

STI Global Update

Newsletter of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections

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President's Letter



How the world has changed since my last global report.

Last November, I marvelled at the quality of our regional IUSTI conferences in Europe, Latin-America and the Asia-Pacific regions, where hundreds of our members came together to share their expertise, to network, and to enjoy each other's company. Today all of our regions are experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic with some countries undergoing severe travel restrictions and imposed isolation. Some of you will undoubtedly be caught up in these controls. Also, many of you will be at the front line of the diagnosis, or care, of those infected, or involved in the public health measures to contain the epidemic.

While the situation is evolving, and it is unclear exactly what will happen in the weeks and months ahead, there are optimistic figures from China where the epidemic appears to have peaked in late January.



It is therefore fortuitous that our 21st IUSTI World Congress is happening much later in the year than usual. So, our plans for Bangkok are able to

proceed as normal, with the Scientific Committee making good progress on the programme.

Important dates to remember:

- General abstract submission opens: March 31, 2020
- Scholarship application submission opens: March 31, 2020
- Deadline for abstracts and scholarships submissions: July 31, 2020
- Abstract evaluation deadline: August 31, 2020

Early Bird registration is up until August 31, 2020, with substantial reductions on all the registration fees for fully paid IUSTI members.

Please continue to make your plans to attend the Congress and to prepare your abstracts for submission.

Change in the Regional Director of North America

It is with sadness that I let you know that Kees Rietmeijer has resigned from the position of IUSTI North America Director with effect from 1 February 2020. He has been a great supporter of IUSTI. He was initially the North America Chair before being elected to the North America Regional Director post in 2015. He was also the Scientific Co-Chair of the IUSTI World Congress in Dublin 2018. Kees has been very effective in all of these roles and has contributed a great deal to IUSTI. We will obviously miss him and on your behalf, I wish him all the best for the future.

He can't officially be replaced until the next elections are held at the beginning of 2021. The appointment will then need to be ratified at the General Assembly in 2021 in Amsterdam. This means that we have needed to co-opt someone who is already on the Executive Committee to be the stand-in Regional Director until these elections.

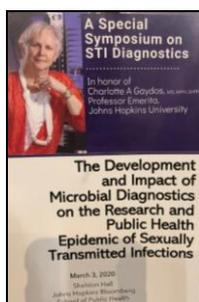
I am delighted to let you know that Bradley Stoner (the Membership Secretary) has agreed to be co-opted to the North American Regional Director's post and consequently Jackie Sherrard (the Assistant Secretary General) has agreed to be co-opted to Membership Secretary post to cover Brad during this time.

These changes came into effect on 1 February 2020. Thank you to Brad and Jackie for agreeing to take on these roles. Kees, Brad, and Jackie,

have been working together over the past few months to ensure smooth handovers. The report from North America in this newsletter is a collaboration between Kees and Brad.

A Special Symposium on STI Diagnostics in honour of Professor Charlotte Gaydos, March 3 2020

Colleagues at Johns Hopkins University held a special symposium on 3rd March 2020 to honour the prestigious career of our IUSTI Past-President, Professor Charlotte Gaydos, following her recent retirement. This fitting tribute to her exceptional career follows on from her receiving the IUSTI Gold Medal and the ASTDA Distinguished Career Award in Vancouver in July 2019.



Prof Charlotte Gaydos receiving the IUSTI Gold Medal in July 2019



Prof David Lewis (also a past president of IUSTI) congratulates Prof Charlotte Gaydos after receiving the ASTDA Distinguished Career Award in July 2019.

Although she may have retired from her laboratory work she still remains active in research, and of course in IUSTI.

Janet Wilson, IUSTI-World President

News

September 2020 - 34th European Congress on Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV / AIDS
 During the period 03-05 September 2020, the 34th European Congress on Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV / AIDS will be held in Bucharest. The Congress is organized under the auspices of the International Union Against Sexually Transmitted Infections (IUSTI) (<https://www.iusti.org/>) in collaboration with the Romanian Medical Association and will be held at

the Parliament Palace in Bucharest. The scientific program is addressed to specialists and residents from different specialties: Dermatovenerology, Infectious Diseases, Urology, Gynecology, Microbiology, Epidemiology, Oral Pathology, Health Management, as well as to all the specialties with interest in the management of sexually transmitted infections.



The congress program will include interactive courses, presentations, symposiums and debates on the main topics of interest, as well as lectures in the field of sexually transmitted infections held by experts from the country and abroad.

Registration for the congress is on the website: <https://www.iustibucharest2020.com/>. You can also visit the Facebook page of the Congress - IUSTI-Europe Congress for the latest news (<https://www.facebook.com/iustieurope/>).

Don't forget to register before June 1st to benefit from Early Bird Registration!

Prof. Univ. Dr. George Sorin Tiplica, Congress President
Dr. Vall-Mayans Marti, Scientific Chair

Regional Reports

Europe

IUSTI- Europe STI Course: 2-5 June 2020 in Bertinoro, Italy

The fifth edition of the basic course DIAGNOSTIC PATHWAYS AND MANAGEMENT OF SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (EXCLUDING HIV), will be Held in Bertinoro (Italy) from 2nd to 5th June.

Course aims:

- To provide a European overview about management of STI with an insight to epidemiology, epidemiological tools and policy of Public health interventions
- To give a clinical updated overview on the main STIs and to describe the diagnostic process from the patient to the lab and back to the patient for correct treatment
- To interactively discuss with participants clinical cases examining clinical, diagnostic, psychological aspects in the context of a Public health

intervention directed to prevent disease complications and diffusion.

At the end of the course participants will achieve a level of knowledge that will enable them to properly manage the whole problem of STIs for patient and for public health.



34th IUSTI- Europe Congress on Sexually Transmitted Infections: 3-5 September 2020 in Bucharest, Romania

The 34th IUSTI-Europe Congress on Sexually Transmitted Infections will take place on 3- 5 September in Bucharest, Romania in 2020.

The concept behind the local organization of the Congress is to bring together the competences and experience of different fields of medicine that deals in the day to day practice with venereal diseases. The Romanian Medical Association (founded in 1866) will represent the back-bone of the local team together with the affiliated national associations of different specialities. Dermato-venereologists, infectionists, microbiologists, epidemiologists, oral pathologists and other specialties will find a special place of interest in the IUSTI Congress as the multidisciplinary sessions will deal with the hot problems of venereology.

The scientific programme will deal with current challenging issues with updated topics in sections that will benefit from the interventions of international key opinion leaders. Sessions will facilitate knowledge-exchange and multidisciplinary interactions to try to find solutions together for taming the tide of the STIs and HIV (our modern... vampires).

The Congress will take place in The Palace of Parliament, one of the world's largest buildings, where large and sumptuous decorated rooms will welcome colleagues from different specialties in a unique multidisciplinary event.

For more information please see the website at: www.iustibucharest2020.com



Collaboration between IUSTI Europe and ECDC

The European Centre for Disease Control is based in Stockholm. Its work covers three main areas: surveillance and disease data (across Europe), threats and disease outbreaks, and Public Health training. A recent reorganisation will hopefully help better deliver its vision "To improve lives in Europe and globally applying scientific excellence, thus empowering the Member States, the European Commission, and other partners to drive public health policy and practice." IUSTI is invited to be part of all its major STI consultations and IUSTI has a representative at its meetings - considerable work has taken place over the last 12 months:.

IUSTI has had input into the development of a number of ECDC initiatives;

1. *Development of national strategies for the prevention and control of STIs (Oct 2018)*
This toolkit allows policy makers to develop strategies for prevention and control of STI
2. IUSTI made a number of suggestions to increase the profile of STI with policy makers. This included the development of a senior Scientist exchange program – the first of these took place in the autumn of 2019 (Croatia/UK)
3. Key IUSTI members have been given access to EPIS (the European Infection notification system). A number of teleconferences were held to co-ordinate activities across Europe concerning the recent discovery of the Finnish variant Chlamydia and the monitoring response. Key links to ECDC documents are now on IUSTI website adjacent to our current management guidance for diagnosis and management.
4. Input into the STI co-ordination committee to set ECDC priorities for 2018-19, 17-18 October 2019 (IUSTI members raised the issue of syphilis as a key problem for clinicians and the rise in congenital cases seen in Northern Europe). Subsequently ECDC have commissioned a detailed review of syphilis in Europe and key actions for policy makers

5. Input into the documents around syphilis, and antibiotic resistance for GC (published 2019)
6. We will have 2 members on the PrEP implementation report
7. Members of IUSTI have attended a meeting on HPV vaccination policies in the EU/EEA and provided input into the subsequent report

The relationship with the ECDC is extremely strong. The quality of the work is exceptional and provides resources that are freely available through its website.

Airi Pöder

North America

From the ASTDA President



The 3rd annual ASTDA sponsored Workshop on Academic, Public Health and Industry Collaborations which focuses on career development activities as well as strengthening joint efforts designed to control STIs, was held in Santa Fe in January 2020. The workshop was attended by leaders in STI research, junior faculty interested in building a career in STI research, representatives of public health agencies and, representatives of the diagnostic industry. The workshop creates opportunities for investigator initiated studies and helps industry, academia and public health align on research priorities.



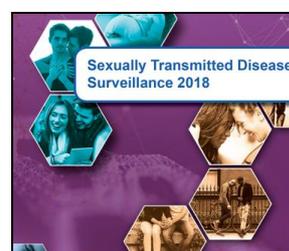
ASTDA also held its annual Board of Directors meeting during the same week where discuss plans for the organization of the 2023 ISSTD meeting which we will be hosting. Please visit our website (www.astda.org) to be sure you have renewed your ASTDA membership (which will also

renew your IUSTI membership!) and check out what's new with ASTDA.

Finally, ASTDA sponsored, in part, a symposium held the first week of March honoring the career and contributions of Dr. Charlotte Gaydos who has recently achieved Emerita status at Johns Hopkins University and who has been actively engaged in IUSTI activities (including serving as IUSTI World President) and has served on the ASTDA Board in the past. Congratulations and thanks for all you have done for our field, Charlotte!

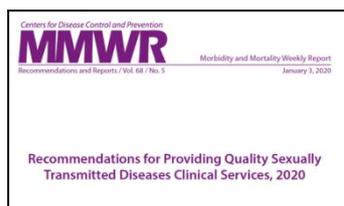
Barbara Van Der Pol, PhD, MPH

From the CDC



In October last year, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention came out with the 2018 STD Surveillance Report confirming the continued rise of reportable STIs in the U.S. Chlamydia reports are at the highest level ever, and syphilis and gonorrhea reports have not been this high since historic lows in 2001 and 2009 respectively. The continued rise in congenital syphilis with 1,306 reported cases in 2018 is particularly alarming. In the words of Dr. Gail Bolan, the Director of the STD Division at CDC: "It is imperative that federal, state, and local programs employ strategies that maximize long-term population impact by reducing STD incidence and promoting sexual, reproductive, maternal, and infant health. The resurgence of syphilis, and particularly congenital syphilis, is not an arbitrary event, but rather a symptom of a deteriorating public health infrastructure and lack of access to health care. It is exposing hidden, fragile populations in need that are not getting the health care and preventive services they deserve. This points to our need for public health and health care action for each of the cases in this report, as they represent real people, not just numbers."

The full report is available at on CDC's website: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats18/default.htm>



The long-awaited *Recommendations for Providing Quality STD Services* were released by CDC early January. Recommendations are aimed at primary care and STI specialty care settings and are made at two levels, i.e., services that should or could be delivered in either of these settings. The following domains of services are addressed: sexual history and physical examination, prevention, screening, partner services, evaluation of STI-related conditions, laboratory, treatment, and specialist referral of complicated cases. These recommendations will be of importance in efforts to improve the level of STI services both in primary care settings and in STI specialty clinics and will also inform curricula for STI workforce development. In a time of rising STI rates, these recommendations are timely indeed.

The *Recommendations* can be downloaded at this link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/rr/rr6805a1.htm>

STD Awareness Week



Dear Colleagues,

Today, we have exciting news to share about our annual STD awareness observance. We are ecstatic to kick off the new decade by inviting you to observe STD Awareness Week with us from April 12-18, 2020.

As you may know, April has historically served as STD Awareness Month. The decision to move to a week was not made lightly but rather driven by consideration of our past efforts and audience engagement here at CDC and in speaking with colleagues in the field. Furthermore, in being strategic of health observances, we selected the second full week of April for STD awareness as the first week is National Public Health Week and the third week is National Infertility Awareness Week. We expect this change will amplify our prevention messaging over the week, rather than diffused across a month, increasing our collective impact for STD awareness in the nation.

While the timing is shifting, our goals for the new STD Awareness Week remain the same: raise awareness about STDs and how they impact our lives; ensure people have the tools and knowledge to prevent, test for, and timely treat STDs; and break down the STD-related barriers of stigma, fear, and discrimination. While we're excited for this change, we know transitions come with challenges and recognize that this first year we'll encounter some hiccups. We believe, though, that while STD Awareness Week provides us a yearly opportunity to unify our voices, it certainly isn't the only time to share our messages or hold testing events. STDs impact people daily not just during a certain week or month so let's encourage prevention and testing year-round!

Because local prevention needs vary with the communities we serve, CDC will again provide four diverse campaigns to choose from with different prevention focuses and audiences this year. We will update you by mid-March with more specifics on STD Awareness Week materials.

After decades of service in our field, what keeps me engaged and excited year after year is one constant: change. Our field has an incredible history of adaptability and flexibility as the times change. I see this as a new era for raising our voices about STD prevention and control. Here's to a great STD Awareness Week this April and thank you for your unwavering commitment to STD prevention!

Best Regards,
Gail Bolan, MD, Director, Division of STD Prevention National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

More information:

<https://www.cdc.gov/std/saw/index.htm>

National Coalition of STD Directors



**National Coalition
of STD Directors**

Highlights:

- STD Awareness month is now STD awareness week, April 13 (see above)
- The first ever STI Action plan will be released by the Trump Administration in April.
- STDs are included the Trump Administration's End HIV Initiative and there is the first ever federal funding line for STD clinics in the initiative

- Congress increased funding for STD prevention by an additional \$3.6 million in FY 20, the first increase in 18 years

More on the NCSD website: <http://www.ncsddc.org>

On a Personal Note...

This will be my last contribution to the IUSTI Newsletter. I am retiring from “active duty” at the Denver Health Department and the Denver STD Prevention Training Center on April 1. In anticipation of this, I also resigned as the Director of the North American IUSTI region and with that my position on the Board of ASTDA. Thank you to Brad Stoner for stepping up as the interim Director for our region until the position is permanently filled by the IUSTI World Executive Committee at the end of this year. It has been a great honor to be on the IUSTI World EXCO and to represent the North American Region/ASTDA for the past 6 years. I have always found great passion among IUSTI members for the work that we do and you may rest assured that I will find other ways to express my passion in the future. As the old Eagles song goes: “You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave!”

Kees Rietmeijer

Upcoming Conferences



November 19-22, 2019
 Hilton Alexandria Mark Center Hotel
 5000 Seminary Road
 Alexandria, VA 22311

From the IUSTI-NA Regional Director

As the newly-co-opted Regional Director for the North America region, I wish to thank my predecessor, Dr. Kees Rietmeijer, for his dedication and service to the field. Kees has been a role model and mentor for countless STI clinicians, investigators, and program staff, and he is an indefatigable advocate for STI prevention and control. Under his leadership, the IUSTI-NA region has become stronger and more cohesive, particularly with regard to our close alliance with the American STD Association (ASTDA) as well as Canadian colleagues. Looking forward, IUSTI-NA will be well-represented at the 21st World IUSTI Congress in Bangkok this coming December – please come and share your research with the world community.

Brad Stoner

Conference Update

IUSTI Events:

IUSTI-Europe 2020 Congress
 Dates: 3-5 September 2020
 Locations: Bucharest, Romania
 Website: www.iustibucharest2020.com

21st IUSTI World Congress
 Dates: 1-4 December 2020
 Location: Bangkok, Thailand
 Website: www.iusti2020bangkok.com

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.

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