

STI Global Update

Newsletter of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections

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President's Letter



Prof Christopher Fairley - President of IUSTI

Dear Colleagues and IUSTI Members,

What a privilege you have bestowed on me. Thank you – I shall do my best over the next 2 years.

Before I start though, I need to thank the many presidents who have gone before and left IUSTI in such wonderful shape, not least Jo-Anne's whose energy and commitment have been extraordinarily. The terms of presidents are short and so presidents have worked together and pass on the baton with projects that require more than the 2 years to complete. To this end, I shall continue Jo-Anne's work in several areas including exploring a potential merger with ISSTD to create a single body that unites the objectives of both organisations. I will also progress the wisdom project (thank you Jackie) and new web site (thank you Ina) both of which are critical to our clarity.

But IUSTI World is not about the presidents. Many wonderful people with unique skills and abilities have worked tirelessly for IUSTI World. In no particular order but with the same enormous gratitude I would like to thank the most organised person I have ever known (Jackie Sherrard the Secretary General), the fountain of all IUSTI

knowledge (Janet Wilson Immediate past president), our thorough and careful treasurer (Jonathan Ross), our diligent membership secretary Jason Ong, Caroline Cameron who work as Education Director has set us up for future success and last but most certainly not least, Ina Park for her extraordinary work on our new web page and as Communication Director. Let me welcome Andy Winter as a new Treasurer, Rayner Tan as our new communications director and Karen Lithgow our new Education director. Thank you to the Regional Directors for the wonderful work they describe in this newsletter. Each has worked hard and put in many long hours for their regions.

Early during this next two years I would like to work closely with the key committee members (Patti, Jackie, Andy, Jason, Jo-Anne, Karen, Rayner, Phyu Mon and Jonathan) to develop a work plan that would include the areas mentioned above but also new ones that Patti is keen to take forward into her presidency.

Conferences are an important part of what we do and why we exist. At a personal level they connect us over dinner, coffee, and other events so we learn about our work and each other. But they are also the main source of income for IUSTI compared to the small income from membership fees. It is therefore important that they are excellent, as so many have been with both Montreal this year (thank you Jo-Anne and Marc Stebbens) and Sydney 2024 (thank you Eric Chow and Jo-Anne) being recent examples. It is therefore critical that we put substantial effort and careful planning into these to ensure they are at least as successful as the ones that have preceded them. And we have some great ones planned; Prague in 2026, New Delhi in 2027, Cape Town in 2028 and Barcelona in 2029. We owe a great deal of gratitude to the challenging work of the presidents of past and future conferences.

Exploring the potential merger of ISSTD and IUSTI is daunting but important. In some ways it is a unique time in the journeys of these two organisations and may be the right time for them to explore merging to provide the world with single organisation. This will be easier for our communities and sponsors to understand because we will not appear as two competing organizations.

It is important to acknowledge these steps began in 2013 with Angelica Stary and King Homes who organized the first joint ISSTD/IUSTI conference in Vienna, Austria. We now have considerable overlaps in board members between the two organizations and the presidents for each now reside at the same institution (Melbourne Sexual Health Centre).

We do not underestimate how important and difficult it will be to develop a proposal that is acceptable to both organisations. Many feel that one future organisation that has a shared respect of each organisations background will benefit us all. We have spoken at length about this within IUSTI and as have ISSTD and decided the best way forward would be for a small and workable committee of equal numbers from both organisations to develop a proposal for a merger. Considerable consultation will occur between and within the organisations. We will keep you updated of the progress.

Christopher Fairley, IUSTI-World President



Africa MENA committee members

Get ready for Cape Town 2028!

IUSTI Africa MENA, in collaboration with the Foundation for Professional Development and Professor Nigel Garrett (Desmond Tutu Health Foundation), were delighted to be successful in the bid to host the 27th IUSTI World Congress in October 2028.

Regional Reports

Africa MENA



Dr Sara Lowe – Regional Director of IUSTI-Africa MENA

Africa-MENA regional committee – new appointments (approved Montreal 2025)

1. Regional Director: Dr Sara Lowe (Zimbabwe)
2. Regional Chairperson: Professor Laith Abu-Raddad (Qatar)
3. Executive committee members: Dr Chido Dziva Chikwari (Zimbabwe), Mandisa Mdingi (South Africa), Dr Hicham Oumzil (Morocco)
4. Strategic Advisors: Dr Francis Ndowa (Zimbabwe), Dr Amina Hançali (Morocco)

FOCUS COUNTRY – SOUTH AFRICA

1. Syphilis Management Training: Spotlight on Maternal Screening

The South African National Department of Health recently hosted a training session on syphilis management. Mandisa Mdingi, Research Manager at the Foundation for Professional Development, was invited as one of the key speakers. Her presentation focused on **maternal screening gaps and actionable strategies** to raise awareness, promote early screening and diagnosis, and ultimately improve maternal and child health outcomes. This important discussion highlighted the need for strengthened service delivery and collaboration to reduce the burden of syphilis in pregnancy.



2. In a major step toward strengthening maternal health, FIND has partnered with the Foundation for Professional

Development (FPD) in East London, South Africa, to conduct critical research on the detection of sexually transmitted infections.



The study will assess the performance of FIND's *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* Lateral Flow Assay (NG LFA) in more than 1,000 women, offering valuable insights into its diagnostic accuracy in real-world clinical settings. In addition to evaluating the test's performance, the study will explore the feasibility and user acceptance of self-sampling methods, which have the potential to significantly increase access to screening and treatment—especially in underserved communities. This collaboration with FPD marks an important milestone in our mission to ensure that innovative, accessible diagnostics reach the people who need them most, ultimately contributing to improved health outcomes for women and their families.

3. FPD Launches New Study on Syphilis Transmission



The Foundation for Professional Development (FPD), in partnership with SOS Global, is excited to announce a new clinical study focused on improving our understanding of how syphilis spreads. The study will look at *Treponema pallidum* (TP) – the bacteria that causes syphilis – in women and men-who-have-sex-with-women (MSW) with early infectious syphilis.

The research aims to:

- Find out where TP can be detected in the body (mouth, vagina, penis, anus, and urine) – even when there are no visible symptoms.
- Understand whether TP found in these areas is linked to what is detected in the blood.
- Test if TP is still alive in these samples to know if it can be passed to others.
- Compare results between women and MSW, and between first and repeat syphilis infections.

This important work will help strengthen efforts to prevent syphilis transmission and improve health outcomes for communities globally.

FOCUS COUNTRY – QATAR

Status of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* infection in South-East Asia

Researchers at the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Group, Weill Cornell Medicine–Qatar, conducted a systematic review of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (NG) epidemiology in South-East Asia. NG prevalence in the general population was 0.5%, with a 2% annual decline over the past four decades. In contrast, prevalence was much higher in key populations: 13.9% for urogenital infection among female sex workers, and 12.0% and 7.0% for anorectal and oropharyngeal infections among men who have sex with men, transgender individuals, and male and transgender sex workers. Published in the *Journal of Infection*, the study by Ageeb et al., “Epidemiology of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* in South-East Asia: Systematic review, meta-analyses, and meta-regressions,” concluded that regional prevalence mirrors global levels. However, the pronounced burden among key populations, coupled with extensive antimicrobial resistance, highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions.

Citation: Ageeb RA, Almukdad S, Alalami H, Harfouche M, Abu-Raddad LJ. Epidemiology of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* in South-East Asia: Systematic review, meta-analyses, and meta-regressions. *J Infect.* 2025 Aug;91(2):106545.

Weblink: [https://www.journalofinfection.com/article/S0163-4453\(25\)00139-2/fulltext](https://www.journalofinfection.com/article/S0163-4453(25)00139-2/fulltext)

Vaccination as a strategy for global *chlamydia trachomatis* control

Researchers at the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Group, Weill Cornell Medicine–Qatar, used mathematical modeling to assess the global impact of a hypothetical *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT) vaccine. Assuming introduction in 2030 with 50% efficacy, 20-year protection, and 80% coverage by 2040, the model projected reductions by 2050 of 26.2% in prevalence, 32.3% in incidence rate, and 26.5% in annual new infections, averting an estimated 717 million infections. Adolescent vaccination also reduced burden, though with slower gains compared to adult-targeted strategies. Published in *BMC Global Public Health*, the study by Makhoul et al., “Vaccination as a strategy for *Chlamydia trachomatis* control: a global mathematical modeling analysis,” concluded that even a moderately effective vaccine could markedly reduce the global CT burden. Targeted approaches—adolescent vaccination for long-term control and catch-up programs for immediate benefit—could maximize impact and effectiveness, underscoring the urgency of vaccine development and integration into public health programs.

Citation: Makhoul M, Abu-Raddad LJ. Vaccination as a strategy for Chlamydia trachomatis control: a global mathematical modeling analysis. BMC Glob Public Health. 2025 Jul 25;3(1):65.

Weblink:

<https://bmcbglobalpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s44263-025-00181-7>

Sara Lowe



Latin America



Dr Angelica Espinosa Miranda– Regional Director of IUSTI- Latin America

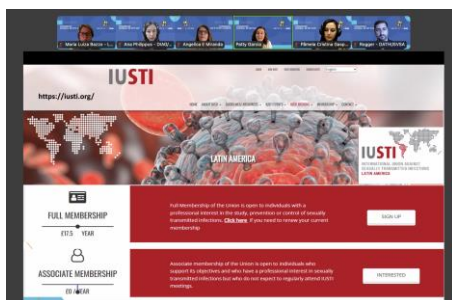
Webinar: Highlights from the World STI Congress

The STI & HIV 2025 World Congress took place from July 26 to 30 in Montreal, Canada. Following the event, the International Union Against Sexually Transmitted Infections (IUSTI), in partnership with the Ministry of Health of Brazil and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), organized a webinar to share the main highlights and outcomes. The webinar presented to health professionals, policymakers, academics, and civil society the key scientific, clinical, and public health advances discussed during the Congress. It highlighted recent evidence, innovative practices, and strategies that can inform and strengthen national policies, programs, and actions to address STIs and HIV across the Americas. Simultaneous interpretation was available in English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Portuguese:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/1q0Mpc0xUgY?si=TiUAPITuQmj1KNL1>

Spanish: https://www.youtube.com/live/Hdq8JT-uNTA?si=8nKXNC_AQyacn0At



Argentina

Prevention of Congenital Syphilis through Theater. Syphilis remains a global public health concern, with congenital syphilis (CS) causing high rates of fetal and neonatal death. To raise awareness and support prevention, the project *Camaleón* was developed: a theatrical play presenting three scenarios that show the consequences of untreated maternal syphilis versus the benefits of early diagnosis and treatment.

Performed by a seven-member cast, the play concludes with prevention messages for the audience. The material is freely available for health and education institutions, offering an innovative cultural tool to increase visibility and community engagement in the fight against CS. Instagram: @camaleonlaobra



Ecuador

Ecuador is advancing in the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission (EMTCT) initiative, with technical support from PAHO/WHO. The Ministry of Public Health has established a national intersectoral commission and strengthened primary care, laboratories, and information systems to ensure timely diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up for mothers and children.

This commitment, guided by principles of human rights, gender equity, and community participation, demonstrates Ecuador's determination to achieve international certification for the elimination of HIV and syphilis transmission from mother to child. The news can be accessed at the link: <https://youtu.be/Ohwo9KJoBTE>



Paraguay

The campaign “Syphilis is detected, treated, and cured” is part of the CCHD Project (Cooperation Among Countries for Health Development), supported by Pan American Health Organization, a strategic initiative between Brazil and Paraguay to eliminate acquired and congenital syphilis. Through this binational collaboration, more than 200 Family Health Units in Paraguay received training for health teams, strengthening primary care capacity for prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of syphilis cases.

The project also delivered technical guidelines, digital awareness campaigns, and equipment to improve surveillance and clinical practice, reinforcing both health professional training and community engagement. This cooperation highlights the importance of capacity-building and knowledge exchange to accelerate progress toward syphilis elimination. The campaign is available at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/17PFaQuSeG/>



Angelica Espinosa Miranda

Europe



Dr. Claudia Heller-Vitouch – Regional Director of IUSTI-Europe

38th IUSTI Europe Congress: Athens, Greece 9-11 October 2025



An exciting event with a captivating scientific programme and wonderful social activities took place in Athens, Greece. Congress President Prof. Electra Nicolaidou and the Chair of the Scientific Committee, Prof. George Sorin Tiplica, created an atmosphere that combined the highest scientific standards with a spirit of friendship and collegiality among all those dedicated to the field of STIs.

It is our great pleasure to report that at the 38th IUSTI-Europe Congress in Athens, a total of 48 young colleagues were supported through **scholarships**. IUSTI-Europe itself awarded 10 scholarships, which covered a combined ticket for both the conference and the course, as well as a contribution toward travel and accommodation expenses.

In addition, several European STI societies generously supported their young members: Greece provided 17 scholarships; Austria and Ireland five each; the United Kingdom four; Finland, Sweden, and Croatia two each; and Turkey one.

27th IUSTI World and 39th IUSTI Europe Joint Congress, Prague October 14-17, 2026

Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers: Shaping the Future of STI & HIV Prevention and Care



The Scientific Committee Chairs Dr Janneke Heijne (Amsterdam, NL) and Dr Andy Winter (Glasgow, UK) are delighted to be leading a strong international scientific committee underpinning the meeting. The tracks are working hard to develop exciting symposium and plenary sessions over the full 2.5 days of the meeting. Abstract submissions will open in January 2026.

Other key appointments include:

- Communication and Promotion committee - Dr Jason Ong (Melbourne, AUS)
- Community Outreach Committee – Dr Rayner Tan (Singapore)
- Early Career Researcher committee - Dr Lenka Vodstrcil (Melbourne, AUS)
- Fundraising and Sponsorship committee – Prof Georg-Sorin Tiplica (Romania)
- Scholarship committee – Dr Alison Footman (USA)

The meeting will open on Weds 14th late afternoon with the scientific programme running for 2.5 days Thurs 15 Oct through to Sat 17 Oct lunchtime



Dr Andy Winter and Dr Janneke Heijne, Scientific Committee Co-Chairs

IUSTI-Europe STI-courses:

Angelika Stary and Marco Cusini

After the successful Advanced course at the IUSTI Europe Conference in Malta with the theme “SYPHILIS: from Alpha to Omega”, with about 100 participants and the successful course in Zagreb “From yeasts to HPV” with again about 100 participants, the Advanced Course at the IUSTI Europe conference in Athens will take place on the day of the opening ceremony under the topic

STI TREATMENT: TRICKY PROBLEMS - BEST SOLUTIONS

The course is especially designed for early-career clinicians and healthcare providers (HCPs) who are developing an interest in sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Leading experts will provide the latest updates on STI-treatment in 3 different sessions and will give advice how to solve tricky problems for bacterial, viral, and selected STIs. The course includes also interactive case discussions with active participant involvement, selected by Andy Winter.

We expect about 140 delegates, which is the highest number of participants ever since the course was organised in connection with European IUSTI Conferences at the day of the opening ceremony.

The support of the local organising team with **Electra Nicolaidou** as the conference president was exceptional and we would like to express our special thanks to Electra and her PCO. Without their help the preparation and organisation of the course would not have been possible.

We also want to thank the speakers and chair persons for their contributions and look forward to a successful course which encourages young participants to increase their knowledge and interest on STIs as a good start to continue to participate at the excellent conference IUSTI Europe Conference in Athens!

We also look forward to organise again an Advanced IUSTI Europe Course at the next IUSTI World and IUSTI Europe Conference on STI in Prague in 2026!

Officers for Education of IUSTI Europe

Thursday, October 9, 2025		Divani Caravel Hotel / MACEDONIA HALL
08:00-09:00	Registration	
09:30-11:00	STI Advanced Course / Session 1: Treatment problems with bacterial STIs Chairs: Michael Gombert (United Kingdom) - Michael Jester (France)	
09:30-09:40	Stephan Lantschliager (Austria): Tricky problems with gonorrhea	
09:40-10:00	David Lewis (Australia): Resistant <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i> : How big is the problem?	
10:00-10:30	Georg Stary (Austria): C. trachomatis - new treatment options?	
10:30-11:00	Jorgens Siew Jensen (Denmark): Resistant MG: How to treat, how to prevent?	
11:00-11:30	Break	
11:30-12:00	STI Advanced Course / Session 2: Treatment problems with selected STIs Chairs: Andrzej Jermolov (Poland) - Henry de Witte (The Netherlands)	
11:30-11:50	Claudia Heller-Vitouch (Austria): Recurrent Scabies	
11:50-12:10	Peter Greenhouse (United Kingdom): Chronic candidiasis/Candidemia	
12:10-12:30	Jacques Thuermer (Switzerland)	
12:30-13:00	Andrew Winter (United Kingdom): Presentation of difficult cases	
13:00-13:40	Lunch break	
13:40-15:10	STI Advanced Course / Session 3: Recurrent viral infections: Are there treatment solutions? Chairs: Michael Sharpe (Croatia) - Denk Froendman (Germany)	
13:40-14:00	Rig Patel (United Kingdom): HIV: tricky problems	
14:00-14:20	Colin O'Mahony (United Kingdom): HPV: when and what to treat?	
14:20-14:40	Josep Ricard Munnings (Spain): APOR: is it a problematic STI in Europe?	
14:40-15:00	Stefanien Fiedler (France): PEP and PrEP	
15:00-15:10	Angelika Stary (Austria) & Marco Cusini (Italy): Closure	

IUSTI-Europe – EADV MoU in Action

George-Sorin Tiplica

The recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology

(EADV) and the European Branch of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections (IUSTI-Europe) demonstrated its strength and vitality during the EADV Congress held in Paris, France. With over 20,000 participants in attendance, the Congress provided an exceptional platform to highlight the shared commitment of both organizations to advancing education, research, and public health. The IUSTI-Europe booth, prominently located in the Congress's social area, served as a vibrant showcase of this collaboration.

A Shared Vision for Sexual Health

EADV and IUSTI-Europe are united by a common mission: to promote excellence in patient care, research, and education within the fields of dermatology and venereology. The MoU formalized this shared purpose, establishing a structured framework for joint scientific programming, congress activities, educational initiatives, and strategic planning. The Paris Congress marked a significant milestone in the realization of this agreement, which will soon continue with a joint session at the upcoming IUSTI-Europe Congress in Athens. EADV President Prof. Branca Marinovic has confirmed her participation, accompanied by a team of EADV experts.

The IUSTI-Europe Booth: A Hub of Engagement and Exchange

A focal point of interaction throughout the Congress was the IUSTI-Europe booth (Figure 1), which drew considerable interest from attendees eager to learn more about the organization's initiatives, publications, and educational offerings. Among the highlights was information on the 2026 IUSTI Congress, set to take place in Prague. Organized jointly by IUSTI-World and IUSTI-Europe, the event will continue the tradition of providing a high-level scientific forum addressing the most pressing global challenges in STI management and sexual health.

Strengthening Collaboration: EADV Task Force & IUSTI-Europe Council Meeting

Alongside the main scientific program, a dedicated meeting convened members of the EADV Task Force on STIs and representatives of the IUSTI-Europe Council. Discussions centered on enhancing practical collaboration, identifying timely and relevant topics, and selecting leading experts to deliver impactful presentations. Participants reviewed ongoing projects, including educational courses and joint research initiatives, and reaffirmed their commitment to public health advocacy—particularly in response to rising STI incidence, increasing antibiotic resistance, and the urgent need for improved screening and prevention strategies.

During the Congress, two STI-focused sessions featured distinguished speakers affiliated with both organizations: Sébastien Fouéré, Nicolas Dupin, George-Sorin Tiplica, Valeska Padovese (Figure 2), Electra Nicolaidou, Henry De Vries, Georg Stary, and Simona Saluzzo (Figure 3).

The EADV Congress in Paris offered a compelling demonstration of how the EADV–IUSTI-Europe partnership translates shared vision into tangible scientific, educational, and public health outcomes. As both organizations continue to collaborate, their synergy will remain essential in ensuring that sexual health receives the sustained attention it deserves—within the dermatological community and beyond.



IUSTI Europe booth at the EADV Congress in Paris – (from left to right:) Mrs. Kristýna Hájková and Prof. Jana Třešňák Hercogová – Co-President of the 2026 IUSTI Congress



EADV Congress 2026 (from left to right:) Valeska Padovese, George-Sorin Tiplica, Sébastien Fouéré, Nicolas Dupin. Photo kindly provided by Peter Greenhouse



EADV Congress 2026 (from left to right:) Georg Stary, Simona Saluzzo, Henry De Vries, Electra Nicolaidou – President of the 2025 IUSTI-Europe Congress. Photo kindly provided by Peter Greenhouse

IUSTI Europe Webinars 2025-2026

Derek Freedman and George Sorin Tiplica

The fifth season of IUSTI Europe Webinars will start off at the end of October, with 'Montreal

Highlights'. Some of the most interesting and relevant presentations from the recent ISSTD/IUSTI Congress in Montreal will be curated and introduced by the Congress Presidents, Marc Steben and Jo Anne Dillon.

In December, Worlds AIDS Day will be marked by 'Celebrating' the Fight against HIV', addressing problems in HIV care and prevention both in our clinics and public health programs and engendering awareness in parts of the world where care may be compromised.

The New Year will start with January's Webinar bringing the best from the IUSTI Europe 'Athens Highlights' Congress, curated and presented by the Chair of the Congress Scientific Committee, George Sorin Tiplica, and the Congress President, Electra Nicolaidou.

It is planned to address problems faced in practice in February's Webinar, 'Practice Challenges'. We will address the challenges to our clinical practice in developed and developing countries in this era of AI. March's Webinar will focus on the rare and exotic STI's only occasionally seen in our practices – 'The lions from the waiting room: extreme STIs'. The season will finish in May with 'Bridges of Prague -STI Practice and Research' a presentation by Prof Jana Hercogova where the current research and practice in the Czech Republic will be showcased as a precursor to the IUSTI Europe and World Congress to be held in Prague in October 2026.

We appreciate the worldwide interest and participation that these webinars have produced. We welcome topic and speaker suggestions, especially those that bring attention to practical problems encountered in practice and ideas for their prevention.

Tracing the History of IUSTI The Challenges I saw as Secretary General and the Name Change at Melbourne 1997

Michael Waugh - President IUSTI 1995-9

Background- 1953 at the General Assembly in Rotterdam, after the Success of yaws eradication by WHO campaign the International Union against Venereal Diseases (I.U.V.) NGO recognised by WHO, and through the dynamic leadership of Thorstein Guthe, chief of Department of Treponematoses IUV became IUVDT. Meanwhile VD which up till then was syphilis, gonorrhoea, chancroid, LGV and granuloma inguinale had become outdated with the whole spectrum of causes of STIs increasingly recognised.

Serendipity - How I got involved with IUVDT. I became a consultant venereologist at Leeds in 1975 having trained in the Charing Cross Group of Hospitals in London. For 1978 the Spring Meeting

of Medical Society for the Study of Venereal Diseases was to be held in Leeds. One Sunday a few months before Dr Jimmy Jefferiss, the Secretary General phoned me; "The next General Assembly of IUVDT was meant to be in Acapulco but had fallen through, did I mind having it for 3 days after MSSVD meeting"? Luckily Leeds IUVDT was a success. In 1984 already by then I was the Hon.Sec. of MSSVD, I was asked to attend an executive meeting of IUVDT near London Airport. I flew down. The plane was late. On arriving a wave of clapping led by Anton Luger, Vienna and Peter Bakker, The Hague signified to my amazement I had been made Secretary General IUVDT. So from 1984 to 1995 I served under 3 presidents Anton Luger, André Siboulet (Paris), Detlef Petzoldt (Heidelberg). In Paris at a conference on AIDS organised by André Siboulet I had met Ross Philpot (Adelaide) and we got on well together. During my years as Sec. General, I did much travelling to meet STI specialists in Australia and S.E. Asia and travelled much through Eastern Europe which had before been under Soviet domination. In 1994 another Executive Meeting was held in New York. There was also a distinguished candidate for the office of president apart from myself – the late King Holmes. Luckily for me the Executive members voted for me.

We had arranged to hold IUVDT General Assembly in 1997 at Melbourne. Over the years IUVDT had become an out-of-date mouthful and did not cover all our subject. The name change to IUSTI suggested by me and agreed with Ross Philpot before the General Assembly was voted Nem. Con.

Sexual Health in Europe: Key Updates from Summer 2025

Andy Winter

HIV Prevention: Long-Acting PrEP Approved in EU

In July 2025 the European Medicines Agency granted marketing authorisation for [Yeytuo®](#) (lenacapavir) for twice-yearly HIV PrEP, offering a [major advance in long-acting prevention](#).

- WHO has endorsed lenacapavir in its [updated HIV prevention guidelines](#).
- This innovation may significantly improve adherence and access, especially for underserved populations.
- Pricing agreements will be critical to enable adoption in middle and high income countries.

WHO Guidance: Strengthening STI Service Delivery

WHO released [updated guidance on STI management](#), with a focus on:

- Asymptomatic screening for high-risk groups: pregnant women, adolescents, sex workers, and MSM.
- Integration of STI services into primary care and digital platforms.
- Despite 89% of countries having STI strategies, only 43% have updated them since 2023—highlighting a gap in strategic alignment. Data on policy adoption and implementation is summarised in a [series of maps](#), noting significant gaps in reporting in WHO Europe region.

Tools to promote vaccination acceptance and uptake

ECDC has now [published a report](#) promoting the '5Cs model' to support vaccine uptake, aimed at policy makers and public health authorities. With [HPV vaccine coverage](#) across WHO Europe languishing at 40% for first dose for females by age 15 in 2024 there is much work to do.

Sexual Health as a Human Right: The Porto Proclamation

At the inaugural [World Sexual Health Assembly](#) in Porto in September 2025, over 40 global organizations signed the Porto Proclamation, affirming sexual health as a human right. The declaration calls for:

- Equity and access to sexual health services
- Sexual justice and inclusive, rights-based approaches This marks a strategic shift toward embedding sexual health within broader human rights frameworks.

Digital Health: Innovation and Youth Engagement

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the United Nations Population Fund is reaching millions with [youth-friendly sexual health education](#)—demonstrating the power of digital engagement. Examples include TikTok campaigns like @Shyn.kz in Kazakhstan supporting sexual and reproductive health education, and an Instagram account in Ukraine to address adolescent concerns around puberty.

Policy Momentum: EU Roadmap for Women's Rights

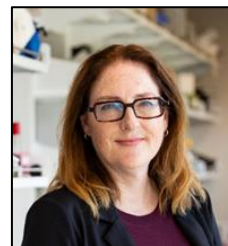
The [European Commission's 2025 Roadmap for Women's Rights](#) released in March reaffirms sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) as central to gender equality. The Roadmap aims to address structural discriminatory norms in our societies

The [Annual Report on Gender Equality in the EU](#) showed continued concerns with gender-based violence: one in six adult women have experienced

sexual violence, and one in five have faced domestic violence.

Claudia Heller-Vitouch

North America



Dr Caroline Cameron – Regional Director of IUSTI-North America

From the American STD Association (ASTDA)



ASTDA 2025 Award Winners

At the 2025 STI & HIV World Congress in Montreal, ASTDA hosted an awards luncheon to honor the 2025 ASTDA Award Winners:

- Distinguished Career Award - Barbara Van Der Pol, PhD, MPH
- Achievement Award - Stephanie Cohen, MD, MPH
- Early Career Award - Olivia Van Gerwen, MD, MPH



ASTDA also presented a special recognition award to Lynn Barclay, President and CEO of the American Sexual Health Association. Video of the awards ceremony will be available soon on the ASTDA website.

Summer Fellowships

The ASTDA summer research fellowship is designed to provide financial support for students and post-doctoral trainees to conduct a mentored STI-related research project during a 3-4 month

period over the academic summer break. The request for applications for the 2026 summer program will be released in October with applications due in early 2026.

Leadership Changes

In September 2025, Abigail Norris Turner, PhD completed her tenure as ASTDA President. Julie Dombrowski, MD, MPH assumed the role of President (2025-2027) and Preeti Pathela, DrPH, MPH became President-Elect. Arlene Seña, MD, MPH is continuing her role as Treasurer.



Dr. Abigail Norris Turner



Dr. Julie Dombrowski



Dr. Preeti Pathela

From IUSTI-Canada



- **The 2025 STI & HIV World Congress: A Resounding Success in Montreal**

Marc Steben and Jo-Anne Dillon

The 2025 STI & HIV World Congress, co-hosted by ISSTD and IUSTI-World, brought the global community together at the Palais des Congrès de Montréal from July 26–30, 2025. Chaired by Drs. Marc Steben and Jo-Anne Dillon, with an outstanding scientific program led by Drs. Remco Peters and Yonatan Grad, the Congress delivered an exceptional platform for science, collaboration, and community engagement.

The Congress's priorities, in addition to a compelling scientific program, included expanding scholarship support especially for those from low- and middle-income countries, ensuring comprehensive Indigenous participation, and amplifying community voices. These priorities were woven throughout the program, reinforcing commitment to equity and inclusivity in research, prevention, and care.

The numbers attest to the success of the Congress: 1514 registrants from 72 countries; 83 sessions (18 invited, 7 special, 7 poster tours, 19 oral abstract sessions, 27 attendee-organized sessions, and 5 industry-supported sessions); 1183 abstract submissions, with an impressive 95% acceptance rate; \$395,000 USD in scholarship funds raised, enabling participation from 63 low- and middle-income countries, 22 early career researchers, 27 community members, and presenters, especially those from low and middle income countries and the aboriginal community.

The high interest and surge in attendee-organized sessions was particularly inspiring, showcasing the strength of community leadership and engagement in shaping the global STI and HIV agenda and, hopefully, our future Congresses.

The Congress was made possible thanks to the generous support of 13 corporate and 17 NGO sponsors. Symposia, plenaries, and the opening and closing ceremonies were recorded. Every effort is being made to make these recordings available on IUSTI and ISSTD websites as soon as possible.

Finally, the tireless contributions of countless individuals involved in planning and implementation of this Congress is gratefully acknowledged. The STI and HIV 2025 Congress advanced science but also elevated diverse voices and perspectives, ensuring that the work ahead remains deeply connected to the communities most affected.

- IUSTI-Canada and ASTDA co-hosted the Early Career Development Symposium at the 2025 STI & HIV World Congress in Montreal, Quebec. The symposium welcomed 40 early career professionals from across North America, and included presentations, panel discussions, and breakout table sessions led by leaders in the STI field. Topics discussed included writing for academic journals, navigating collaborations, networking, advocating for yourself and your career, and additional topics relevant to early career professionals.
- IUSTI-Canada is continuing its 2025 webinar series, with a series of outstanding presentations on a diverse range of topics provided by leading experts in the STI field! More information and details about how to register can be found on the [IUSTI-Canada website](https://www.iusti.org/canada).

From the American Sexual Health Association (ASHA)



- ASHA is supporting 2025 Clinical Essentials, a new format of the Contraceptive Technology Conference. Launching on World Contraception Day, Clinical Essentials will cover the latest updates in STIs, vaginitis, Medical Eligibility Criteria (MEC), contraception in peri-menopause, and federal attacks on sexual and reproductive health.
- ASHA continues our work as funded by CDC through the grant Support Technical Assistance and Opportunities for Program, Policy, and Communications to Prevent STDs (STOP STDs). We are working in three priority areas: congenital syphilis, bacterial STI prevention, and Doxy-Pep.
 - We published a two-part series on STIs, sexual health, and Native Americans that covered the unique challenges faced by these communities, what might be done to reverse the trends, and the importance of tribal sovereignty in any discussions.
 - We recently produced a podcast episode on syphilitic uveitis with Dr. Meghan Berkenstock.
 - We also published an interview with Morgan Finke, exploring the use of data apps for STI partner notifications.
 - All 4 were produced as podcast episodes as well have a corresponding social media toolkit comprised of short bite size messages as Instagram reels.
- ASHA took part in several public health observations including Immunization Awareness Month in August, Sexual Health Month and Gynecological Cancer Awareness Month in September, and World Sexual Health Day. We created a 30 days of testing toolkit for National Get Tested Day launching on September 30th.

From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



- [Availability of STI Testing & Treatment Products | STI | CDC](#) – CDC continues to post status updates on the availability of STI testing and treatment products – most recently, Bicillin L-A® on its Availability of STI Testing and Treatment Products.
- [Program Operation Considerations for Sexually Transmitted Infection Prevention](#) – In July, CDC published *Program Operation Considerations for Sexually Transmitted Infection Prevention*, a resource for the planning and implementation of STI prevention programs.
- <https://www.std.uw.edu/go/comprehensive-study/syphilis-pregnancy/core-concept/all> - In August, the National STD Curriculum posted a new module on congenital syphilis and syphilis during pregnancy.

Caroline Cameron

Conference Update

IUSTI Events:

38th IUSTI Europe Congress

9-11 October 2025

Athens, Greece

<https://www.erasmus.gr/microsites/1301>

IUSTI World Congress

14-17 October 2026

Prague, Czech Republic

<https://www.iustiprague2026.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.

Prof. Jonathan Ross, Editor

jonathan.ross@uhb.nhs.uk

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