

Study reveals increase in use of antibiotics in Africa and Asia due to COVID-19

A study has shown an increase in the use of antibiotics and antimalarials in Africa and Asia due to corona virus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

The study was conducted by Dr. Sylvia Opanga, a senior lecturer at the School of Pharmacy, University of Nairobi together with other scholars in Africa and Asia.

Dr. Opanga presented the study with its findings during the UoN-CHS COVID-19 Research Forum held on Tuesday 4th August, 2020.

The study also reveals changes in utilisation, prices, and shortages of pertinent medicines and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) among African and Asian countries since the outbreak of the pandemic.

The study indicates that price increases are a burden to patients with a low socio-economic status especially as they pay out of their pockets.

According to the study, there has been increases in utilisation of vitamins and immune boosters and PPE.

However, concerns with increased utilisation of antimicrobials needs to be addressed alongside misinformation, unintended consequences from the pandemic and any appreciable price rise.

Community pharmacists and patient organisations can play key role in providing evidence-based advice, helping moderate prices through improved stock management, and helping address unintended consequences of the pandemic.