



American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Association (ASTDA) / IUSTI North American Region

From the ASTDA President



It has been a year since I took office as President and there are many important things going on with ASTDA that I want to share with you. As you are no doubt aware, there have been many changes in our working environment over the past year some of which are positive (e.g. additional funding support as a result of the *Ending the HIV Epidemic* initiative) and some of which are not (e.g. increasing numbers of state laws that are harmful to women's sexual & reproductive health). It is with attention to this context that our Association has developed a Mission Statement, revised our Objectives and clarified our core values in terms of commitments that we as an Association can make to the field. I share them with you here and encourage you to go to the website www.ASTDA.org (if you are not already reading this on the website!)

ASTDA's Mission is to foster scientific knowledge, develop leadership and champion practice in the field of sexually transmitted infections.

ASTDA's Objectives are to:

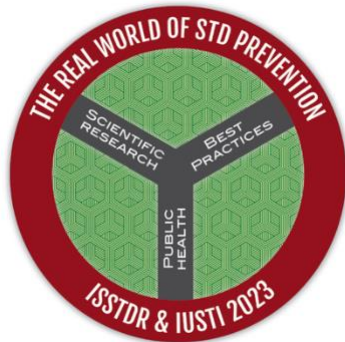
- . To control, prevent, and ultimately eradicate sexually transmitted infections (STI)
- . To support research in all aspects of STI including medical, epidemiologic, laboratory, social and behavioral studies
- . To recognize outstanding contributions in STI control and prevention
- . To disseminate authoritative information concerning STI
- . To develop the current and future generations of STI professionals
- . To promote social justice as an antidote to the structural determinants of STI risk

ASTDA's Commitments are that:

- . We demand rigorous science adhering to the highest ethical standards.
- . We promote a sex-positive sexual health framework.
- . We are committed to an STI workforce and ASTDA membership comprised of professionals with a wide range of roles and experiences.
- . We value a culture of inclusion, equity, safety, professionalism, and respect.
- . We recognize social justice as a core value for addressing STI.

As I mentioned above, the website is now a place that we encourage you to go for the latest updates about the Association (and to become a member if you are not one or refer colleagues so that they can become members). We have improved the functionality and the content of the website and hope that it will now become a site that you visit often as we are updating it frequently.

We have also simplified the membership structure. Since ASTDA now serves as the operational arm of the North American Branch of the International Union Against STIs (IUSTI-NA), we have harmonized the ASTDA and IUSTI membership periods so that they both begin on 1 January and go through 31 December of each calendar year. Remember – your ASTDA membership gives you automatic IUSTI membership which provides substantial discounts for many meetings! Of course, your membership also gives you a subscription to the Sexually Transmitted Diseases journal which you can access through our website.



In July, ASTDA presented a bid to host the 2023 International Society for STD Research (ISSTD) in Chicago. We were successful in our effort to bring this meeting back to the US for the first time since 2007! Keep an eye on the [ASTDA website](#) for additional details about this exciting opportunity for the Association to showcase itself and support our mission of dissemination of research findings as well as to foster development of leadership in our field.

At the most recent ISSTD meeting (held in Vancouver in July), we were able to fund several scholarships for travel. IUSTI-NA/Canada branch & ASTDA held a young investigator’s workshop with the intent of bringing early career stage investigators and public health professionals together with academic colleagues and industry representatives to provide mentorship. Breakfast sessions were also supported by ASTDA to provide an opportunity for early stage career professionals to meet with experts and discuss common concerns regarding publishing, obtaining funding, and addressing sexual and gender harassment/inequalities in our workplaces. We will continue to offer such opportunities at future national and international meetings so if you are interested, or have a mentee who may benefit from these sessions, please check the website for more details regarding these opportunities as we approach these meeting dates.

In other news, we have updated the Association’s By-laws so be expecting to see a request for approval that will be sent out to all members in the upcoming weeks. 2020 will be a Board

election year so be thinking about who you may want to nominate (including yourself!) If you don't see emails about Association news – please check the website!

We are looking forward to a productive year and hope to continue to build & expand our community in the field of STI research, control & prevention.



Barbara Van Der Pol, PhD, MPH
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Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Medicine
Director, Infectious Diseases Laboratory
President, ASTDA
President-Elect, International Society for STD Research

IUSTI Canada



Over the past few years we have been working to form a Canadian branch of the International Union against Sexually Transmitted Infections (IUSTI-Canada) with the objectives to advance STI public health and to encourage and improve the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of STIs. The Executive Committee of IUSTI-Canada consists of: President – Jo-Anne Dillon; Vice-President – Marc Steben; Treasurer – Max

Chernesky; Secretary - Irene Martin; Member-at-Large – Caroline Cameron; Coordination, – Greg Penney (Canadian Public Health Association) The membership drive was initiated in January 2019 and we currently have 20 active members.

IUSTI-Canada held its first Annual General Meeting at the Vancouver STI & HIV World Congress meeting on July 15, 2019.

During the Vancouver STI & HIV World Congress meeting, IUSTI-Canada held a well attended Pre-Conference symposia on '**Innovative platforms and interventions against gonorrhoea**', highlighting new innovative technologies, novel anti-gonococcal antibiotics under development and potential vaccine therapies. Presentations included: i) Novel targets and drug development for STIs - Dr. Gerry Wright, McMaster University; ii) International dissemination of ceftriaxone-resistant *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* strain (FC428) - Dr. Petra Smyczek, Alberta Health Services; iii) New gonococcal antibiotic treatments under development – Dr. Jo-Anne Dillon, University of Saskatchewan; iv) Potential gonococcal vaccines and immune response - Dr. Scott Gray-Owen, University of Toronto.

Also part of the Vancouver STI & HIV World Congress meeting, IUSTI-Canada, in collaboration with the American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Associations (ASTDA) held a **Career Development Symposium for Emerging Investigators and Program Leaders** workshop for young investigators on July 13, 2019. Coordinated by Dr. Marc Steben, the workshop included speakers from the ASTDA, IUSTI-North America, the editor of the Sexually Transmitted Diseases journal as well as industry partners. The workshop included 22 participants and provided a tremendous opportunity to foster relationships with other researchers and industry in the field of STI.



IUSTI-Canada / ASTDA Career Development Symposium for Emerging Investigators and Program Leaders Workshop Participants

We continue to recruit members for IUSTI-Canada. Membership is open to individuals with a professional interest in STIs.

Contact us at: iusti.canada@cpha.ca

IUSTI-Canada Executive consists of:

President – Jo-Anne Dillon - j.dillon@usask.ca

Vice-President, ASTDA EC Member – Marc Steben - marc@marcsteben.com

Secretary – Irene Martin – Irene.martin@canada.ca

Treasurer – Max Chernesky - cherneskg@gmail.com

Member-at-Large – Caroline Cameron – caroc@uvic.ca

Coordination, CPHA – Greg Penney - gpenney@cpha.ca

American Sexual Health Association



- ASHA recognized September as [Sexual Health Month](#). We took part in the World Sexual Day observance organized on 9/4/19 by the World Association for Sexual Health (WAS) and during the month launched a social media campaign and released a [new podcast episode](#) arguing that consent should be instilled as a value early in life rather than taught as a lesson in high school and college.
- We produced additional podcast episodes over the summer and fall including *Bacterial Vaginosis and Vaginal Health*; *Choosing the Right Contraceptives for You and Your Teen*; and *HIV Testing Day 2019*. All podcast episodes available at <http://www.ashasexualhealth.org/sexhealth-podcast/>.
- Released new videos including *Sexual Health and the Military* for active duty service members and *HPV Tests Take Center Stage* focusing on the current approaches to screening for cervical cancer including the newest option, HPV primary screening, where an HPV test is used without being paired with a Pap test. These and other sexual health videos are available on ASHA's Youtube channel at <https://tinyurl.com/y5kklbb>.

Hidden Epidemic Revisited



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, through the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), has requested that the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine convene an ad hoc committee to examine:

- 1) The epidemiological dimensions of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in the United States and factors that contribute to the epidemic (changes in population demographics, sexual and other behaviors, social determinants), as well as changes in the understanding of the agents that cause STIs;
- 2) to the extent possible, the economic burden associated with STIs;
- 3) current public health strategies and programs to prevent and control STIs (including STI diagnostics, STI vaccines, STI monitoring and surveillance, treatment);
- 4) barriers in the healthcare system and insurance coverage associated with the prevention and treatment of STIs;

The committee will provide direction for future public health programs, policy, and research in STI prevention and control and make recommendations* as appropriate.

*The committee will not provide recommendations on HIV/AIDS or viral hepatitis prevention, diagnosis, treatment, policy, or research as that is not the focus of this study.

The Committee is comprised of a multidisciplinary group of researchers, program experts, and policy makers and includes three members of the IUSTI World Executive Committee: Drs. Charlotte Gaydos, Ned Hook, and Kees Rietmeijer. To date, the Committee has met three times and has started its work on a report that is expected to be published by the fall of next year.

Upcoming Conferences



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

INNOVATE. IMPACT. EMPOWER.



Report submitted by:
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