

STI Global Update

Newsletter of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections

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President's Letter



2022 - returning to some normality

I'm sure like me many of you were delighted to welcome the start of 2022, with the hope that this year may mark the return of some normality. Certainly plans for the 23rd World IUSTI Congress, on 4th-7th September 2022, at the Elephant Hills Resort, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, are moving at a great pace. There will definitely be a face to face meeting but there will also be the option to attend the congress virtually in recognition that not everyone will be able to, or want to, travel as yet. Registration, accommodation booking, and abstract submission, are all open and available on <https://www.iusti2022zimbabwe.com/>

Dr Francis Ndowa, the Congress President, gives further details about the congress later on in this Newsletter.



23rd World IUSTI Congress, 4th-7th September 2022, at the Elephant Hills Resort, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

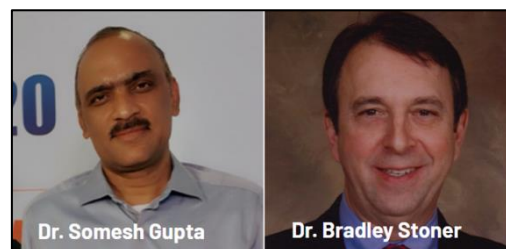
2021 was a year of two IUSTI Congresses

The first was the very successful virtual STI & HIV 2021 World Congress, in Amsterdam in July, hosted by Dr Henry de Vries. Henry provided us with a detailed report of this congress in the August 2021 Newsletter, and we have attached the Final Congress Report with the email circulating this Newsletter to you all.

The second was the postponed 21st IUSTI World, with the Asia-Pacific Region, Congress. Originally, the 21st IUSTI Congress was due to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, in December 2020. This was initially postponed, due to COVID, until December 2021. However, during 2021 it became clear that a face to face congress, even in December, was not going to be possible. So instead, we combined it with the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference and held a virtual two-day congress on 10-11th December 2021.

There are two key people that made this happen. The first was Dr Bradley Stoner, who was the Chair of the Scientific Committee for the 21st IUSTI World Congress. He and his Co-Chair, Suzanne Garland, with the scientific committee had spent two years creating a 3-day multi-parallel session programme. They all pulled together to condense it into an amazing shorter two-parallel session programme that ensured there was some content from all the five tracks that were topical and interesting.

That left the issue of finding a local organiser who had experience of holding virtual meetings and knew of a company that had experience of running them. The second key person was Dr Somesh Gupta who volunteered to do this at very short notice, and delivered a very successful virtual congress. There are more details about the congress in the report from Bradley and Somesh further on in this Newsletter



My heartfelt thanks go to Somesh and Bradley, and Henry and Francis. Organising a scientific congress is a huge amount of work and these

inspiring occasions only happen because of the enormous efforts of our wonderful IUSTI colleagues.

WHO's Global Health Sector Strategy for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) for 2022-2030

Throughout 2021, I represented IUSTI in several WHO webinars about the Global Health Sector Strategy for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) for 2022-2030. These were to define the key priorities and strategic shifts required to achieve the goals of ending these diseases as public health threats by 2030. Many of you will have also been involved in the WHO regional consultations, as well as the online survey which was available from May to August 2021. In October 2021, IUSTI provided comments to the initial draft of the strategies. The comments and feedback that WHO received has informed the latest version of the strategies. The revised draft of the global health sector strategies 2022-2030 is available at

https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/hq-hiv-hepatitis-and-stis-library/who_draft_ghss_hiv_hep_stis_2022-2030.pdf?sfvrsn=d49c7b49_18

And back to 23rd World IUSTI Congress, 4th-7th September 2022, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe



WHO will have a number of presentations at the 23rd World IUSTI Congress and these will include the Global Health Sector Strategy for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) for 2022-2030.

The Congress's International Organising Committee, the Scientific Committee, the Fundraising Committee, the Scholarship Committee and the Local Organising Committee, are all working really hard to ensure this hybrid face to face and virtual meeting is a huge success. And me, well I am very excited. It has been so long since we have been able to meet each other and I have really missed you. So I am very much looking forward to seeing you all in Zimbabwe in September!

Janet Wilson, IUSTI-World President

News



STI Podcasts

Sexually Transmitted Infections is the world's longest running international journal on sexual health. The journal releases regular podcasts which aims to keep practitioners, trainees and researchers up to date in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of all STIs and HIV.

Latest episodes

[World Human T Leukaemia Day: patient, clinician and scientist's perspectives](#) - On the World HTLV Day (10th November), STI's Podcast Editor, Dr Fabiola Martin, was joined by Ms Kristy Blakeborough, Prof Yoshihisa Yamano and A/P Keith Chappell to discuss how the Human T leukaemia virus affects people, and review new developments in HTLV treatment and vaccination medicine.

[Impact of HIV infection on COVID-19 clinical outcome](#) - In this podcast STI's Podcast Editor, Dr Fabiola Martin, interviews Editor in Chief of the STI Journal, Prof Anna Maria Garretti and Dr Paddy Ssentongo to discuss the reported impact of HIV infection on people who are hospitalised with COVID-19.

STI podcasts are free to access and available on all major podcast platforms including [Soundcloud](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#) and [Spotify](#).

Regional Reports

Africa MENA

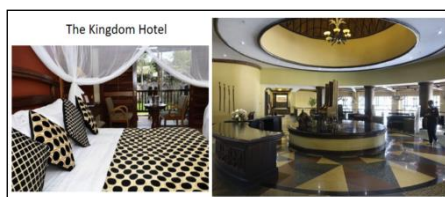
Plans for the IUSTI World Congress in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

The 23rd IUSTI World Congress is scheduled to take place from 4 to 7 September 2022 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, with pre-conference meetings taking place from Saturday 3 September.



Hopes are still high for an in-person conference on the assumption that Covid-19 regulations will have become under reasonable control by that time and there will be more flights to the region. However, provision is also being made for a hybrid meeting to allow for people to attend virtually should they prefer to do so.

The venue for the conference has been confirmed at Elephant Hills Resort in Victoria Falls. The conference venue has 8 meeting rooms with a total capacity of 830 people. It has 276 guest rooms. Free Wi-Fi to hotel residents is available. Additional accommodation will be at the Kingdom Hotel. There will be complimentary shuttle buses for transfers from hotel to hotel and to certain tourist attractions, such as the Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River.



The Welcome and Opening Ceremony is scheduled for the evening of Sunday 4th September and the Closing Ceremony will be at noon on Wednesday 7 September. The Congress Gala Dinner is scheduled for the evening of Tuesday 6 September, at the Boma Restaurant.

Theme of the Congress

The Theme of the Congress is “*Confronting inequities in STI prevention, diagnostics and care*”. This theme was crafted to cover issues of lack of accessible diagnostics, lack of appropriate antimicrobials, lack of appropriately trained health-care providers, inequities due to stigma and marginalization being experienced, especially in Africa, but also in Asia and Latin America and other resource-constrained settings. It is envisaged that some of the sessions will showcase examples of how some solutions have been identified and implemented.

Congress planning teams

The International Organising Committee includes Dr Francis Ndowa, Dr Janet Wilson, Professor Jo-Anne Dillon and all the committee members of the IUSTI Africa-MENA region.

The Scientific Committee is chaired by Professor Jo-Anne Dillon and the Co-chairperson is Professor Remco Peters. The Track Chairpersons are as follows.

Track 1. Basic and Laboratory Sciences - Tania Crucitti (Madagascar);

Track 2. Prevention and Behavioural Sciences - Sinead Delany-Moretlwe (South Africa);

Track 3. Epidemiology and Surveillance - Laith Abu-Raddad (Qatar);

Track 4. Clinical and Implementation Science - Philippe Mayaud (United Kingdom)

Track 5. Community Engagement and Policy - Carmen Logie (Canada).

A Fundraising Committee has been established, chaired by Professor Jo-Anne Dillon. Proposals to some establishments have already been submitted. A Scholarships Committee has been established, chaired by Professor David Lewis. A Local Organising Committee has been established, chaired by Francis Ndowa.

Management of the Congress

A professional conference organising company, Scatterlings Conference and Events, (<https://www.soafrika.com/>), based in South Africa, has been engaged to manage the conference, including creation of the website for the Congress, (<https://www.iusti2022zimbabwe.com/>), audio-visual services, management of registration and hotel room allocation as well as financial management.

Congress logistics

A travel agent, *Infinite Destinations Travel*, based in Harare, Zimbabwe, has been retained as an affiliate to facilitate local travel services from the airport to the hotels and back, as well as from hotel to hotel within Victoria Falls city.

Laboratory facilities for Covid-19 testing are available in Victoria Falls with capacity to conduct Covid-19 PCR tests that can be made available within 6 to 8 hours.

The Victoria Falls airport serves as the international airport and a number of airlines fly into Victoria Falls. Alternatively, delegates can fly into Harare and connect to domestic airlines to Victoria Falls.

Updates on travel regulations and availability of laboratory tests will be posted on the website under Travel_About Zimbabwe.

We are ready and looking forward to welcoming IUSTI members and other scientists to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.



Francis Ndowa

Asia Pacific

The annual STI training conference in Shanghai, China

The STI training conference has been held annually since 2003, which is organized by Shanghai STD Treatment Quality Control Center. They provide a platform where STI-associated professionals share new knowledge and information to improve clinical diagnosis, treatment and service delivery for STIs in Shanghai. The 2021 STI training conference was held from 11 to 12 November, Shanghai.

Although influenced by the Covid-19, this virtual conference was very successful. There were 4 webinars spread over the 2 days. Each webinar was anchored by 4 presentations, which included syphilis, gonorrhoea, genital herpes, human papillomavirus infection, *Mycoplasma genitalium* infection, chlamydia infection, fungal infection, etc. Courses in this conference covered progress in STI diagnosis and treatment, STI epidemiology, the latest STI laboratory technology, the strategy for STI prevention and control, and the frontiers and advances of STI basic/clinical research.



The conference attracted a total of 1149 attendees, including clinicians from dermatology, gynaecology and urology, nurses, researchers, STI laboratory technicians and health care professionals. Attendees had active participation in Q & A sessions. Through this training, participants learned the latest advances in diagnosis, prevention and management of STIs as well as exploring new ideas and concepts on a larger scale. After the meeting, all delegates passed the online assessment. The annual STI training conference held every year provides a firm

foundation for the high quality of clinical diagnosis and management of STIs in Shanghai.

Pingyu Zhou

North America

From the American STD Association (ASTDA)



- ASTDA recently introduced the [Summer Research Fellowship Program for Students and Post-Doctoral Trainees](#). The Summer Research Fellowship is designed to provide financial support for students and post-doctoral trainees to conduct a mentored research project during a 3-4 month period over the academic summer break. We are happy to report that the response to the new ASTDA Summer Fellowships was excellent. We received numerous applications which are being reviewed and funding decisions will be made by April of 2022. ASTDA plans to fund at least 5 fellowships this year: Trainees will receive \$5,000 and their mentors will receive \$2,000. Additional information can be found on the ASTDA website.
- In addition to the Summer Fellowships, ASTDA continues to offer funds as [Small Project Assistance Grants](#) to help defray costs of members' projects through small-scale financial assistance. Additional information can be found on the ASTDA website.
- The ASTDA website was recently updated to include detailed information about [IUSTI North America](#) and the relationship among IUSTI NA, IUSTI Canada, and ASTDA. The IUSTI-NA section also provides links to IUSTI-NA events.
- The [Advancing HIV, STI and Viral Hepatitis Testing Conference](#) will be a virtual event, held on March 29 – April 1, 2022. This conference is brought to you by ASHA, ASTDA, APHL, and CDC.
- The [Julius Schachter 15th International Symposium on Human Chlamydial Infections](#) will be held from June 19 – 24, 2022 in San Antonio, TX.



- Finally, ASTDA will host the [STI & HIV 2023 World Congress](#) in Chicago, IL, focused on the theme 'Local Engagement/Global Impact'. Save the dates: July 24 – 27, 2023. We look forward to seeing you there in person!

From the CDC Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP)



- [STD Awareness Week](#) will be observed April 10 – 16. This year, CDC will refresh two popular social media campaigns – *GYT: Get Yourself Tested and Talk. Test. Treat.* – and roll out a new campaign, *Prepare Before You're There*.
- In September 2021, CDC hosted a three-day meeting to explore opportunities to enhance disease investigation and intervention functions. [Day one](#) focused on rules, regulations, accountability, cost-benefit considerations and the organizational context and structure of DIS teams related to the effectiveness and impact of disease investigation and intervention; [Day 2](#) examined recently developed technologies and how they can be adapted to DIS work; and [Day 3](#) summarized the first two days of the webinar and included an active panel discussion about DIS functions, their effectiveness, and their impact.
- In October 2021, we recognized [National Disease Intervention Specialists \(DIS\) Recognition Day](#).
- In our continued response to antibiotic-resistant gonorrhea, colleagues collaborated across DSTDP branches (the Surveillance & Data Science Branch and the STD Laboratory Reference & Research Branch, or STDLRRB) to fund American Type Culture Collection (ATCC) to [generate a CDC International AR Gonorrhea Isolate Bank](#). This bank will include bacterial isolates exhibiting geographic diversity, originating from at least four different continents.

- CDC continues to update its [Drug and Diagnostic Test Notices page](#) to provide the latest information on current and resolved drug and diagnostic test kit shortages and discontinuations.
- Stay up-to-date on the latest news from DSTDP by visiting the Division's [What's New page](#).

From IUSTI-Canada



The IUSTI Canada Webinar Series is up and running, with some exciting presentations highlighting advances in the field.

- On October 25, 2021, IUSTI-Canada hosted a webinar entitled [A New Model of Gonorrhea Control in Canada: Surveillance, a New Way of Selecting Best Therapeutics and Maybe a Vaccine](#). Speakers included Dr. Helen Marshall, Dr. Jo-Anne Dillon, and Irene Martin. The webinar was hosted by IUSTI-Canada President Marc Steben. A recording of the webinar is available [here](#).
- On December 1, 2021, IUSTI-Canada hosted a webinar featuring Dr. Jean-Pierre Routy entitled [HIV Cascade of Care: Integrating Lessons Learned from the COVID-10 Pandemic](#). The webinar was hosted by IUSTI-Canada President Marc Steben. A recording of the webinar is available [here](#).
- Discussions are underway for additional webinars in 2022 – potential topics include *Mycoplasma genitalium* in Canada; prevention of syphilis including potential vaccines; at-home HIV / STI self-testing; disseminated gonococcal infection; new advisory group on STI Guidelines and epidemiological update from the Public Health Agency of Canada; and other topics. Information about all of the IUSTI-Canada webinars and recordings of past webinars can be found on the IUSTI-Canada website.

**IUSTI-Canada
is hosting
the World!
Bienvenue!
Welcome!
to Montréal 2025**



In the coming years, IUSTI-Canada is reaching out to establish closer links with the nation's most important professional association partners in STI control : such as the Association of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease Canada (AMMI), the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC), the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), and the Canadian Association for HIV Research (CAHR).

Finally, IUSTI Canada is starting to plan for the 2025 ISSTD IUSTI Congress which will be held in Montreal – we hope to see you all there.

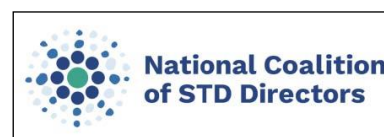
From the American Sexual Health Association (ASHA)



- ASHA participated in public health observations including [Cervical Health Awareness Month](#) (January) and [National Condom Month](#) (February). We create dedicated microsites for observations like those that offer background information and free digital content including videos, podcasts, and downloads of fact sheets and booklets. During January we also published [The Patient Journey: Stories from Cervical Cancer Patients and Survivors](#).
- We continued our Yes Means Test initiative to encourage STI testing, especially among young women. This campaign includes a [website](#) with a clinic locator tool.
- ASHA issued a [statement](#) opposing the increasing attacks on reproductive choice including restrictions put forth by the state of Texas. Our document offers links to social justice organizations that monitor such legislation and work to protect access to essential health care including abortion.
- ASHA produced new episodes of our Sex+Health podcast and covered topics including cancer prevention and care in the midst of a global pandemic. Another episode deals with cancer as a health equity issue and the need to ensure communities of color are adequately represented in clinical trials. All ASHA podcasts are freely available on our website at https://soundcloud.com/asha_sexual_health and also through [iTunes](#).

- We released several new videos on HPV-associated cancers including *HPV and Head & Neck Cancer: Get the Facts*; an interview with actor Alysia Reiner (*Orange is the New Black* and *Better Things*) on preventing cervical cancer through education and activism; and another with the current Miss USA Elle Smith who chose cervical cancer prevention as her platform to promote during her reign. Our videos are available at <https://www.youtube.com/c/AmericanSexualHealthAssociation/videos>.

From the National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSA)



[Congenital Syphilis Workshops](#): NCSA hosted a series of workshops on congenital syphilis to highlight some of the innovative approaches jurisdictions are taking to combat these increasing numbers and create space for community action planning and problem-solving

[340B and Ending the Epidemics](#): NCSA developed resources and toolkits to guide sexual health clinics through the process of operationalizing the 340B program and supporting STD clinics in expanding their HIV services, including increasing capacity to provide PrEP services.

[PrEPared to Support Women and Their Sexual Health Webinar Series](#): NCSA hosted a three-part webinar series on women and PrEP.

Brad Stoner

Conference Update

IUSTI Events:

23rd IUSTI World Congress

Dates: 4-7 September 2022

Location: Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Website: <https://www.iusti2022zimbabwe.com/>

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

