What’s holding us back and how do we move faster?

Plenary Session - Plenary Room 2, 08:20 - 10:30

Olive Shisana, South Africa: Strengthening health systems and community
Jennifer Gatsi-Mallet, Namibia: Gender inequality and HIV
Mark Dybul, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria: Better and smarter investments in the HIV response

Award Presentations: The Women, Girls and HIV Investigator’s Prize and The Prize for Excellence in Research Related to Children Affected by HIV, will be both given at the beginning of the session.

The scientific programme kicks off this morning with presentations that will investigate how to move forward in the HIV epidemic by looking at issues such as: strengthening health care systems, gender equality, and using epidemiological data.

Sustainability

Professor Olive Shisana, local Co-chair AIDS 2016 and Chief Executive Officer at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in South Africa will present a session entitled: Strengthening Health Systems and Community. In her session, she will address the health system challenges that have been caused by the high burden of HIV and tuberculosis. Professor Shisana will also discuss the opportunities that arise from addressing HIV and TB in the era of increasing non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Shisana will put forward many ideas for strengthening and creating sustainable health care systems.

Power Relations

Jennifer Gatsi-Mallet is Director and a founding member of the Namibia Women’s Health Network and the Namibia Country Officer for the International Community of Women Living with HIV. Ms. Gatsi-Mallet will deliver a 25 minute plenary presentation on Gender Inequality and HIV emphasizing community responses supporting national efforts.

Gender inequality and unequal power relations between women and men persist as major social determinants of HIV transmission, progression, and persistence. Approximately 60% of people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa are women and girls, 50% worldwide are women and girls. Continued gender inequality and violations of human rights make women and girls vulnerable to HIV and persists in stunting progress, which threatens HIV prevention and increasing access to antiretroviral therapy. The steps taken by community groups to respond to gender inequality and HIV highlight the importance of setting gender and AIDS programme priorities, which will vary according to the configuration of a country’s epidemic and its local contexts.

Efficiency in the HIV Response

Dr Mark Dybul, Executive Director, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, will speak on a paradigm shift from epidemic to low-level endemicity: ending HIV as a public health threat as part of the plenary session on Better and smarter investments in the HIV response. The talk will focus on the interlinked historic opportunities to completely control HIV and creating an inclusive human family. There will be an emphasis on focusing combination prevention interventions in geographies and populations with the highest rates/risk of transmission and on ensuring quality in the delivery of interventions.

Towards an HIV Cure Symposium: a platform to present state-of-the-art basic science, pre-clinical and clinical research towards an HIV cure.

The 2014 Towards an HIV Cure Symposium took place on 19 & 20 July at the Victoria University City Convention Centre. The symposium, co-chaired by Francesco Barin-Sinussi, IAS President; Steven Deeks, Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), and Sharon Lewin, Director of the Infectious Diseases Unit, Alfred Hospital, Monash University, and Bumet Institute, brought together 500 participants including basic and clinical researchers, funding administrators, regulators, scientific journalists and community advocates. The symposium provided a platform to present state-of-the-art basic science, pre-clinical and clinical research towards an HIV cure with the presentation of 70 oral and poster abstracts. The symposium also provided an opportunity for discussion through three roundtable sessions on analytical treatment interruption, HIV cure preparedness in resource-limited settings, and public-private partnerships in HIV cure research, respectively. The keynote address was provided by Dr. Jeffrey Lifson, Frederick National Laboratory, USA, and the closing lecture was given by Prof. Miles Prince, Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Australia.
The panel will question the biomedical and scientific advances of prevention technology. The aim is to understand if the community will actually take these options on board and if there is policy and programme support to roll out these technologies. If one of the major reasons for sexual encounters is pleasure, which of these technologies actually increases pleasure and doesn’t diminish it? What are potential downsides and side-effects and are they worth it? How do new prevention technologies affect disclosure, prevention and stigma?

Lancet Special Theme Issue: HIV and Sex Work?
Symposia Session – Plenary Room 3, 14:30 – 16:00

The Lancet has commissioned a special theme issue on the global HIV epidemic among sex workers to address these issues. This symposium, chaired by IAS President-elect Chris Beyrer and Richard Horton, is based on the theme issues, and will take account of the realities of the lives of sex workers through their voices; review the risk environment and its impacts; assess HIV prevention options; investigate community empowerment interventions; review the human rights, legal, and policy frameworks, including decriminalization and policing practices, which affect sex workers and can enhance or reduce their risks; and review the special issues for male and transgender sex workers.

“HIV Cure” 101
Scientific Development Workshop - Room 103, 11:00 – 12:30

The aim of this workshop is to facilitate discussions around current research and developments in relation to a HIV cure. This workshop is targeted at those living with HIV and AIDS, clinicians, and researchers. It seeks to reach non-scientists, and laymen who have a strong interest in the development of a cure for HIV but who may not be fully aware of the current state of the field. Participants will leave the workshop with a working knowledge of the current state of research and language around “cure” research. They will develop understanding of the viral reservoir, what it consists of, where it is located and how it can be assessed. They will understand the strategies proposed to reduce or eliminate the reservoir and the difference between a functional and sterilizing cure and the different meanings associated with “eradication of HIV” when applied to an individual compared to its use when referring to populations.

Reforming Drug Policies to End the HIV and AIDS Epidemic among People Who Inject Drugs
Special Session, Melbourne Room 1, 13:00 – 14:00

Featuring The Hon. Michael Kirby, Sir Richard Branson (by video) and Michael Kazatchkine of UNAIDS, the objective of the session is to provoke discussion and audience interaction at a time where the Global Commission on Drug Policy is advocating for health, human rights and development approaches to lead the ongoing global discussions ahead of the UNGASS 2016 on the world drug problem. It also brings together experts on HIV infection among people who inject drugs, and those working on the decriminalization and policing practices, which affect sex workers and can enhance or reduce their risks; and review the special issues for male and transgender sex workers.

IAS Towards an HIV Cure - Community Engagement Workshop
Non-commercial Satellite - Room 103, 18:30 – 20:30

With the introduction and welcome address by Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, France, and co-organized with the International AIDS Society, National Association of People With HIV Australia (NAPWHA) and the Treatment Action Group (TAG), the Community Engagement Satellite aims to provide the key elements to understand the challenges and obstacles for an HIV cure, to present the most recent results that are fueling new research directions, as well as engaging a cross-community dialogue. This satellite will be open to all, including community representatives, members of patient associations, advocates, and HIV cure researchers, from both the public and private sector, and media representatives.

Award Presentations: The Women, Girls and HIV Investigator’s Prize and the Prize for Excellence in Research Related to Children Affected by HIV
Non-commercial Satellite - Room 103, 18:30 – 20:30

The recipients of the Women, Girls and HIV Investigator’s Prize and the Prize for Excellent in Research Related to Children Affected by HIV will receive their awards in Plenary 2 at 8:20 at the start of the morning plenary session entitled What's holding us back and how do we move faster?

The purpose of the Women, Girls and HIV Investigator’s Prize is to encourage research in low- or middle-income countries that can benefit women and girls affected by HIV and AIDS. The US$2000 is offered by the IAS and UNAIDS, and supported by the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) and the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW). This prize serves to highlight the challenges faced by women and girls in the HIV epidemic and to encourage investigators from low- and middle-income countries to pursue research in this area.

The Prize for Excellence in HIV Research Related to Children supports investigators whose abstracts demonstrate excellence in research that is likely to lead to improved services for children affected by HIV in low- or middle-income countries. The prize is offered by the IAS and the Coalition for Children Affected by AIDS. This year the US$2000 prize will be jointly awarded to two researchers, who submitted outstanding research to AIDS 2014.

Be a Part of AIDS 2014 Evaluation

The Conference Evaluation Team invites delegates to take part in their efforts to evaluate the conference. Here are two ways you can participate:

Focus Group Discussions
If you accepted an invitation to participate in a focus group discussion, please do so at the time and location provided to you.

Post-Conference Survey
Please complete the post-conference online survey that will be emailed to you on Tuesday 29 July.

Key findings and recommendations will be documented in the AIDS 2014 Evaluation Report, which will be posted on the conference website in December 2014 and shared with key stakeholders in order to improve planning of the next International AIDS Conference.

AIDS 2014 Melbourne Declaration Booth

Be sure to visit the AIDS 2014 Melbourne Declaration booth, which you will find in the main plenary foyer. Here you can sign the Declaration and join forces with our many Declaration Ambassadors; Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Sir Richard Branson, Aung San Suu Kyi, Sir Bob Geldof and many more.

To defeat HIV and achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support — nobody should be criminalised or discriminated against because of their gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability, religious or spiritual beliefs, country of origin, national status, sexual orientation, gender identity, status as a sex worker, prisoner or detainees, because they use or have used illicit drugs or because they are living with HIV. Sign online at: http://www.aid2014.org/declaration.aspx

Readings Bookshop

Come and visit Readings Bookshop! Here you will find a wide range of gifts and books, many related to the topic of HIV/AIDS.

Located opposite the media centre, Readings Bookshop will be open from 9am to 6pm, until Thursday 24th July.

You are welcome to use the $5 voucher that was supplied in your welcome pack!