

STI Global Update

Newsletter of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections

Contents

President's Letter	1
In Memoriam	2
News	3
Regional Reports	
Africa MENA	5
Latin America	7
Europe	9
North America	13
Asia Pacific	16
Conference Update	16

President's Letter



Prof Christopher Fairley - President of IUSTI

Dear Colleagues and IUSTI Members,

I trust you had a lovely Christmas and New Year. It has been a busy time in IUSTI world over the last 8 months.

One major task is the 2026 IUSTI World Congress that will be held in Prague between the 14-17th of October chaired by Jana Hercogova and myself. I do hope you can join us for what I'm sure will be fantastic time. Janneke Heijne and Andrew Winter have developed an outstanding scientific committee including Petra Wolffs, Marissa Becker, Sebastien Fouere. Laith Abu-Raddad and Angelica Espinosa Miranda. The conference is also supported by a series of advisory committees chaired by Lenka Vodstrcil, Alison

Footman, Jason Ong, and Rayner Tan. Thank you also to Derek Freedman for his advice. Please put these dates in your Calander and we hope to see you there.

The 2027 ISSTD and IUSTI STI&HIV World congress will be held between the 21st and 24th of October in New Delhi. Sunil, Eric Chow and I are the congress Chair and co-chairs and they are working hard to create a great meeting. Bobbie Van Der Pol and Ismail Maatouk are well advanced with key appointments for the scientific program. Please join us at what will be a magnificent congress.

I wanted to thank Ina Park and Phyu Mon Latt for their work in bringing the new web site very close to fruition. We are all very much looking forward to seeing this and enjoying the fruits of all their hard work.

Finally wanted to report on the progress towards a potential merger of IUSTI and ISSTD. I outlined the rational and relevant history in the previous newsletter so I will describe the progress that has been made to date.

Eric Chow (ISSTD President) and I sent identical surveys to the executive committee and board members of the two organisations and collated the feedback. Not only were the responses in favour of a merger but the issues that they raised, and the answers to questions about what a future merged organisation would look like, were very similar. Eric and I then invited an equal number of members from each organisation (four each) to form a committee whose aim was to develop a document describing the single merged organisation. This committee has now met

three times and is making good progress on this document.

The current plan is to provide a draft merger document to both ISSTD/ IUSTI Boards in September 2026 and to receive feedback by December 2026. The first half of 2027 will involve an iterative process of consultation and communication between the merger committee and the respective boards, with the aim of developing a merger document that is acceptable to both organisations. The intention is to have a final document ready for consideration at the October 2027 meeting in India.

The committee is in the process of developing a document with four sections and two members of the committee are primarily responsible for one of the four parts listed below. Thank you to each member of the committee who have put in a considerable amount of effort and time in the preparation of these documents.

Working Pairs

- Structure of new merged body (David Lewis and Henry de Vries)
- Conference Organising Committee IUSTI World and conference issues (Kit and Eric Chow)
- Funds (Caroline Cameron and Janet Wilson)
- Culture (Alison Footman and Patty Garcia)

Christopher Fairley, IUSTI-World President

In Memoriam: Dr James S Bingham



Dr James Bingham, a pioneering figure in the field of Genitourinary (GU) Medicine and sexual health, has passed away on the 7th of February 2026. Widely regarded as a "father figure" of the modern specialty in the United Kingdom, Dr. Bingham's career spanned several decades and continents, leaving an indelible mark on clinical practice, medical education, and international health policy.

Education and Early Career

A native of Northern Ireland, Dr. Bingham graduated from Queen's University, Belfast in 1969. He initially pursued a career in obstetrics and gynaecology, spending five years practicing in Northern Ireland, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and Canada. Upon returning to the UK, he transitioned his focus to venereology, undertaking specialist training at The Middlesex Hospital in London.

Clinical Leadership

Dr Bingham was a mainstay of London's medical community. He served on the staff of both The Middlesex Hospital and Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals, where he practiced until his retirement in 2011. Based in the Lydia Department at St Thomas', he was known for his compassionate approach to patient care and his expertise in managing complex sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV.

Professional Contributions and IUSTI

His influence extended far beyond the clinic through his leadership in numerous specialist societies. Most notably:

IUSTI

Dr Bingham having trained under Dr Duncan Catterall, a past president of IUVDT, became a member of the Society early in his career. He served as Treasurer for many years. He became President Elect at the World Meeting in Melbourne (2001) and took over from Dr Ross Philpott at the General Assembly in Berlin (2003). Having previously convened the Membership subcommittee he understood the challenges the organisation faced and developed the role of the Membership Secretary. As President from 2001 to 2003 he worked closely with the IUSTI regions and led a number of delegations to Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia. He understood the importance of IUSTI supporting the developing world and worked closely with Dr Hilda Abreu in making the first IUSTI congress in South America (Montevideo (2003)) a success. He remained an active voice in the organization for decades, sharing his "lifetime experience" at global conferences as recently as 2019.

Specialist Societies

He held senior roles—including President, Chairman, and Treasurer—for the majority of British specialist societies in his field.

SAC and RCP: He was a key figure in the Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC), contributing significantly to the development of training and examinations in the UK, Europe, and Thailand. He also served as the Chairman of the Joint Specialty Committee in GU Medicine at the Royal College of Physicians (RCP).

Legacy and Advocacy

Dr. Bingham was a staunch advocate for equitable healthcare. He was frequently cited for his work regarding the rights of asylum seekers and immigrants to access NHS care, particularly for HIV treatment. His historical perspective on the field—documented in various lectures and podcasts—highlighted the evolution of sexual health from its military origins to a modern, patient-centred specialty.

Dr Bingham is remembered by colleagues as a dedicated mentor and a gentle, insightful clinician who navigated the challenges of medical reform and the HIV/AIDS crisis with unwavering professionalism.

News**International Syphilis Symposium Webinar**

The International Syphilis Symposium Webinar Series has been launched following an in-person meeting in 2025. This is intended to be a quarterly webinar series focused on global syphilis control. It is hoped that the series will bring together clinicians, academics, public health agencies, and community organisations to highlight ongoing research and public health interventions focused on syphilis.

More details and registration for forthcoming webinars is available at:

<https://www.internationalsyphilissymposium.com/>

SHADE-AI Study

The research team and Professor Eric Chow from Melbourne Sexual Health Centre invite you to participate in this research survey. They would also greatly appreciate it if you could forward this to relevant colleagues.

About the Study

The SHADE-AI Study (Sexual Health Anogenital Diagnosis Enhancement through Artificial Intelligence) is investigating whether AI-assisted decision support can improve clinicians' diagnostic accuracy when assessing anogenital skin conditions.

The ethics approval covers national recruitment in Australia. We have obtained ethics exemptions in New Zealand, the UK, and the US, which enable us to recruit participants in those countries. We obtained ethics approval from the University of Colombo in Sri

Lanka (ERC/PGIM/2025/265), a non-WMO declaration from the Medical Ethics Review Committee of Amsterdam UMC in the Netherlands (reference number 2025.1107) and the University of Malta Ethics Committee.

How can you help?

We would be grateful if you could:

- Participate in this survey
- Forward this email to eligible clinicians within your network.
- Share the survey link through your department's communication channels or social media platforms.
- Display the poster below, which includes a QR code, in staff areas or common rooms (subject to clinic policy).

Are you a doctor or nurse practitioner?

If yes, we would like to know how you use AI to assist your clinical diagnosis on anogenital skin conditions in sexual health.

Practitioners who work in dermatology, general practice, HIV, sexual health, infectious diseases, venereology, urology and/or hospital settings are eligible.

Take a 10 minutes anonymous survey
<https://go.unimelb.edu.au/iva2>




MSHC **MONASH University**

This study has been approved by the Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee (501/25)

Eligible Participants

We are seeking doctors and nurse practitioners currently practising in: Dermatology, General practice, HIV medicine, Sexual health, Infectious diseases, Venereology, Urology, or Hospital settings.

What's Involved?

Participants will review 6 de-identified clinical images, provide their diagnoses, and then see AI-generated suggestions. The survey is anonymous and takes approximately 10

minutes to complete. Participants will receive educational feedback with the correct diagnoses at the end.

Survey Link

<https://go.unimelb.edu.au/iva2>

WHO call for experts: Technical Advisory Group on Sexually Transmitted Infections

WHO have published an open call for experts to serve on this newly created TAG-STI (for more information:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/call-for-experts--technical-advisory-group-on-sexually-transmitted-infections>).

This group will provide independent, high-quality technical advice to WHO on priority areas for normative work in STI prevention, diagnosis, treatment and control. Its contributions will be central to shaping global standards, informing evidence-based policies, and guiding innovation in the STI response.

WHO are seeking motivated, knowledgeable and forward-thinking experts committed to advancing the global STI normative and innovation agenda. We aim for broad representation across WHO regions, professions, and relevant areas of expertise. If you are interested – or if you know colleagues who may be – please consider applying or sharing this open call for experts within your networks.

Regional Reports

Africa MENA



Dr Sara Lowe – Regional Director of IUSTI-Africa MENA

On February 11th, 2026, IUSTI Africa MENA reached a significant milestone with the launch of its first regional online webinar, organized in collaboration with the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD).



The session, which drew over 250 attendees, was facilitated by Mandisa Mdingi and delivered by our regional chairperson Professor Laith Abu-Raddad. The topic explored the epidemiology and global impact of neonatal herpes, focusing on the burden, patterns and implications of infection. The webinar addressed the urgent need for better data collection and the potential for new HSV prevention measures to reduce neonatal cases worldwide. If you missed it, it can be accessed on the Africa MENA IUSTI webpage.

This successful launch sets the stage for a new series of IUSTI Africa MENA webinars designed to foster knowledge exchange across the region.

Focus country: South Africa
Community Engagement and New Evidence on STI Management

STI/Condom and Sexual Reproductive Health Week Activities

The Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) STI Research Team supported multiple outreach events hosted by the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality Health District as part of STI/Condom and Sexual Reproductive Health Week.

These activities aimed to strengthen community awareness of sexual and reproductive health, promote safer sexual practices, and expand access to screening and treatment services. The FPD team provided:

- On-site STI screening services
- Syphilis and gonorrhoea testing
- Immediate treatment where indicated
- Health education and counselling

This collaboration reflects ongoing efforts to integrate research, service delivery, and community engagement to improve early detection and management of STIs at district level.



Highlights of recent publications from the region:

- 1. Partner Treatment and Repeat STIs in Pregnancy**

To contribute to regional evidence on STI management strategies, our team recently published a short report titled: “Association between partner treatment and repeat sexually transmitted infections positivity in pregnant women in East London, South Africa.”

We evaluated the impact of partner notification and treatment based on the occurrence of repeat STIs in pregnant women in South Africa, highlighting important considerations such as strengthening partner notification and treatment to prevent reinfection. The article is available here: <https://doi.org/10.1136/sextrans-2025-056758>

This work adds to the growing body of African data informing improved STI control approaches, particularly in maternal health contexts.

2. Engagement of young people in STI services in Zimbabwe

This qualitative study in Zimbabwe found that non-judgmental, informative, and accessible youth-friendly providers significantly enhance young people's engagement with STI services. While personal health concerns drove service usage, partner notification remained challenging due to fears of blame or violence, usually limited to stable relationships. The research concludes that integrating STI screening into broader, community-based services addresses critical supply-side and demand-side barriers for high-risk youth.

Citation: Mackworth-Young, C. R. S., Busza, J., Karumazondo, J., Bernays, S., Tshuma, M., Nyamyanza, Chikwari, C. D. (2025). How and why do young people engage in STI screening, treatment, and partner notification? A qualitative positive deviance study in Zimbabwe. *Global Public Health*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2025.2557312>

3. Vaginal discharge point-of-care testing

A modelling study in Zimbabwe indicates that point-of-care testing for vaginal discharge could reduce unnecessary antibiotic prescriptions for chlamydia and gonorrhoea by

over 80% compared to traditional syndromic management. This shift promises to significantly curb antimicrobial resistance by limiting overtreatment while ensuring accurate, targeted care.

Citation: Stuart RM, Newman LM, Manguro G, Dziva Chikwari C. et al Reduction in overtreatment of gonorrhoea and chlamydia through point-of-care testing compared with syndromic management for vaginal discharge: a modelling study for Zimbabwe Sexually Transmitted Infections Published Online First: 05 February 2026. doi: 10.1136/sextrans-2025-056646

4. HSV-2 Transmission Dynamics and Sexual Risk Behavior in the United States

A study conducted by the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Group at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar used a population-level mathematical model to quantify temporal and age-specific variations in sexual risk behavior associated with HSV-2 infection in the United States between 1950 and 2020. The model was calibrated using ten rounds of nationally representative data from NHANES. Published in *Scientific Reports*, the study by Naffeti et al., titled “Quantifying population-level sexual risk behavior through HSV-2 transmission dynamics in the United States, 1950–2020,” found that sexual risk behavior was highest among individuals aged 15–24 years and declined steadily with increasing age.

The analysis also revealed a distinct wave of elevated sexual risk behavior that began in the early 1960s, peaked in the early 1980s, and declined thereafter, with a particularly sharp decrease during the 1990s. This modeling framework can be applied to other populations and extended to additional STIs, providing insights into how sexual risk behavior varies across age groups and evolves over time.

Citation: Naffeti BS, Ayoub HH, Abu-Raddad LJ. Quantifying population-level sexual risk behavior through HSV-2 transmission dynamics in the United States, 1950–2020. *Sci Rep*. 2025 Oct 3;15(1):34521. doi:10.1038/s41598-025-17719-2.

5. HSV-2 Screening in People with and

Without HIV

A collaborative review conducted by the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Group at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar and the University of Washington synthesized current evidence and guidance on HSV-2 screening, with emphasis on its implications for HIV care. Published in *Current HIV/AIDS Reports*, the study by Abu-Raddad et al., titled “Herpes Simplex Virus Type 2 Screening in Persons with and Without HIV: Evidence, Challenges, and Future Directions,” concludes that the available evidence supports targeted screening rather than population-wide screening to maximize clinical benefit while minimizing potential harms. The review further highlights that advances in diagnostics and therapeutics, alongside stronger evidence demonstrating measurable population-level reductions in transmission or disease burden through interventions, may justify broader integration of routine HSV-2 screening, including within HIV prevention and care programs.

Citation: Herpes Simplex Virus Type 2 Screening in Persons with and Without HIV: Evidence, Challenges, and Future Directions. *Curr HIV/AIDS Rep.* 2026 Feb 2;23(1):3. doi:10.1007/s11904-026-00771-6.

Sara Lowe

Latin America



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

The webinar entitled “Echoes of the Syphilis Symposium – Shanghai 2025” was held on December 2, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Lima, Peru time). It aimed to disseminate to Latin American audiences the key discussions and scientific advances presented at the Shanghai Symposium. The webinar was

organized by the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections – Latin America and the Caribbean (IUSTI-LAC) and the STI-HIV and Epidemiology Unit of the School of Public Health at Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia (UPCH). Its primary objective was to share updated scientific and policy insights with researchers, public health managers, and civil society stakeholders working in the field of sexually transmitted infections in Latin America.



The Shanghai meeting focused on translating cutting-edge research into actionable strategies to address the syphilis epidemic across diverse populations and regions. Emphasis was placed on strengthening collaborative efforts to close critical gaps in diagnosis, treatment, and prevention, while highlighting the latest global developments in syphilis research and programmatic response.



The Doxi-Rio study is a pilot project that evaluates the feasibility, acceptability, and impact of doxycycline as post-exposure prophylaxis for bacterial sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among men who have sex with men, transgender women, and travestis in Rio de Janeiro. The study will follow up to 200 participants—people living with HIV and PrEP

users—for up to 48 weeks, monitoring STI incidence, adherence, safety, and antimicrobial resistance. It also includes a qualitative component and community engagement activities, with the aim of generating evidence to support the future implementation of doxy-PEP in Brazil.



To strengthen awareness and support prevention efforts, the Camaleón Project was developed as an innovative arts-based public health intervention. The initiative centers on a theatrical production entitled Camaleón, written by Mauro Romero Leal Passos and Miguel Tilli and directed by Elsa Orrea.

The play presents three contrasting scenarios that illustrate the consequences of untreated maternal syphilis and the positive outcomes associated with timely diagnosis and appropriate treatment. As highlighted in its central message - “Congenital syphilis can take a life before it begins. Every pregnancy deserves care and prevention. Detecting it in time saves lives” - the production emphasizes the urgency of prenatal screening and early intervention. Performed by a seven-member cast, the play combines dramatic narrative with clear public health messaging and concludes with direct prevention messages to the audience. In addition to live performances (including special sessions with free admission upon reservation), the production has also been made available through an online presentation, expanding its reach and accessibility.

The material is freely available to health and educational institutions, offering a culturally sensitive and engaging tool to increase visibility, stimulate community dialogue, and strengthen collective action in the prevention of congenital syphilis.



The Argentinian annual actualization course on infections in gynecology and obstetrics and sexually transmitted infections in 2026. It will be in a virtual format. The course is a great opportunity for professionals to update their knowledge on the topic.

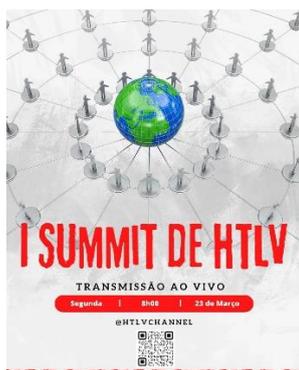


Photo: Pamela Gaspar

In February 2026, the Workshop on Strategies, Perspectives, and Challenges for New STI Treatments in Brazil was held in Florianópolis, Brazil, with the participation of IUSTI-LAC. The focus was to discuss the generation of evidence to support decision-making on the positioning of zoliflodacin in the country, in an

initiative led by GARDP in partnership with the Ministry of Health, PAHO, the WHO STI Reference Laboratory, and Brazilian experts, with a view to its potential incorporation into national treatment guidelines. During the same week, the National Meeting to Strengthen Integrated Surveillance of Gonococcal Antimicrobial Susceptibility (SenGono) and the E-test implementation pilot project were also held.

Together, these meetings strengthened gonorrhea surveillance in Brazil by promoting the integration of laboratory and epidemiological strategies, enhancing antimicrobial resistance monitoring, and advancing public policies focused on prevention, timely diagnosis, appropriate treatment, and the incorporation of new therapeutic options.



I HTLV Summit – Integrating Science, Public Policy, and Civil Society

The I HTLV Summit, held in recognition of the Brazilian National HTLV Awareness Day, will take place on March 23, 2026, in São Paulo. The meeting aims to strengthen collaboration among researchers, clinicians, public health authorities, civil society, and international partners to advance a coordinated and comprehensive response to HTLV.

The program is structured around five key areas: diagnosis; care for asymptomatic individuals; HTLV-associated myelopathy (HAM); adult T-cell leukemia/lymphoma (ATLL); and comprehensive care for pregnant women and exposed children. The sessions will

bring together national and international experts, policymakers, and people living with HTLV, fostering multidisciplinary, inclusive, and action-oriented dialogue.

The event will be streamed online: <https://www.youtube.com/live/4BxD2herYEc?si=iOwyXUQcFxiGJe1>

Angelica Espinosa Miranda

Europe



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

Dr. James Bingham

IUSTI Europe is mourning the loss of James Bingham, a longstanding member of our association and a respected contributor to the field of sexually transmitted infections. His professionalism and commitment have left a lasting mark on our community.

James remained actively engaged with IUSTI well into his seventies and last addressed the Society at the European meeting in 2019. James Bingham will be remembered with great respect as a wonderful gentleman, a close friend and an outstanding STI expert.

Our sincere condolences go to his family, friends, and colleagues.

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



The Congress Presidents Jana Tresnak Hercogova and Christopher Fairley extend a cordial invitation to attend the IUSTI World Congress in Prague.

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.

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

IUSTI-Europe advanced STI-course:

On October 14, 2026 ahead of the IUSTI World Congress 2026 in Prague, the Advanced STD Pre-Congress Course entitled “Living in the Golden Age of STD Diagnosis?” will be organized by Angelika Stary and Marco Cusini, chairs of the educational committee.

The course will address recent advances and persisting challenges in the diagnosis of sexually transmitted diseases. Internationally renowned speakers will review developments in molecular diagnostics, antimicrobial resistance testing, and contemporary diagnostic strategies in both clinical practice and public health settings.

IUSTI Europe Webinars 2025–2026 — Mid-Season Summary

Editors: Derek Freedman & George-Sorin Tiplica

The season we outlined in the previous newsletter has moved from plan into practice.

The first months of the Fifth IUSTI Europe webinar series have drawn strong international attendance and lively discussion, delivering concise, practical learning for clinicians and public-health teams.

Athens Highlights (Webinar 31): We opened by translating the Athens Congress into a clinician-focused toolkit. Ismail Matouk (WHO) framed global STI control challenges; Jacob Bornstein clarified HPV immunity for patient counselling; Peter Greenhouse offered immediately usable approaches to chronic candidiasis; Zoë Alexiou questioned routine chlamydia testing; and Louisa Heller demonstrated promising, cautiously framed AI applications in genital dermatology.

Celebrating the Fight Against HIV (Webinar 32):

The World AIDS Day session combined clinical updates with service resilience. Talks ranged from early-diagnosis strategies and dermatological warning signs to regional care challenges and pragmatic guidance on ART after PrEP. Titiana Deshko’s account of using AI to sustain HIV services under crisis conditions gave the session particular urgency and hope.

Montreal Highlights (Webinar 33)

was curated by Jo-Anne Dylon and Marc Steben, presidents of the 2025 Montreal Congress. This special edition distilled key advances and practical takeaways from the meeting. Presenters included Henry de Vries (NL) with a historical perspective on global prostitution laws (an extract from the IUSTI Prestigious Lecturer opening address); Tanya Applegate (AUS) on the prospects for affordable point-of-care STI tests in low- and middle-income countries; Khalil Ghanem (USA) on syphilis detection and diagnosis; Sanjay Ram (USA) on challenges for STI vaccine development; Eric Chow (AUS) on AI and the future of sexual healthcare; Odile Harrison (UK) issuing a public-health warning about high *Neisseria meningitidis*

oropharyngeal carriage trends in men who have sex with men; and Marc Steben (CAN) reflecting on the congress' importance for practitioners.

Challenging Cases (Webinar 34) was clinically focused with case-based learning from expert speakers: Chris Kenyon (BE) on the challenge of untreatable *Mycoplasma genitalium* and emerging resistance; Jean-Noël Dauendorffe (FR) and Johan Chanal (FR) on complex anogenital STI cases and differential diagnosis; and Maciek Pastuszczyk (PL) on the persistent difficulties of managing syphilis in pregnancy. Each talk combined up-to-date evidence with real-world examples, emphasizing practical decision-making when standard algorithms are insufficient and offering actionable strategies for frontline clinicians. Together, the January and February webinars exemplify IUSTI-Europe's commitment to bridging high-level science and everyday clinical practice.

Emerging Themes and Next Steps

Recurring themes are translation of evidence into practice, technology as both tool and challenge, antimicrobial resistance, and service resilience in fragile settings.

March's Webinar will focus on the less common and more challenging STI's only occasionally seen in our practices – 'The lions from the waiting room: challenging STI's' Enteric STI's will be presented by Prof. Daniel Richardson, Dr Johnny Boylan will address Male Pelvic Pain and the answer to the question: "What's the Best STI test for ME?" will be given by Prof. Barbara Van Der Pol.

The current research and practice in the Czech Republic will be showcased in the webinar "Bridges of Prague - STI Practice and Research" introduced by Prof. Jana Hercogova as a precursor to the IUSTI Europe and World Congress to be held in Prague in October 2026.

All recordings remain freely available at <https://www.iusti-europe.eu/web/index.php/webinar-recordings>. The series continues to combine excellent speakers with practical focus, making it a valuable, accessible resource worldwide.

IUSTI-Europe Rising Star Scientific Award

IUSTI-Europe is delighted to announce that submissions are now open for the Rising Star Scientific Award - celebrating early-career medical professionals who are making significant contributions to sexually transmitted infection (STI) research and public health with a clear European focus.

This prestigious award includes:

- € 1000 monetary prize
- Registration for the Autumn IUSTI-Europe Congress
- An invitation to deliver a lecture at the meeting
- Full eligibility criteria include:
- A recognised medical qualification
- Being within 10 years of receiving the medical degree (with allowances for career interruptions)
- Demonstrated scientific excellence, innovation, and European-focused STI work
- Evidence of leadership and engagement with IUSTI Europe activities

The recipient will be selected by the IUSTI-Europe Scientific Committee in March 2026. Application Deadline: 1 March 2026

Please find the application Criteria as well as the application form on www.iusti-europe.eu. The task force for honours and awards comprises Dr. Raj Patel (UK) and Dr. Airi Pöder (Estonia)

IUSTI-Europe Guidelines

Jackie Sherrard

The current European guidelines for management of STIs are available at <https://iusti.org/treatment-guidelines/>. The guidelines on *M. genitalium*, syphilis,

urethritis, gonorrhoea and genital warts are in the process of being revised. Patient information leaflet are now available free to download in 16 different languages <https://iusti.org/patient-information/>

Partnership IUSTI-Europe/EADV

IUSTI Europe and the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology (EADV) have signed an enhanced Agreement that deepens their collaborative commitment to dermatology, venereology and sexual health education across Europe on 23 January 2026 in Montreux (Photo 1). Building on the document signed one year ago, the new Agreement formalizes an expanded role for venereology within the EADV Congress programme.

Under the terms of the Agreement, EADV will include a dedicated “Venereology and HIV” track on the Thursday of its annual Congress, ensuring a full day of focused sessions on sexually transmitted infections, HIV care, diagnostics, prevention, and policy. In addition, the event programme will feature one plenary session devoted to venereology, raising the profile of STI related science and practice among the wider dermatology community.

This development reflects EADV and IUSTI-Europe increased commitment to the partnership and to integrating venereology more visibly into mainstream dermatology education. The strengthened collaboration will support joint symposiums, shared educational activities, and coordinated efforts to develop European guidance on STIs and HIV. It also reinforces both organisations’ intent to promote high quality continuing medical education, collaborative research, and unified advocacy to improve patient care.



Prof. Branka Marinović - EADV President (right) and Prof. George-Sorin Tiplica - IUSTI Europe Chair of the Council (left) signing the EADV - IUSTI Europe Agreement.

Sexual Health in Europe: Key Updates

Andy Winter, Chair for Communication

DoxyPEP – Public Health Considerations

ECDC has published [guidance](#) support public health actions in EU/EEA countries considering doxy-PEP as part of STI prevention. While recognising guidelines vary between countries, it makes clear that people are already obtaining doxy-PEP via off label prescribing and self-sourcing. Key recommendations include that prescription of doxy-PEP should be medically guided and integrated into other sexual health services. Public health impacts on antimicrobial resistance and STI prevalence must be monitored.

Strategies are lacking to tackle the rise in STIs in Europe

A [report](#) published by ECDC in December 2025 highlights the gap between absent or ageing public health strategies and the rapid shifts in STI incidence, especially in key populations. In nearly half countries surveyed, people faced out-of-pocket costs for basic STI tests. Only four countries of 29 surveyed could submit data on uptake of antenatal screening for syphilis. The majority of countries had not updated their national STI plans since the huge changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

IUSTI Europe Country Representatives’ survey - 2025

IUSTI Europe surveyed our country representatives in October 2025 with 26 people responding. The survey was developed with input from the Scientific Support committee. Key concerns raised included:



- Lack of access to NAAT testing in multiple countries, and even where well resourced the results of positive tests are not reported to public health authorities
- Public health authorities not recognising pathogens as potential STIs (eg mpox or Shigella)
- Big gaps in HPV vaccine programmes – especially for boys and post-school – although some countries reported successfully incorporating HPV vaccination for free in schools-based programmes
- HIV PrEP uptake limited by out-of-pocket costs, limited awareness among both patients and other medical staff
- The impact of Russia’s full-scale war in Ukraine and impact of migration from that and other global conflicts driving population shifts. STI testing and treatment is not always universally available – for example being tied to insurance status
- Austerity and health budget cuts having significant impact with STIs not being prioritised by governments, disinvesting in services and prevention.
- The data were shared at our Council meeting and will help in identifying priorities for IUSTI Europe to take forward.

Claudia Heller-Vitouch

North America



Dr Caroline Cameron – Regional Director of IUSTI-North America

From the American STD Association (ASTDA)

From the American STD Association (ASTDA)

- We are seeking a new Editor-in-Chief for the journal *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*. The current editor, Dr. Bill Miller, will be stepping down in mid-2026. Interested applicants are requested to send a CV and personal statement of interest in the position (no more than 500 words) to Julie Dombrowski (jdombrow@uw.edu) and Preeti Pathela (ppathela@health.nyc.gov)
- We are soliciting for nominations to fill two positions on the ASTDA board of directors. Those interested are requested to send a CV and brief cover letter summarizing the candidate's qualifications and reasons for wanting to be a member of the ASDA Board of Directors. Applications are due Monday March 16th and should be submitted to the following link: <https://ssb-management.com/astda-nominations/>
- We will soon release a request for nominations for the annual ASTDA awards and plan to honour the awardees at the 2026 STI Prevention Conference, August 31 - Sept 2 in Atlanta, Georgia.

From IUSTI-Canada



- ***IUSTI-Canada has a new website*** - Please visit <https://www.iusti-canada.ca/> to access our new website, and share with your networks.
- ***IUSTI-Canada’s 2026 membership drive is underway*** - Membership in IUSTI-Canada

has many benefits, including networking and volunteer opportunities, access to the IUSTI-Canada webinar series, and more. Find out more information at <https://www.iusti-canada.ca/join-iusti-canada>.

- ***IUSTI-Canada's 2026 webinar series*** – please join us to hear exclusive webinars that explore cutting-edge research, community engagement and advocacy in the field of Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections (STBBIs). More information and details about how to register can be found on the [IUSTI-Canada website](https://www.iusti-canada.ca).
- ***Scholarship support from IUSTI-Canada*** – IUSTI-Canada is continuing to prioritize support for attendance of early career professionals at IUSTI-related meetings. Upcoming scholarship opportunities will support attendance at the following conferences:
 1. [STI Prevention Conference](#) in Atlanta, Georgia (August 31-September 2, 2026)
 2. [IUSTI-World Congress](#) in Prague, Czech Republic (October 14-17, 2026)
 3. [2027 STI & HIV World Congress](#) in New Delhi, India (October 21-24, 2027)

Scholarship support will be provided through the scholarship application process for each conference; please refer to the individual conference websites for details.

From the American Sexual Health Association (ASHA)



- **Leadership changes:** As Lynn Barclay transitioned into her well-deserved retirement at the end of 2025, Becca Karpinski was chosen as interim CEO to

help the ASHA Board of Directors through the process on envisioning the next phase of ASHA's future.

- 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.
- ASHA took part in several public health observations including [Cervical Health Awareness Month](#) in January. We released a podcast episode on HPV Screening with Self Collection with Rebecca Perkins. We also launched a toolkit for advocates and provided resources for partners and families.
- ASHA released 3 additional podcast episodes.
- [ASHA interviewed Dennis Barbour](#), President and CEO of the Partnership for Male Youth, on the state of boys and young men, with a special look at their mental health.
- We [released an episode](#) on the two new gonorrhea medications recently approved by the FDA. Dr. Jeanne Marrazzo explains why the new drugs are so important in providing a more convenient, oral treatment option against an infection that is increasingly resistant to other therapies.
- We also released an [interview with Dr. Keosha Bond](#) who discusses her award-winning research that highlights the impact of colorism on the healthcare Black women receive, the Black maternal mortality crisis, and her work training the next generation of health care providers to understand implicit bias, racism, structural inequality, and how these factors impact health outcomes.
- Each was produced as podcast episodes as well having a corresponding social media toolkit comprised of short bite size messages as Instagram reels.

From the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention (CDC)



- [Sexually Transmitted Infections Surveillance, 2024 \(Provisional\)](#) provides the latest national data on trends for chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis
- [Gonococcal Isolate Surveillance Project \(GISP\) Profiles | STI Statistics | CDC](#) – in February, CDC posted 2023 and 2024 reports for the Gonococcal Isolate Surveillance Project (GISP)
- [Sexually Transmitted Infections: Outbreak Preparedness and Response Toolkit](#) – in December 2025, CDC released a toolkit to assist state, tribal, local, and territorial health departments in preparing for and responding to STI outbreaks
- [STI Awareness Week](#) is April 12-16, 2026 and offers an opportunity to ensure people have the tools and knowledge for STI prevention, testing, and treatment

Upcoming events in the IUSTI-NA region:



STI Prevention Conference, August 31-September 2, 2026, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

More information can be found at <https://stipreventionconference.org/>



The 2026 STI Prevention Conference comes at a moment when the STI field is being asked to do a lot at once: sustain progress, respond to

new challenges, and chart a path forward in an increasingly complex environment. Convened under the theme, Forward Together: Uniting Science, Community, and Care for STI Prevention, the conference reflects both the urgency of the moment and the optimism that meaningful progress is still within reach, especially if we act collectively.

Recent declines in chlamydia and gonorrhea show that progress is possible. Yet the continued rise in congenital syphilis and persistent barriers in accessing sexual health services highlight gaps in prevention, testing, and treatment, which are affecting communities already disproportionately impacted by STIs.

Unlike prior conferences, the 2026 meeting is designed in response to a dramatically shifting US landscape marked by shrinking federal and state funding, terminated research grants, workforce shortages, and policies that increasingly make sexual healthcare inaccessible. The conference explicitly prioritizes prevention strategies, service delivery models, research, and policy approaches that remain responsive to community needs, even as resources tighten.

Against these challenges, the 2026 STI Prevention Conference centers collaboration across research, public health practice, community leadership, and clinical care to identify how the field can protect hard-won gains and do more with limited resources. With a smaller, action-oriented format, designed to foster meaningful engagement, the 2026 STI Prevention Conference serves as both a call to unity and a platform for collective leadership. It reaffirms a central truth: that progress in STI prevention depends on aligning science, community, and care – and moving forward together.

Caroline Cameron

Asia Pacific



Dr Pingyu Zhou – Regional Director of IUSTI-Asia-Pacific

Second Shanghai International Syphilis Symposium (SISS 2025) Held in China

The second Shanghai International Syphilis Symposium (SISS 2025) convened global leaders in syphilis research, clinical care, and public health from October 20-22 in Shanghai, China. Co-chaired by Pingyu Zhou (Xinhua Hospital, Shanghai Jiao Tong University) and Justin D. Radolf (UConn Health), the meeting addressed the urgent challenge of re-emerging syphilis worldwide.

Scientific Highlights: Sessions reviewed global epidemiology and strategies for key populations, including MSM and pregnant women. Diagnostic innovations—ranging from point-of-care assays to self-testing—were explored alongside evolving treatment paradigms, including Doxy-PEP and novel neurosyphilis data from China. A major focus was vaccine development, leveraging recent breakthroughs in *T. pallidum* cultivation to accelerate antigen discovery and platform-based design.

Implementation and Action: Implementation science emerged as a central theme, with emphasis on community-engaged approaches to reduce stigma and improve testing uptake. Two structured working lunches—one on diagnostic priorities using consensus-building methods, another led by WHO and Gates Foundation on treatment research gaps—translated discussions into actionable agendas.

Looking Forward: SISS 2025 concluded with shared commitment to sustaining momentum through ongoing international collaboration

and plans for future symposia to accelerate progress toward global syphilis control.



2026 IUSTI Asia Pacific Regional Conference

IUSTI Asia-Pacific, in partnership with the Philippine Society of Venereologists (PSV), will be having its Regional Congress in Manila on December 2 – 4, 2026 at the Crowne Plaza Manila Galleria, Quezon City, Philippines. This is the first face-to-face Asia-Pacific Congress since the COVID-19 pandemic, and the event will be held after World AIDS Day on December

Its theme is ‘One Goal, One Voice, One Action Against Sexually Transmitted Infections’.

The Congress is co-chaired by A/Prof. Catherine O’Connor (Australia, IUSTI – AP Regional Chair) and Dr. Gilbert Yang (Philippines, IUSTI Vice-Chair for the Southeast Asia Subregion). The Scientific Committee is co-chaired by Prof. Eric Chow (Australia, ISSTD President) and Dr. Jovanni Templonuevo (Philippines, PSV President). This Congress will have five tracks to suit the interest of delegates.

1. Clinical HIV and STI Dilemma
2. Laboratory of HIV and STI Advancement
3. HIV and STI Policy and Program including Prevention and Control Implementation
4. HIV and STI Epidemiology and Public Health
5. Behavioral and Social Science on HIV and STI

We look forward to meeting you all in the Philippines! For more information, visit our website: <https://iusti2026philippines.com>.

14-17 October 2026
Prague, Czech Republic
<https://www.iustiprague2026.com/>

IUSTI Asia -Pacific Regional Congress
2-4 December 2026
Quezon City, Philippines
<https://iusti2026philippines.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

Conference Update

IUSTI Events:

IUSTI World Congress