

RePORT International Newsletter

May 2026

In This Issue

- Welcoming New RICC Scientific Review Committee Members
- Prof. Ed Nardell's Talk at RePORT Meeting
- Celebrating Clinical Trials
- Mary Talalay Shares Volunteer Experience

Have something you want to share in the newsletter?

Let us know!

SUBMIT

NEW SCIENTIFIC REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The launch of the RePORT International Coordinating Center's Scientific Review Committee (SRC) in July 2024 was new and quite an undertaking. It was built under the able leadership of co-chairs Drs. Mark Hatherill and Tim Sterling with support from Vanderbilt Program Manager Alicia Wright. After two years of building an incredible foundation with time-tested standards of practice, the SRC now is in its second stage with an expanded membership. Prior SRC member Professor Stephanus Malherbe was selected to rise to be a co-chair.

We are grateful to Drs. Hatherill and Sterling for their leadership and ongoing guidance.



Stephanus Malherbe (South Africa) (Chair)

Stephanus (Fanie) Malherbe, MBChB, PhD, is a Clinical Researcher and Associate Professor at the Biomedical Research Institute, Division of Immunology, Stellenbosch University. He leads the BMRI Clinical Team and has extensive experience in clinical trials and international infectious disease research collaborations. His expertise includes tuberculosis diagnostics and treatment response biomarkers, with a focus on PETCT imaging, advanced image analysis, host biomarkers, and novel point-of-care diagnostics.

Gerhard Walzl (South Africa)

Gerhard Walzl is a clinician scientist, a specialist physician and pulmonologist with a PhD in immunology and has set up the Stellenbosch University Immunology Research team that has multiple long-standing collaborations across the globe. This team focuses on host biomarkers for TB diagnosis,

prediction of progression to TB disease, TB treatment response outcomes but also on understanding the biology of protective and non-protective immune responses at the site of disease.



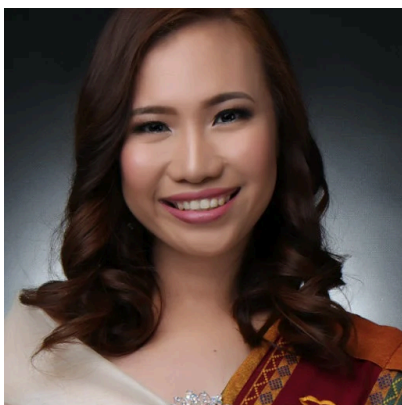
Soyeon Kim (Frontier Science)

Dr. Soyeon Kim is the Principal Research Scientist, the statistical lead, on Frontier Science's research studies. She has over 25 years of experience collaborating on infectious disease research most recently concentrating on TB diagnostics and interventions to prevent and treat the disease. Prior to coming to Frontier Science, Dr. Kim was Associate Professor at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School and Rutgers School of Public Health. She holds a doctorate in Biostatistics from the Harvard School of Public Health, where she also did her postdoctoral

fellowship.

Jaime Montoya (Philippines)

Dr Jaime Montoya - Professor of Infectious Diseases at the Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Medicine, University of the Philippines College of Medicine. He just completed his term as Executive Director of the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development.



Fresthel Monica Climacosa (Philippines)

Fresthel Monica M. Climacosa is a physician-scientist and professor at the Department of Medical Microbiology, College of Public Health, University of the Philippines Manila, specializing in molecular medicine and immunology. She holds leadership roles as Head of the Division of Data Management at the UP Manila National Institutes of Health and Vice President for External Affairs of the Philippine Association of Tropical Medicine and Global Health. Her research focuses on the immunology of infectious diseases, including tuberculosis,

HIV and COVID-19, with contributions to multi-institutional and global health collaborations.

Mariana Araújo-Pereira (Brazil)

Mariana Araújo-Pereira, PhD - Researcher in Public Health at Fiocruz-Bahia and investigator in the RePORT-Brazil Consortium. Her work focuses on immunology, systems biology, and precision medicine applied to infectious diseases, particularly tuberculosis and HIV. She integrates multi-omics

data, epidemiology, and machine learning to identify biomarkers and improve risk stratification and clinical outcomes.



Anete Trajman (Brazil)

Anete Trajman is a Full Professor of Internal Medicine at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and a Visiting Professor at McGill University, Canada, dedicated to research on the cascade of care of TB infection and prevention, with focus on implementation science. She recently conducted a large TPT implementation project in Brazil, the ExpandTPT. She is a member (and a former president) of the Brazilian TB Research Network - REDE-TB and an expert member of the TB Advisory Board of the

Brazilian Ministry of Health.

Vijaya Valluri (India)

Vijaya Lakshmi Valluri has a PhD in Immunogenetics, at present heading the Immunology & Molecular Biology Department. She has experience in establishing both children & adult cohorts for longitudinal studies. She is a basic scientist, investigating host immune biomarkers leading to high-risk for progression to latent and active TB. Pursuing her interest in an efficacious vaccine for TB, she is involved in working on correlates of protection and genetic predisposition for eliciting protective immune responses.



Pavan Kumar (India)

Pavan Kumar is a PhD-trained clinical immunologist and Scientist-D at the ICMR-National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis under the Indian Council of Medical Research. With over 17 years of experience, his research focuses on host immune responses in tuberculosis, particularly in the context of comorbidities such as diabetes, malnutrition, and helminth infections. His work emphasizes identifying immune biomarkers to predict treatment outcomes, alongside contributions to vaccine immunology, including BCG vaccine and Covaxin, and studies on

immune responses in MIS-C.

RePORT INVESTIGATORS: NEW RECORDED WEBINAR

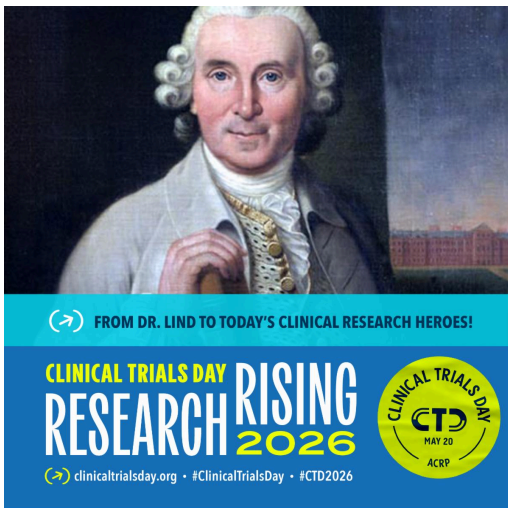
Controversies in TB Transmission and Control, Dr. Ed Nardell, Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School

Controversies in TB Transmission & Control

Edward Nardell, MD
Professor of Medicine
Harvard Medical School
Brigham & Women's Hospital
Division of Global Health Equity
Partners In Health



CELEBRATING CLINICAL TRIALS



Changing the science of TB treatment, diagnosis, and prevention

Clinical Trials Day is celebrated globally each May 20 to recognize the day in 1747 that James Lind, a ship's surgeon in the British Royal Navy, started what is often considered to be the first randomized clinical trial. In this case, it was to study the effects of different treatments on scurvy, a disease caused by a deficiency of vitamin C, and a major scourge for sailors on long voyages. ([Association of Clinical Research Professionals](#), 2026)

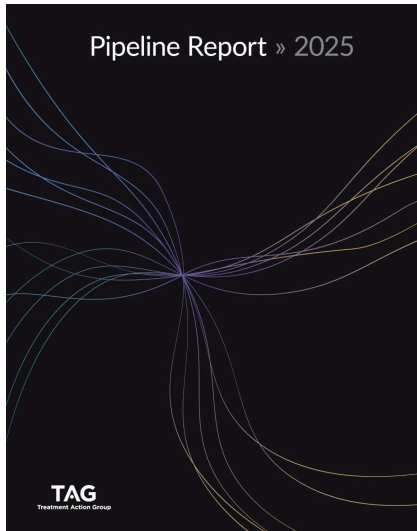
Clinical trials are the gold standard of research for studying the efficacy of therapeutics, diagnostics, and vaccines. TB has often been ignored by “big pharma” but there have been great strides made since the 1970s in the development of fixed-dose combinations, oral-drugs in the place of injectables, long-acting drugs, interferon-gamma release assays, and molecular and point-of service rapid diagnostic tests. There are even promising TB vaccine candidates in making to replace the 100-year-old BCG vaccine.

Advancing TB elimination takes village. Groups like the non-profit [TB Alliance](#) represents collaborative development of therapeutics with input from a variety of partners. The [TB Trials Consortium](#) is an international public health partnership that has made serious strides in the development of new TB regimens as has the [AIDS Clinical Trials Group](#). These are just a few of the many groups involved in TB treatment trials. The [WHO Research Tracker](#) is a great resource for clinical as well as operational research and other studies on TB and MDR-TB.



The Stop TB Partnership has a [TB Vaccine Pipeline](#) and the Treatment Action Group has published its annual [TB Diagnostics Pipeline Report](#) and the [TB Diagnostics Pathway](#) is a virtual knowledge

management tool to document a TB diagnostic innovator's path to the rapid introduction and widespread scale-up of promising new TB tools, indicating the critical activities, stakeholders and resources along the pathway including for clinical trials. It includes a list of key stakeholders in the world of TB diagnostics such as FIND and the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund.



And we cannot forget advocacy. Clinical trials and TB research in general would not happen without the work of the on-the-ground demands and support of groups like [Treatment Action Group \(TAG\)](#), [RESULTS](#), [Stop TB Partnership](#), [TB Proof](#), and many others. These groups often help identify the research needs, make studies more palatable and ethical for participants, and assist with disseminating the results both positive and not so positive. And while having successful products of clinical trials occur, implementation science is also important to be sure new diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines are put n into practices once available.

Many of our RePORT International investigators wear multiple hats and are involved in all aspects of science strategies mentioned here. They are part of the TB elimination village — clinical trials and all!

MARY TALALAY SHARES VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Special thanks to Erin Dupont, Mary Talalay and the JHU ID Communications Team for sharing this story.



Mary Talalay, MS, MPH, TB Research Training Director with RePORT International at Johns Hopkins, recently got in touch with the (ID) comms team to share about her volunteer experience with the Peace Corps Virtual Service Pilot Program. For the past two years, Mary has taught English Language and Culture to undergraduate and graduate students at National University in Ukraine. She just wrapped up her fourth term.

"I initially took a three-month position to teach from September to December in fall 2024 because I just really wanted to help Ukraine in some way. Teaching English was the most natural fit for me. I was a Peace Corps volunteer in the Slovak Republic and worked at the Ministry of Health and taught English to 11th and 12th grade students.

Poltava is 7 hours ahead, so I teach before my work day starts, as the students' school day is ending. I'm just finishing up my 4th term at National University. I had 22 students this term and will teach again in September. Over two years, I've taught nearly 100 students. I also host a Conversation Club with university faculty, staff, and doctoral students.

My university colleague, Dr. Anna Ageicheva, and I also successfully applied for a grant to provide first aid training to the university and its community, in coordination with its local ambulance corps."

Mary encourages those interested to learn more about volunteer opportunities with the [Peace Corps Virtual Service Pilot Program](#). Thanks so much for sharing your story, Mary!

Please remember to follow and subscribe. Don't forget to invite others, both inside and outside of RePORT International to follow our updates!



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