

STI Global Update

Newsletter of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections

Contents

Presidents Column	1
IUSTI News	2
Research Review	2
Regional Reports	2
Update from the UK Health Protection Agency	4
Conference Update	5

President's Column



Dear members of IUSTI and colleagues interested in STIs!

The joint meeting **17th ISSTD - 10th IUSTI World Congress, July 29 to August 1**, is "ante portas". We are expecting a challenging and exciting STI world meeting in Seattle with global representation of all aspects of STIs and a high number of participants. I am writing this letter with the hope and expectation to meeting you there!

The preparations for the meeting have gone extremely well due to the enormous energy of Hunter Handsfield, the president of ISSTD and Chair of the conference, and furthermore, because of the high level of input from the Scientific Organizing Committee with Jeanne Marrazzo as the chairperson, the help of members of the International and IUSTI Scientific Committee, and the efficient work of the Local Organizing Committee. Their effort is highly appreciated and on behalf of the members of IUSTI I want to thank all those involved in the preparation of the conference. The organizers have received about 850 abstracts and are expecting the largest ever meeting on STIs with at least 1,200 participants. Information about the conference is available on the homepage www.ISSTD.org.

The programme includes all aspects of STI-related science, clinical and epidemiological topics and the most recent research developments. Topics will be covered in morning sessions, plenaries, symposia, satellites, and during poster presentations. The programme will keep us busy from early morning until

late afternoon if we do not want to miss interesting lectures. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to choose between different talks during parallel sessions, all of them certainly worthy of attendance. In addition, the conference will offer the opportunity to meet colleagues and build up new contacts during the social programme in the evenings, which will probably also keep us busy until late at night if not "sleepless in Seattle". If you are able to arrive before the official opening of the conference, consider taking part in the pre-conference satellites and activities – further information is available on the conference homepage. I want to especially recommend a few of the most important events before or during the meeting:

Birthday Symposium in honour of King K. Holmes, Saturday, July 28

Excellent speakers are expected to celebrate the incoming president of IUSTI.

Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention: From Efficacy-to-Effectiveness; From Effectiveness-to-Impact, Sunday, July 29

CDC sponsored symposium, co-organized by Sevgi Aral, Board Member of IUSTI.

General Assembly of IUSTI, Tuesday, July 31, 12.30-1.30 pm, Room 604

As a member of IUSTI you are most welcome to participate at the General Assembly of IUSTI scheduled for Tuesday midday. We will provide you with information about the most recent developments of IUSTI and our exciting plans of activities for the next few years. Snacks will be served during the meeting. Please try to attend!

Symposium - IUSTI Challenges, Wednesday August 1, 2.00 - 3.45 pm, Room 611

Diversity is our strength! The IUSTI regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin-America, North America) are active and information on interesting key STI topics, activities, and new developments in their regions will be presented by the regional representatives.

At the conference you will get information about IUSTI and IUSTI-meetings in your conference bag as well as at the *IUSTI Booth*. At the booth you will also be able to contact us personally for more information on our activities. Flyers and announcements of regional and world IUSTI-meetings will be provided. We still need to increase the number of IUSTI members to help represent all those involved in STI management and service planning. At the booth you can join IUSTI or renew your membership. Please come and visit us during the conference!

See you in Seattle!

*Angelika Stary
IUSTI world president*

IUSTI News

A new short text on STIs has recently been published entitled *Fast Facts – Sexually Transmitted Infections*. It provides a useful primer in disease management and is available at the discounted price of £10 to IUSTI members. Details are available at www.fastfacts.com where the code SN10 should be entered in the coupon box to receive the discount.

Research Review

STIs, Plus or Minus 30 years (1977 to 2037)

Thirty years ago there was no HIV, no www, no electronic search engines, no PCs, no PCR, no HSV treatment, no HBV vaccine and we used to speak to each other on the phone. STI rates were sky high, often at their highest level in history- even higher than before the 'war'. Gonorrhoea rates were 500 per 100,000 in the US and 60,000 cases were diagnosed in the UK. Condoms were rarely used and our job prospects were looking very healthy, even if nothing else was.

What did we publish then in the only two STI journals (STI and STD). The International Journal of STD and AIDS or the more recent Sexual Health weren't even around then. In 1977 there were 6 issues of STI published. In the first issue there were four single author papers, five dual author papers and the remaining 6 papers had only three authors. Things have changed. Of the 20 papers in the current issue, two were single author editorials and 16 had 4 or more authors, and one 10 authors. All the famous names were there back in 1977, starting their careers - have a look.

There were reports about unusual infections such as Giardia and Shigellosis appearing for the first time in men who have sex with men (MSM) through proposed faecal oral transmission, and reports of penicillin resistant gonococci. It was certainly a time for terms one wouldn't dare use today; 'STIs in promiscuous and non-promiscuous women' for example. Remember however, publishing then involved hand writing or dictating manuscripts and laboriously looking through hundreds of Index Medicus books to find references. And then it took a week for the post to arrive from Australia.

Now allow me some crystal ball gazing. What will 2037 be like? Those publishing first author papers today will be the famous leaders of the future and I'll be a 'grey nomad'; Grey nomads is an Australian term to describe retirees with caravans and satellite phones, driving around outback Australia, just like my parents are doing now.

Thanks to vaccines, there will be virtually no new cases of genital warts, chlamydia, herpes or hepatitis C; hopefully there'll be an at least partially effective HIV vaccine as well. We'll finally understand what the elusive causes of 'pathogen negative' NGU are

and appropriately manage their partners. We'll understand PID with at least some consistency in its diagnosis and management.

I'm afraid however the news won't be all good. We exist on this planet because we like eating and having sex, both critical to survival. But, just like obesity won't go away, neither will STIs. The successful transition of HIV into a chronic manageable condition has seen the resurgence of STIs in men who have sex with men. The rates of syphilis in men in the UK have now reached the level of its post war peak, and the trend is looking a bit like the current bull stock market.

Now, I won't be able to use the term 'behaviour', in 2037, because it can be 'good' and 'bad' so I'll settle for 'sexual practices'. The sexual practices of MSM, with high and rising rates of partner change and intimate contact provide the potential for the rapid and possibly silent transmission of other new infections. Hopefully we won't see another HIV, but just like LGV reappeared recently, and Giardia and Shigellosis were reported in 1977, the next thirty years may well bring other new infections.

I'm optimistic that this transient political trend to the right, is indeed transient and won't threaten the 'logical, sensible, responsible and practical' (1) harm minimisation approach that has been so successful in preventing much disease transmission. What happens with this may more than anything else determine how much and what work we'll be doing in 2037.

1. Breakfast in America is the sixth album by the band Supertramp, recorded in 1979

Christopher Fairley
cfairley@unimelb.edu.au

Regional Reports

Europe

We are all looking forward very much to the upcoming IUSTI-Europe Congress to be held in Cavtat near Dubrovnik in Croatia, between 11th - 14th October 2007. The organisation of this meeting has gone very well, with a huge amount of work being put in by very many people, ably led by the Congress President, Dr Mihael Skerlev, and the Chairman of the International Scientific Committee, Dr Derek Freedman from Dublin, Ireland. All information, including the ability to register and book accommodation on-line, is available through the conference website at: www.iustieurope2007.org

Planning has also commenced on the 24th IUSTI-Europe Congress which will take place in Milan, Italy, 4th - 6th September 2008. The Conference President is Dr Marco Cusini from Milan,, and the Chair of the International Scientific Committee is Claudia Heller-Vitouch from Vienna (Claudia is of course the Honorary Secretary of IUSTI-Europe). Those of you who have not already received a paper version of the

first announcement for the congress can download a copy from the website: www.iustieurope2007.org

In 2009, IUSTI-Europe will not be organising an independent conference, as it will be encouraging its members to attend what will no doubt be an excellent scientific meeting taking place in Europe that year, the 18th Congress of the International Society for Sexually Transmitted Diseases Research (ISSTDR) in London, United Kingdom 28th June – 1st July 2009.

At its Board meeting in Dubrovnik in October, IUSTI-Europe will be looking to decide on venues for its congresses in 2010 and 2011. European physicians who would like to submit a bid should contact the Honorary Secretary, Dr Claudia Heller-Vitouch (email: c.t.heller@chello.at).

Work on updating the European STD management guidelines is also progressing well. Official representatives on the Editorial Board have now been appointed by the Union of European Medical Specialists (UEMS – Dr James Bingham, London, United Kingdom), the European Dermatology Federation (EDF – Prof Martino Neumann, Rotterdam, the Netherlands) and from the European Centres for Disease Control (ECDC – Dr Marita van der Lar).

Guidelines currently being updated include: syphilis; gonorrhoea; pelvic infection (accepted for publication in the *International Journal of STD & AIDS* which is the official organ of the IUSTI); chlamydia; HIV testing; urethritis. A new guideline on the management of proctitis is in the process of being finalised and prepared for publication. Anybody in Europe who would like to become involved in updating European STD management guidelines is encouraged to contact myself by e-mail (keith.w.radcliffe@hoptpct.nhs.uk).

Keith Radcliffe

Africa

Regional Membership

Membership to the African Region has been slowly increasing, from 3 full members and 11 associate members at the start of 2006 to 17 full members and 38 associate members in June 2007. The Region still has a long way to go, but progress has been made. Several country leads have now been identified and slowly the African IUSTI network is taking place. The IUSTI-Africa Region now has its own bank account and is able to accept subscriptions from those prospective members unable or unwilling to utilize the on-line registration process. The bank details are available on request from Mrs. Aulette Goliath, the Region's Administrative Secretary, at iusti-africa@nicd.ac.za.

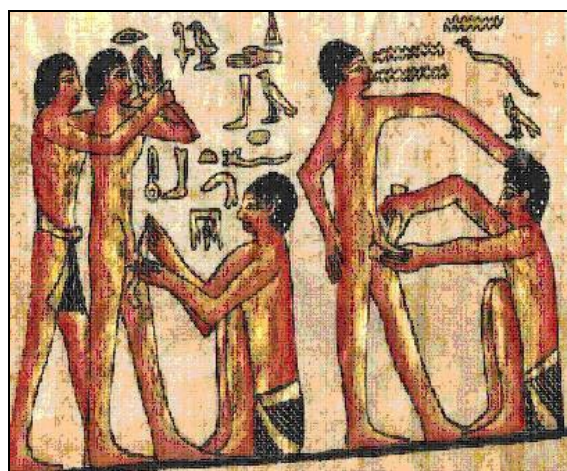
Forthcoming Regional Conferences involving IUSTI

Preparations are now well underway for the 11th World IUSTI meeting to be held in Cape Town (Spier Wine Estate) in November 2009. The Region is delighted to have Professor Kit Fairley (IUSTI Asia-Pacific region) as the co-Chair for the international

scientific committee. All involved wish for this STI/HIV conference to be a celebration of science, clinical debate, and partnership on the African continent and we look forward to welcoming many international speakers of repute to South Africa to participate in this world IUSTI meeting.

The Regional Director has recently accepted a position on the International Steering Committee for the 15th International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA), to be held in Dakar in Senegal (December 8-11, 2008). The ICASA conferences are important meetings in Africa for the discussion, education and social exchange regarding both HIV/AIDS and STIs. The inaugural steering committee meeting took place on the 8th June this year.

Recent Research from Africa



Many of our readers will be familiar with the results of the three male circumcision trials from Africa that have recently been published. Auvert et al. (2005) published the first randomized controlled intervention trial in a general population in South Africa (Orange Farm). Their data suggested that male circumcision provided 61% protection against HIV acquisition when controlling for behavioural factors. Subsequently, two studies were published in February this year from Uganda (Rakai) and Kenya (Kisumu). Bailey et al. (2007) performed a randomized controlled trial among 2784 men aged 18-24 in Kisumu; men were randomly assigned into either the intervention (circumcision) or a control group (delayed circumcision). They demonstrated a 60% protective effect for circumcision. Gray et al. (2007) reported a 51% efficacy of immediate circumcision (intervention) versus delayed circumcision (control). These randomized controlled trials have now highlighted male circumcision as a potentially very important approach to reducing the risk of HIV acquisition. Scientific and cross-cultural debate continues on the question as whether roll-out of a mass circumcision initiative in African countries with high HIV prevalence will be effective as a public health intervention.

David Lewis

Asia-Pacific**STI/HIV Training Courses in South East Asia**

The new STI/HIV Certificate Course was established in 2006 by three academic bodies namely the Indian Association for the Study of Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS (IASSTD & AIDS); the Resource Centre on Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS (RCSHA); and the Consortium of Thai Training Institutes for STDs and AIDS (COTTISA).

This is a 9-day course for medical practitioners, followed by an examination with MCQs, Slide quiz, and Objective Structure Clinical Examination (OSCE). Dr. Verapol Chandeying, representative of COTTISA has assisted in examination preparation from the first course.

There were 21 participants in the first course (July 2006), 26 in the second course (October 2006), and another 26 participants in the third course (February – March 2007)

The coordinators of Chennai course are Dr. G. Chandrasekhara Rao, gcrao@eth.net and Dr. T. Ram Manohar Rao, rmlprao@gmail.com.

The on-going International STDs/AIDS Diploma Course, a 4-week course, is arranged by Consortium of Thai Training Institutes for STDs and AIDS (COTTISA). In 2006 the 16th Diploma course was held from 30 October to 24 November 2007, with 16 participants. The next course will be conducted from 29 October – 23 November 2007. The contact persons are Dr. Chavalit Mangkalavarija, E-mail: chavalit@cottisa.org and Dr. Verapol Chandeying, E-mail: verapol.c@psu.ac.th.

Over in Malaysia the Academy of Family Physicians of Malaysia conducts a STI course targeting Family Medicine Specialists and GPs. It is held annually, spread over 8 months with 4 weekends of intensive lectures and interactive sessions. 2-3 days of laboratory work and a week of outpatient clinic attachments are included with cases in Hat Yai or India. There are also 2 days of attachments to HIV ward rounds. This is followed by a 10 day attachment with COTTISA's Diploma course and examinations in Bangkok. This year there were 22 candidates, the majority being Malaysian Ministry of Health sponsored family medicine specialists. The contact person is Dr H Doshi, doshihk@streamyx.com.

Roy Chan

Update from the UK Health Protection Agency

Update: Recent epidemiology of STIs in the UK

Understanding the epidemiology of STIs in the UK has become more difficult in recent years. While rising numbers of chlamydia, syphilis and HIV diagnoses and localised outbreaks of lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV) have indicated that sexual health in the UK is continuing to deteriorate, numbers of gonorrhoea diagnoses have been dropping rapidly. So how can we interpret this?

The discrepancy is likely to be the result of complex interactions between sexual behaviour, epidemiology and improvements to the provision of sexual health services.

Improved case finding has almost certainly influenced the steady increase in chlamydia diagnoses in the UK since the mid 1990s. The introduction of more sensitive tests using urine specimens, and the expansion of asymptomatic screening in routine sexual health service settings and, latterly, as part of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme in England, has revealed a large reservoir of previously undiagnosed infection. About 10% of young adults attending a variety of healthcare and non-healthcare settings in England are infected. In a recent report, the UK's Independent Advisory Group on Sexual Health and HIV has suggested there is a strong correlation between alcohol, drugs and risky sexual behaviour, and that these factors are fuelling a sexual health crisis among young people in the UK.

Despite these concerns, there is growing evidence from STD clinic data that transmission of gonorrhoea among heterosexuals is in decline across most parts of the UK. Significant reductions in waiting times for appointments and evidence of improved partner notification for gonorrhoea have been observed in STD clinics, and may have helped interrupt transmission of this infection among heterosexuals. Diagnoses outside of the STD clinic setting are less well monitored but while there is some evidence of more diagnoses being made by general practitioners, most are still made in STD clinics, and there is currently little evidence that the decline in diagnoses in STD clinics has resulted from a major shift in service provision. Whether there exists a significant reservoir of undetected gonococcal infections in the community is clearly worthy of further research.

Of particular concern are the rising numbers of syphilis and LGV diagnoses among men who have sex with men (MSM), a high proportion of whom are also infected with HIV. New diagnoses of HIV infection in MSM have reached record levels in recent years and while numbers of gonorrhoea diagnoses fell overall, those in MSM continued to rise. Likewise, the recent sharp increase in the prevalence of gonococcal resistance to ciprofloxacin has been predominantly associated with transmission among MSM. There is powerful evidence from enhanced surveillance systems that the greatest risk of STI infection in MSM is associated with core groups practising high-risk sexual behaviours. Clearly, efforts to reduce unsafe sexual behaviour in MSM in the UK must be invigorated, and there is an ongoing need for interventions and health promotion campaigns targeting this group.

Gwenda Hughes

Conference Update

IUSTI Events:**17th ISSTD/10th IUSTI World Congress**

Dates: July 29-August 01, 2007
 Location: Seattle, WA, USA.
 Website: <http://www.isstdr.org/index.php?id=38>

23rd Conference of IUSTI – Europe

Dates: October 11-14, 2007
 Location: Dubrovnik, Croatia
 Contact: Dr. Mihael Skerlev mskerlev@kbc-zagreb.hr

15th IUSTI-Asia-Pacific Congress

Dates: February 03-06, 2008
 Location: Dubai, UAE
 Website: <http://www.iusti.ae/>

Other STI or Related

Meetings/Congresses/Courses:

Training Courses and Study Days in Sexual Health, Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV Disease. 2007, St Stephen's AIDS Trust

Dates: July, October & November 2007,
 Location: London
 Website: www.ssat.org.uk

King K. Holmes Symposium

Dates: July 28, 2007
 Location: Seattle, WA.
 Website:
http://depts.washington.edu/astda/calendar/KKH_Symposium.pdf

2nd International workshop on HIV Transmission

Date: August 26, 2007
 Location: Washington DC, United States
 Website: <http://www.virology-education.com/>

HIV/AIDS Counselling: Trends and Challenges

Dates: September 4-6, 2007
 Location: Nairobi, Kenya
 Website: <http://www.kapc.or.ke>

21st World Congress of Dermatology

Dates: October 1-5, 2007
 Location: Buenos Aires, Argentina
 Website : <http://www.iacd2006.com>

Infectious Disease Society of America

Dates: October 4-7, 2007
 Location: San Diego, CA.
 Website:
http://www.idsociety.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Meetings/2007_Annual_Meeting/2007_IDSIA_Annual_Meeting.htm

Australasian Sexual Health Conference

Dates: October 8-10, 2007
 Location: Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia
 Website: <http://www.sexualhealthconference.com.au>

Annual HIV/AIDS Update and Border Health Summit

Dates: October 24-26, 2007
 Location: South Padre Island, Texas, United States
 Website: <http://www.valleyaids.org>

4th Asia Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights

Dates: October 29-31, 2007
 Location: Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India
 Website: <http://www.4apcrsh.org>

Meeting on Prevention and Control of Sexually Transmitted Infections in the Western Pacific Region

Dates: October 29 - November 1, 2007
 Location: Penang, Malaysia
 Website:
http://www.wpro.who.int/health_topics/sexually_transmitted_infections/meetings.htm

Congreso Centroamericano de ITS/VIH/SIDA

Dates: November 4-9, 2007
 Location: Managua, Nicaragua
 Website: <http://concasida.org>

First International Summit on HIV/AIDS and Zimbabwe

Dates: November 30- December 2, 2007
 Location: Oakland, California, United States
 Website: <http://www.ZimAIDSSummit.org>

East African Conference on the Role of Future Health Professionals on Community based HIV/AIDS control.

Dates: December 11-15, 2007
 Location: Butare, South Province, Rwanda
 Website: <http://www.medsar.org>

International Symposium on Tropical Medicine and Hygiene

Dates: December 12-15, 2007
 Location: Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan
 Website: <http://www.aku.edu/news/seminars/rstmh/>

International Conference on Opportunistic Pathogens in AIDS

Dates: January 27-29, 2008
 Location: New Delhi, India
 Website: <http://www.icopa-india.org>

3rd Africa Conference on Sexual Health And Rights

Dates: February 4-7, 2008
 Location: Abuja, Nigeria
 Website: <http://africalsexuality.org>

5th EADV Spring Symposium

Dates: May 22-25, 2008
 Location: Istanbul, Turkey
 Website: <http://www.eadv.org/article.asp?AID=368>

XVII International AIDS Conference

Dates: August 3-8, 2008
 Location: Mexico City, Mexico
 Website: <http://www.aids2008.org>

17th EADV Congress

Dates: 17-21 September 2008

Location: Paris, France
Website: <http://www.eadv2008.com/>

15th International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa

Dates: December 8-11, 2008
Location: Dakar, Senegal
Website: <http://www.icasadakar2008.org/>

25th International Papillomavirus Conference

Dates: May 8-14, 2009
Location: Malmö, Sweden
Website: <http://www.hpv2009.org>

International Society for Sexually Transmitted Diseases Research

Dates: June 28 - July 1, 2009

Location: London, United Kingdom
Website: <http://www.isstdr.org/index.php?id=62>

Somesh Gupta

STI Global Update is published by the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections. Its aims are to provide an international perspective on the management and control of sexually acquired infections. Regular contributions from the regional directors of IUSTI and feedback from conferences is supplemented by short reviews of relevant topics and input from the Center for Disease Control (US), Health Protection Agency (UK) and the World Health Organisation.

Prof. Jonathan Ross, Editor
jonathan.ross@hobtpct.nhs.uk

Further information on the activities of IUSTI available at
www.iusti.org