

## Appendix 4: Additional Research Agenda

Research Topic	Description of Research	Anticipated research outputs	Status
Implementation of PMTCT Services	In-depth descriptive studies of the implementation of PMTCT services in at least one site per province. Will include a variation of well resourced and poorly resourced sites.	Further lessons learnt about implementation, organisation and management of PMTCT services at the site level.	Several sites have already been visited by researchers (WC, Mpumalanga, KZN, Gauteng and FS). Remaining provinces will be covered. Structured reports allowing site comparisons will be designed to allow an easy generation of the lessons learnt, and a description of the implementation and operational challenges that exist.
Changes in infant feeding practices	Repeat cross-sectional survey of case and control sites to determine the effect of the PMTCT programme on infant feeding practices. Will be based on a 10 minute dietary survey of 1800 mothers attending immunization clinics.	Will describe the trend in infant feeding practices over the next 18 months, and provided it will be possible to maintain non-PMTCT control sites, it will suggest what impact the PMTCT programme has had on infant feeding practices.	UNICEF have helped to fund this through HST. A questionnaire and research protocol has been developed. A request for survey organisations to submit applications to conduct the survey was put out in early January 2002.
Qualitative research on infant feeding practices	Narrative research methods, together with traditional focus group discussions and a questionnaire survey in three provinces (NP, NW and KZN).	Will describe the determinants of infant feeding choices and infant feeding practices, and help explain why there may be differences between choices and practices. Will be critical for informing appropriate infant feeding counselling and IEC strategies.	Research has already commenced in the NP. Further research already planned for KZN and NW. Being conducted by the Human Sciences research Council, under guidance of Health Systems Trust, UNICEF and DoH.
Follow-up of mother-child pairs post delivery	Cohort follow-up of PMTCT mother-child pairs and control mother-child pairs to document infant feeding practices, health indicators, vertical transmission, growth patterns and health seeking patterns.	This will give us detailed information about what actually happens to mothers and children after delivery. An active cohort study design will help ensure that mother-child pairs are not lost to follow-up.	Research protocol for one site in the Eastern Cape has already been developed. Fieldworkers and field coordinators have been identified and recruited. A rural site in the WC will also be incorporated, as well as an urban site in Durban.

Costing the PMTCT programme	In-depth costing of direct (e.g. formula, testing kits, lay counsellors and medicines) and indirect costs (e.g. nurse time, opportunity costs) of the programme. Four sites being selected (high HIV prevalence-good infrastructure; high HIV prevalence-poor infrastructure; low HIV prevalence-good infrastructure).	Proper assessment of the costs of the programme.	Meeting of health economics experts held in December to discuss and formulate key research questions. Protocol has been developed and research will be commissioned by HST. Researchers will consist of ABT Consultants and HEARD (University of Natal).
Quality of antenatal counselling moment	Structured participant observation of counselling in the antenatal period.	Structured and in-depth understanding of the counselling issues.	Protocol and proposal developed. Research being planned for implementation in one site at present.
Rapid evaluation of obstetric care in a sample of PMTCT sites	Structured evaluation of the obstetric practices relating to HIV positive women.	More detailed understanding of the implementation of the revised obstetric guidelines.	To be designed.
Effect of PMTCT programme on vertical transmission	Periodic cross-sectional surveys of general population in case-control sites, or cohort studies or modelling studies.	Assess the impact of the programme on averting HIV transmission.	A group of statisticians, epidemiologists and health economists are being convened by the Medical research Council to advise on the best way forward. Meeting scheduled for mid-February.