

HIV in Europe – Working Together for Optimal Testing and Earlier Care

HIV in Europe is a cross European multidisciplinary initiative working for optimal testing and earlier care for HIV in Europe.

HIV in Europe builds on a Call to Action adopted at a pan-European conference in Brussels in 2007 gathering more than 300 key European advocates, clinicians and public health professionals. In November 2008, the European Parliament adopted the Joint Resolution on HIV/AIDS: early diagnosis and early care based on the HIV in Europe call to action. The initiative has developed concrete projects with the aim to improve the evidence base around this priority.

HIV in Europe provides a European platform to share knowledge and experiences across European borders and is collaborating with ECDC, WHO-Europe and Member State health authorities.

HIV in Europe website launch

In April the HIV in Europe website was launched. Please visit www.hiveurope.eu

Ongoing Projects

HIV Indicator Diseases Across Europe

Following the recommendations from the HIV in Europe 2007 Conference, the Indicator Diseases survey aims at developing focused HIV testing in patients presenting with certain clinical conditions and/or diseases.

The objective is to launch, implement and evaluate a survey initiative to assess HIV prevalence for 8 defined diseases and/or conditions within a specific segment of the population not yet diagnosed with HIV and that present for care with the specific disease/condition.

Call for collaboration

A call for collaboration for partners to cooperate on the Indicator Diseases Project can be downloaded here:
<http://tinyurl.com/CallForCollaboration>

Deadline the 15th of June 2009

The Stigma Index

One of the key results from the HIV in Europe meeting was that stigma is an important barrier for access to optimal testing and earlier care. In order to reduce barriers to testing and treatment it's important to gather more precise data on both issues in order to base action on evidence.

In 2008 the Global Network for People Living with HIV/AIDS (GNP+), the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and UNAIDS have presented 'The People living with HIV Stigma Index'. The Index aims to build the evidence base for understanding stigma and discrimination experienced by people living with HIV in different countries.

The objective of the HIV in Europe stigma index project is to implement the Stigma Index in three countries in the European region.

Criminalisation of Communicable diseases

UNDP and UNAIDS, in their policy brief on the criminalization of HIV, write that criminalization "could discourage HIV testing".

The aim of the study is to review legislation across the European Region that singles out the criminalization of HIV or other communicable diseases, and describe such laws, the reasoning for them and investigate whether this has had any effect on the spread of the disease in the country including potential impact on testing.

Temporal Trends in Late Presenters over the European Continent

The Objectives of the project are:

- 1) To study the epidemiology for those persons who are presenting late with HIV compared to those presenting early for care, and;
- 2) To develop methodologies that are able to estimate the size of the undiagnosed yet infected pool of persons.

HIV in Europe Conference 2nd and 3rd of November, Stockholm

A follow-up meeting has been planned at the Nobel Forum in Stockholm on 2nd and 3rd November 2009 under the auspice of the European Union Presidency and the Swedish Government.

This conference will gather cross disciplinary and cross border actors around the complex issue of the large proportion of undiagnosed HIV infected and late presentation for HIV treatment in Europe to share knowledge and experiences across European borders. The anticipated result is, through exchange of good practices, to reach momentum on the four ongoing projects and to raise awareness about the aspect of optimal testing and earlier care for HIV/AIDS.

Preliminary Programme -
<http://tinyurl.com/HIVinEuropeProgramme>

Participation is on invitation only - Application Form for participation can be downloaded here:

<http://tinyurl.com/ConferenceApplicationForm>

HIV in Europe Steering Committee

Name	Country	Affiliation
Henrique Barros	Portugal	HIV/AIDS Infections
Ton Coenen (Co-chair)	Netherlands	Aids Action Europe
Nikos Dedes	Greece	European Aids Treatment Group
José Gatell	Spain	University of Barcelona
Brian Gazzard	UK	Imperial College School of Medicine Westminster Hospital
Jens Lundgren (Co-Chair)	Denmark	University of Copenhagen
Jürgen Rockstroh	Germany	University of Bonn
Jean-Luc Romero	France	Elus Locaux contre le Sida
Anders Sonnerborg	Sweden	Karolinska Institute
John De Wit	Netherlands	Utrecht University
Jeffrey V Lazarus*	Denmark	WHO Regional Office for Europe
Srdan Matic*	Denmark	WHO Regional Office for Europe
Marita van de Laar*	Sweden	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

*Observer

Presentations at European Meetings and Conferences

"HIV testing and patient outcomes", Conferência VIH em Portugal 2009, Trabalhar em conjunto para o diagnóstico e cuidados precoces da infecção VIH, March 2009, Speaker: Prof. Jens Lundgren, MD DMSc, University of Copenhagen & Rigshospitalet, Denmark

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