ward because she noticed that it was not like in the ICU where he had more attention. Her son would cry without someone being available to attend to him. I spoke to the sister in the ward and she confirmed the mother's concerns, saying there was a shortage of staff. The mother therefore stopped working until her baby was discharged.

Profile: Karen Mqokozo— GERMS-SA Field Project Coordinator (KZN)



Karen would like to extend a word of gratitude to the GERMS-SA team for giving me this opportunity to move to Durban. As of 1st April 2013 (APRIL FOOL), I am now based at IALCH NHLS Microbiology Laboratory as a GERMS-SA Field Project Coordinator. I strongly believe that I will be able to forge a closer collaboration with NICD and all KZN labs. Working hand in hand with our site coordinators I will also be able to closely manage our enhanced sites in KZN and attend to problems as they arise. I received a very warm welcome from the lab staff, which then made IALCH to be another home away from home. I miss the NMSU team, but this is the opportunity for me to create a strong GERMS-SA presence in KZN, for the better of our surveillance.

Karen has a full programme of site visits to KZN sites planned in May. We look forward to seeing those photographs and reaching those laboratories which have not been previously visited.