

Lehana Thabane

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PROFILE

Dr. Lehana Thabane is a **Vice President of Research** at St Joseph's Healthcare-Hamilton and St Joseph's Health System; **Scientific Director** of the Research Institute at St Joseph's Healthcare; **Professor** of Biostatistics in the Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact at McMaster University.

IMPACT

Dr. Thabane grew up with the principle of ubuntu – “I am because we are” – which continues to guide his scientific and academic leadership. He has redefined how clinical trials generate evidence that matters – evidence designed not only to meet scientific standards, but to shape decisions in real-world health systems. His methodological leadership has underpinned practice-changing studies in areas ranging from infectious disease to chronic illness, informing clinical guidelines, public health strategies, and global policy. Equally committed to equity, he has fostered durable research infrastructure through training programs that support locally led, methodologically rigorous work across Africa. His influence continues to expand both the ambition and the accountability of evidence-based care – nationally, globally, and across generations.

INNOVATION AND ORIGINALITY

Dr. Lehana Thabane has redefined early-phase clinical research on feasibility through methodological innovations that are now embedded in global best practice. His landmark paper on pilot studies – BioMed Central's most accessed article with over 300,000 views – established a new standard for feasibility design. He has since elevated these studies from overlooked procedural steps to rigorous, decision-shaping tools. This vision runs through his leadership of high-impact trials using innovative designs – from COVID therapeutics to chronic disease prevention – where methodological precision is not abstract but applied, shaping outcomes, reducing waste, and advancing the credibility and clarity of science in practice.

Pioneer in Clinical Trials & Health Research Methodology

Current Leadership Roles

Primary

- Vice-President Research, St Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton and St Joseph's Health System
- Scientific Director, Research Institute of St Joe's Hamilton
- Professor, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence & Impact (HEI), McMaster University
- Member, Faculty of Health Sciences' Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenous Reconciliation (EDI-IR) Committee, McMaster University
- International mentor, Future Professors Program, South African Department of Higher Education and Training



Related

- Emeritus Founding Editor-in-Chief, BMC Pilot and Feasibility Studies
- Editorial Board Member of Trials and Clinical Trials
- Member, External Review Panel of the South African Research Chairs Initiative
- Chair, Canadian Medical Hall of Fame Board of Directors
- Co-Chair, Ontario Hospital Association Innovation and Research Committee
- Vice-Chair, Methodology Committee, US Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute
- Member, CIHR Strategy for Patient Oriented Research Refresh Committee
- Member, Strategic Council for Research Excellence, Integrity and Trust, US National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine
- Member, Canadian Academy of Health Sciences Board of Directors
- Member, Baycrest Academy for Research and Education Board of Directors
- Member, Homewood Research Institute Board of Directors
- Chair, Many CIHR Panels for Clinical Trials
- Visiting professorships: Stellenbosch University, South Africa; University of Pretoria, South Africa; University of Johannesburg, South Africa; University of Cape Town, South Africa; Schools of Medicine, UNESP and PUCMINAS, Brazil; College of Radiologists, Dublin, Ireland; Korea University, South Korea

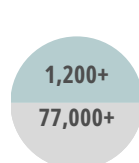


Honors and Awards

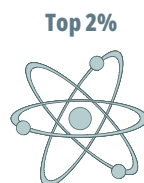
- Honorary Doctor of Science, Stellenbosch University, 2023
- Statistical Society of Canada Award for Collaborative and Applied Statistics
- Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada
- Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences
- Fellow of the Society for Clinical Trials
- Fellow of the American Statistical Association
- Elected Member of the International Statistical Institute
- Honorary Foreign Associate of the Academy of Science of South Africa
- McMaster President's Award for Excellence in Graduate Supervision, 2016



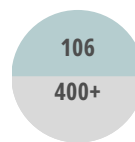
Lifetime Scholarly and Impact Metrics



Number of publications/ citations



Ranking among scientists worldwide



Keynotes and invited conference presentations/ Total conference presentations



Prestigious awards & honors



Lifetime grant funding (\$CAD)/ Number of grants



Graduate students mentored

1. COVID-19 Trials

- TOGETHER trial. [N Engl J Med. 2022;386\(18\):1727-1736.](#)
- AWAKE trial. [JAMA. 2022;327\(21\):2104-2113.](#)
- Living systematic review and network meta analysis. [BMJ. 2021;373:n949.](#)

2. Reporting of Trials

- CONSORT Extension for Pilot and Feasibility Trials. [BMJ. 2016;355:i5239.](#)
- CONSORT - Outcomes Extension. [JAMA. 2022;328\(22\):2252-2264.](#)
- CONSORT 2025 Update. [BMJ. 2025;389:e081123.](#)
- SPIRIT 2025 Update. [BMJ. 2025;389:e081477.](#)

3. Trials Using Innovative Clinical Trial Designs

- CHAP Trial. [BMJ. 2011;342:d442.](#)
- PACT-HF Trial. [JAMA. 2019;321\(8\):753-761.](#)
- IMPACT-AF Trial. [American Heart Journal. 2020; 224:35-46.](#)

4. Methodological Papers on Trial Design and Analysis

- A Tutorial on Pilot Studies: The What, Why and How. [BMC Med Res Methodol. 2010;10:1.](#)
- An Introduction to Multiplicity Issues in Clinical Trials. [Int J Epidemiol. 2017;46\(2\):746-755.](#)
- Composite Outcome Analysis. [PLoS One. 2012;7\(4\):e34785.](#)
- Time-to-Event Outcome Analysis in Non-inferiority Trials. [BMC Medical Research Methodology. 2013; 13\(44\).](#)
- Missing Outcome Data Analysis. [Pediatrics. 2024 Mar 1;153\(3\):e2023063101.](#)

5. Papers in Critical Care

- Stress Ulcer Prophylaxis during COVID-19. [BMC Medical Research Methodology. 2024; 109.](#)
- SQUEEZE Trial. [Crit Care Resusc. 2024 Jun 22;26\(2\):123-134.](#)
- REVISE Trial. [Trials. 2023 Dec 6;24\(1\):796](#)

6. Papers on Capacity Building in Clinical Trials and Biostatistics

- Canadian Network and Centre for Trials Internationally Trainee Paper. [PLoS One. 11\(2\): e0149940.](#)
- Sub-Saharan Africa Consortium for Advanced Biostatistics. [AAS Open Res. 2020 Dec 22;3:51.](#)
- Masters in Biostatistics: Stellenbosch University. [Trials. 2021 Jul 22;22\(1\):478.](#)

7. Papers on HIV and AIDS

- CAMPS Trial: SMS for ART Adherence. [PLoS One. 2012;7\(12\):e46909.](#)
- WelTel Retain: SMS for HIV Care Retention. [Lancet Public Health. 2018;3\(3\):e143-e152.](#)
- Systematic Review: Strategies to Improve HIV Treatment. [BMJ Open. 2020;10\(9\):e034793.](#)

8. Papers on Surgical Trials

- HEALTH Trial. [N Engl J Med. 2019;381\(23\):2199-2208.](#)
- Aqueous-PREP. [Lancet. 2022;400\(10360\):1334-1344.](#)
- FIRST Trial. [Am J Sports Med. 2021;49\(1\):25-34.](#)
- FAITH-2 Trial. [J Orthop Trauma. 2020;34\(10\):524-532.](#)

9. Papers on Diversity and Inclusion in Trials

- Call to Action for Representativeness in Trials. [Eur Heart J. 2023; 44\(11\): 921-930.](#)
- Systematic Review: BIPOC Representation in Diabetes Trials. [Diabetes Care. 2022;45\(7\):e116-e117.](#)
- Systematic Review: Women's Inclusion in Heart Failure Trial Steering Committees. [Circ Heart Fail. 2021;14\(8\):e008064.](#)
- Systematic Review: Under-Enrolment of Women in Heart Failure Trials. [Eur J Heart Fail. 2021;23\(1\):15-24.](#)



Global distribution of past and current graduate students and mentees

Dr. Lehana Thabane has mentored 200+ graduate students globally, with 80 under his primary supervision, fostering the next generation of health researchers. His innovative approach to mentorship and education has led to 71 student awards totaling \$1,354,200 in winnings, demonstrating his commitment to fostering academic excellence in the future generations of researchers. An international leader, his impact spans continents, advancing biostatistical expertise and shaping emerging scholars worldwide.

EXAMPLES OF IMPACT ON HEALTH RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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Lehana Thabane is a pioneer in health-research and clinical-trials methodology, and an advocate of evidence-based medicine and health care. Renowned for developing highly original and rigorous biostatistical methods for new and innovative clinical-trial designs, his biostatistical leadership in the design and conduct of health studies led to major advances in clinical practice guidelines and helped shape new health policy. Moreover, his passion for mentoring without borders has influenced hundreds worldwide.

- The Royal Society of Canada Fellow, 2023 [Read >](#)

For outstanding contributions to statistical methodology in clinical trials, especially in pilot and feasibility studies; for award-winning teaching; and for exemplary leadership and collaborations in applications of statistics in evidence-based health practice.

- American Statistical Association Fellow, 2020 [Read >](#)

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MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Among the top 2% scientists in the world

- World's Top 2% Scientists [Read >](#)

Among the world's most influential researchers

- McMaster University [Read >](#)

Ubuntu and Mentorship: In Conversation with Dr Lehana Thabane

- Orthopod [Watch >](#)

Keys to Research Success and Bayesian Insights

- The Incubator Channel [Watch >](#)

