Greetings from North America IUSTI. Features in this issue include: The BASHH/ASTDA meeting held in Brooklyn New York May 7-10, 2008 ("Converging Approaches in STI control and Reproductive Health"); news from the European Chlamydia Meeting in Aarhus, Denmark July 1-4, 2008; updates from the American Social Health Association (ASHA); the American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Association (ASTDA); and some exciting new websites. As well, we feature a new online project from the Internet and STD Center of Excellence, Denver Colorado, STD Prevention Online, STDpreventiononline.org, where members can discuss STD-related issues, read about new STI information and exchange views, as well as contact collaborators in the field of STDs.

It is a web-based work space, which provides a communication interface for STI/HIV prevention program, policy, and research. You are welcome to join.

Message from the Regional Director

Mary Sullivan
Memorandum: 1961-2008
Mary, our IUSTI newsletter editor was tragically killed August 12 by a truck which crashed into her bedroom.

Mary was a kind, intelligent, hard working, and caring person who always did more than asked for in her friendship and her job. She was totally dedicated to her girls and their successes represent her love and guidance.

Mary always represented the Johns Hopkins University as an ideal employee. She certainly exemplified this work ethic in her job performance, always willing and volunteering to do more than what her job required. She always jumped at the chance to help others in our group whether in the laboratory or in administrative areas, which were extra work for her. She was an outstanding teacher and organizer of her work. She took pride in the work we did and totally dedicated herself to doing an outstanding job.

Many Johns Hopkins employees will sorely miss her as both a friend and fellow employee. Mary was called too early, but surely will join God’s legion of angels.

Mary Sullivan, MSc
Editor

Update from the BASHH-ASTDA Joint Conference

The ASTDA hosted the 3rd Bi-lateral ASTDA/BASHH meeting titled “Converging Approaches in STI Control & Reproductive Health” and was held in New York City, NY on May 7-10, 2008. This meeting was co-sponsored by IUSTI. Over 450 delegates attended an extensive program which included 8 plenary sessions, 28 oral abstracts and over 150 posters. In particular, there was substantial attention paid to the interactions between STIs and HIV. Highlights of the meeting included a large session on bacterial STDs within the context of HIV infection, and focusing on outreach approaches to gay men. We were honored by the presence of Baroness Joyce Gould, who is a member of the House of Lords, and who has been largely responsible for implementation of the UK Chlamydia control program as well as its funding. The meeting concluded with the traditional BASHH gala, which occurred in a stunning venue overlooking the sun setting behind the New York City skyline. One unique aspect of this conference was the involvement and attention of local public health officials and line-public health workers.

Through grants from the ASTDA, over 50 employees from the New York City Health Department and affiliated agencies were able to attend, enabling exposure to top level translational science in a unique venue. (from Jonathan Zenilman, MD, PhD; Director, The Internet & STD Center of Excellence)
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We're on the WEB!!
www.iusti.org

STIs in Teens. A presentation from the 2008 National STD Prevention Conference, Chicago IL, which was sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) last March that received wide news coverage in the United States, demonstrated that about one in four adolescent girls has an STI. It was presented by Sara Forhan et al. and was entitled “Prevalence of STIs and Bacterial Vaginosis among Female Adolescents in the United Stated: Data from the National Health and Nutrition Survey (NHANES) 2003-2004”. From 838 female participants, 14-19 years of age, who were part of the representative National Survey, 404 reported ever having sex. The weighted prevalence of “any STI” for all females was 25.7% (95% CI 20.1-32.9). Among those reporting sex, the prevalence was 39.5% (95% CI 31.1-50.3).

Among all adolescents, specific prevalences were HPV-High Risk/6/11 18.3%, chlamydia 3.9%, trichomonas 2.5% and HSV-2 1.9%. Specific prevalences for those reporting having had sex included: HPV-High Risk 29.5%, chlamydia 7.1%, trichomonas 3.6%, and HSV-2 3.4%. Almost 25% of all females had BV. For those with any STI, 15% had more than one STI. The authors concluded that public health efforts should be increased to prevent STIs among adolescents.

New STI Book. The new edition of the widely used reference book for STIs was published in the spring of this past year: Sexually Transmitted Diseases, 4th Edition, eds. KK Holmes, PF Sparling, WE Stamm, P Piot, JW Wasserheit, L Corey, MS Cohen and HD Watts, (McGraw-Hill, New York, 2008) This book has been heralded as bringing STDs and associated social and population-level issues up-to-date and has created an excellent resource for clinicians world-wide. Earlier this year, the textbook received a 5 star rating from Doody’s Journal, a resource journal for librarians. This 2,166 page edition is highly recommended for all STI researchers, public health officials, and clinicians.

Update from the ASTDA
(from Jeanne Marrazzo, MD, MPH, ASTDA President)

In April, the ASTDA announced its first round of ASTDA Developmental Award recipients. Congratulations to Alia Al-Tayyib, PhD, of Denver Public Health, Denver, Colorado, and Loida Bonney, MD, of Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Georgia! Dr. Al-Tayyib’s proposal is entitled, “Detecting chlamydial and gonococcal infections using respondent-driven sampling,” and she will be mentored by Kees Rietmeijer, MD, PhD. Dr. Bonney’s proposal is entitled, “Identifying barriers and facilitators of HPV vaccination among minority women,” and she will be mentored by Carlos del Rio, MD, PhD. The ASTDA Developmental Awards are intended to encourage new investigators to pursue careers in research related to STI, and will fund up to two years of activities at the post-doctoral level. The intent is that they will be used to generate data that young investigators can use as the basis for seeking future independent funding from the NIH or other sources. We anticipate offering these awards on an annual basis. For details, see www.astda.org.

ASTDA will also sponsor an interactive session entitled “HIV, STDs and the Global AIDS Pandemic: Lethal Synergy 2008” at the 48th Annual Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy and the Infectious Diseases Society of America (ICAA/CIDSA) to be held in Washington, D.C., from October 25-28, 2008. This session will be moderated by Jeanne Marrazzo, MD, MPH, and Myron Cohen, MD, and will feature an international group of panelists discussing challenging scenarios that illustrate the perilous intersection of HIV and STI care and policy. We hope to see you there!
In the News


An inventive intervention was developed by the authors to create videos about risk reduction and condom use and showed it on alternating months to patients in STD clinics in the US. The control group were the patients who visited the clinics during the months when the video was not shown. Over 38,000 people were involved in the study, which was conducted over 20 months in 3 clinics. Incident infections of sexually transmitted diseases were reduced by 10% in those that saw the videos versus those that did not.

Upcoming Events

48th ICAAC—46th IDSA Annual Meeting
October 25-28, 2008 Washington, DC

11th IUSTI World Congress
November 9-12, 2009 Spier Wine Estate, Cape Town, S.Africa

2010 National STD Prevention Conference
March 8-11, 2010 Atlanta, Georgia

19th ISSTDR Meeting 2011July 10-13, 2011 Quebec City, Canada

STD Point of Care Test Funding Opportunity; for information see http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/Medicine/std/funding_announcements/
Anticipated Release Date Sept 5, 2008

In the News

An important challenge in the translation of research findings and programmatic innovations into STI/HIV prevention practice is the effective communication amongst the different prevention disciplines, including program, policy, and research. Rather than being unidirectional, a communication platform for this purpose should acknowledge the expertise existing at multiple levels and should thus focus more on exchange than transfer of information.

To meet this need, the Internet and STD Center of Excellence has developed an online platform to encourage multi-disciplinary STI/HIV prevention collaboration, creativity, and sharing of information.

STDPreventionOnline is an interactive, user-driven website that uses a variety of media, including text, image, video, and audio files, as well as blogs and forums to facilitate communication among its users. In addition, users can develop working groups that may have limited (invitation-only) or open membership. The site also posts jobs in the fields of STI and HIV Prevention. Membership to the site is free.

STDPreventionOnline went live on November 5, 2007 and currently (July 2008) has close to 1,250 members, including 1,200 individual members and 50 organizations. Members have uploaded over 400 and downloaded over 2,500 resources, job postings, events, and blogs. Most members are based in the U.S., but there is increasing interest from members residing abroad, including Europe, Africa, and Asia. The majority of members (52%) work in STI and/or HIV programs in state/local health departments, 15% in a university setting, 11% in clinics, 10% in federal government, and 9% in community-based organizations.

In the short time of its existence, STDPreventionOnline has attracted a wide and varied audience in the areas of STI and HIV prevention. Given the disciplines represented by the site’s current membership, STDPreventionOnline is on track to become an attractive communication interface for STI/HIV prevention program, policy, and research. (from Cornelis A. Rietmeijer, MD, PhD; Director, The Internet & STD Center of Excellence)
Websites Worth Checking Out!

- The Midwest Teen Sex Show  http://midwestteensexshow.com
- STD Prevention Online  http://stdpreventiononline.org
- The STD Wizard Risk Assessment  http://www.stdwizard.org

Update from the American Social Health Association (ASHA)

ASHA continues responding to requests from journalists and news organizations in need of expert insight as they report on STI issues. So far in 2008 ASHA has responded to requests for assistance from media outlets including the Cosmopolitan (STI’s and risk reduction in young women), Playboy (STI testing for men when embarking on a new relationship), National Journal (HPV vaccines), and the New York Post (condom label update). In fall of 2008, ASHA staff are scheduled to be interviewed on the subject of HPV and men for the PBS show To the Contrary.

ASHA promoted STI Awareness Month in April. The STI Awareness efforts included teaming up with the New York P.R. firm Duval Guillaume to highlight the dangers of chlamydia to young people. Working with a team from the Stanford Graduate School of Business and Carleton University's School of Engineering, the team devised an application on the popular social networking site Facebook, where users were invited to "make a love child" by morphing pictures of their own faces with that of their friends. The humor then takes a different turn. The infected user is notified that they have caught the infection from their friend and is prompted to discover more on the ASHA website: www.ASHAstd.org.

Recent Publications


Schachter, J, et.al. Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests in the Diagnosis of Chlamydial and Gonococcal Infections of the Oropharynx and Rectum in Men who have Sex with Men. STD: 2008 Jul; 35(7); p. 637-642.

Latest Estimates of Sexually Transmitted Infections in the US

We welcome new members from North America. Please log onto www.IUSTI.org and join our unique international colleagues who work in the STI field. Other Regions which play an integral part of Worldwide-IUSTI include: IUSTI-Europe, IUSTI-Latin America, IUSTI-Africa, and IUSTI-Asia Pacific. Associate membership is free and full membership is inexpensive. Membership is open to individuals with a professional interest STIs. You can see that we have a lot of work to do in diagnosing, treating, and preventing STIs in North America.