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PhD in Medical Sciences
2017-2018

INVITATION to the Public defence of

Bettina UTZ

To obtain the academic degree of '**DOCTOR IN MEDICAL SCIENCES**'

**Positioning gestational diabetes in low resource settings:
From fragmentation towards integration.**

Wednesday 27 June 2018

Auditorium **Piet Brouwer**, 16:00
Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Laarbeeklaan 103, 1090 Brussel

How to reach the campus Jette:
<http://www.vub.ac.be/english/infoabout/campuses>

Summary of the dissertation

The purpose of this PhD was to illuminate the situation of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) in low resource settings and to propose specific solutions using Morocco as a case country. By applying a sequential approach to the topic, theoretical knowledge about the situation of GDM screening and management was gathered through a guideline review, a scoping review of the literature and a survey of providers in settings with limited resources. In a second step, a new model of integrating GDM into the existing maternal health care package through the primary level of care in Morocco was piloted. Following a situation analysis in two districts, we conducted from November 2016 to November 2017 a hybrid effectiveness-implementation study using a cluster-randomized controlled trial supported by a qualitative strand. Findings revealed that the intervention had a protective impact on the incidence of macrosomia. With a GDM prevalence of 23.7% in an urban and 18.3% in a rural setting, gestational diabetes presents an important health problem for pregnant women in Morocco. The intervention not only added value to existing antenatal care services but also increased the motivation of health care providers. Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that GDM screening and management of uncomplicated cases through the primary level of care can serve as a link between maternal health care and non-communicable diseases and thus reduce fragmentation while presenting a unique opportunity for a better continuity in care for GDM affected pregnant women and their children.

Curriculum Vitae

The PhD candidate Bettina Utz is a trained obstetrician-gynaecologist from Germany. After specializing in her field in 2004, she worked for several years in East-Africa and did a MSc in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. In 2011 she joined Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine where she directed the Diploma Course in Reproductive Health and was the technical lead for a large EmONC capacity building and quality improvement programme in South Asia. From 2014 until recently she worked as research fellow at the Public Health Department of the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. During this time she was involved in teaching in various postgraduate programmes and conducted this research on gestational diabetes. Since May 2018 she works at the Robert-Koch Institute in Berlin as scientific collaborator and is involved in a capacity building project in West-and South Africa.