
STANDARD OF CARE MEETING FOR HIV & CO-INFECTIONS IN EUROPE

16-17 October 2024
Athens, Greece

Endorsed by



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ ΜΕΛΕΤΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΤΙΜΕΤΩΠΙΣΗΣ ΤΟΥ AIDS
HELLENIC SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY AND CONTROL OF AIDS

The Hellenic Society for Infectious Diseases



The Turkish Society of AIDS and STI

EUROPEAN AIDS CLINICAL SOCIETY (EACS)
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Executive Summary

The European AIDS Clinical Society (EACS) was legally established as a not-for-profit organisation in 1991. EACS convenes the HIV scientific community to enhance the provision of care for individuals living with HIV across Europe and beyond. The EACS mission is to promote research, education, and training through its educational programme and the European AIDS Conference, to issue the EACS Guidelines for the management of people living with HIV, and thus, to improve standards of care.

The EACS Standard of Care Working Group was formed in 2014 following the decision of the EACS Governing Board to host a biennial meeting on the Standard of Care for HIV and co-infections in Europe. The working group determined that focusing on the standard of care as a specific topic aligned with EACS's primary activities and also considered the involvement of stakeholders active in the field, such as WHO, EuroTest, ECDC, and EATG. The primary aim was for EACS to establish standards, or benchmarks, defining the meaning of "standard of care" in alignment with the EACS Guidelines, leveraging its role in training and education.

The outcome of the first Standard of Care for HIV and co-infections meeting held in Rome in October 2013 was to identify areas for quality assessment. Consequently, EACS assumed an active role and responsibility in enhancing the quality markers of the treatment cascade in clinical care by engaging clinicians, community representatives, and public health institutional partners from Western, Central, and Eastern Europe. The EACS Standard of Care Working Group further recommended that the standard of care meeting and other policy activities of the Society should prioritise the needs of people living with HIV and caregivers, with a particular focus on "access to care."

The information shared during the meeting regarding the current European situation will serve as the foundation for developing a common platform for European standards of care, which is currently lacking. This initiative involves not only clinicians but also individuals living with HIV, community representatives, and public health institutional partners. As a pan-European Society, EACS has opted not only to host the platform for this initiative but also to advocate for the implementation of European standards of care across all EU and non-EU European countries.

The EACS Standard of Care Working Group acknowledges that while EACS cannot directly oversee interventional and operational roles, it can provide institutional stakeholders with recognised standards to develop a strategy aimed at improving care and bridging existing gaps among the different European regions.

Standard of Care Working Group

Scientific Committee

Karoline Aebi-Popp (Switzerland)

Kerstin Aimla (Estonia)

Natalia Bolokadze (Georgia)

Maria Jose Fuster (SEISIDA)

Deniz Gökengin (Turkiye)

Ole Kirk (Denmark)

Mojca Maticic (Slovenia)

Cristina Mussini (Italy)

Teymur Noori (ECDC)

Cristiana Oprea, Co-Chair (Romania)

Milosz Parczewski (Poland)

Nicoletta Policek (EATG)

Konstantinos Protopapas (Greece)

Jürgen Rockstroh (Germany)

Ann Sullivan, Co-Chair (United Kingdom)

Elena Vovc (WHO)

Sime Zekan (Croatia)

Educational background and justification

The Standard of Care meeting is grounded in the expertise of clinicians, researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders in HIV care and management. It serves as a platform for ensuring that standards of care are informed by the latest scientific evidence, research findings, and clinical guidelines, thus optimising patient outcomes and quality of care. By providing ongoing education and training, the meeting enables healthcare professionals to stay updated on evolving practices and modalities in HIV care. Moreover, the meeting addresses disparities in access to care, challenges in diagnosis and treatment, and barriers to healthcare services across diverse regions and populations. Ultimately, the goal is to improve patient outcomes and quality of life by establishing and promoting standards of care that are applicable, evidence-based, and conducive to better management of HIV and related co-infections and co-morbidities.

Aim/Goal of Standard of Care Scientific Committee

- 1) To collect and disseminate data on the standards of care including the progress and pitfalls in different European regions, as well as to provide a platform sharing this data among different stakeholders.
- 2) To elaborate a standard of care document which defines benchmarks for different areas of care and treatment in accordance with the EACS Guidelines.
- 3) To identify indicators used to measure parameters such as access to testing, access to care, cascade of care and prevention, diagnosis and management of co-morbidities.
- 4) To develop partnerships with the institutional stakeholders and policymakers, such as the European Parliament and Commission, ECDC, EuroTest, UNAIDS, and WHO.
- 5) To actively involve individuals living with HIV and community representatives, such as EATG as well as international and national NGOs.

Event format

The meeting is scheduled to be held in Athens, Greece, at the Technopolis of Athens from 16 to 17 October 2024.

The format of the meeting will span one and a half days, featuring plenary sessions and workshops. This year's theme is "Standard Care for All: Embracing Those Left Behind." Co-organised by Greece and Turkiye, both strategically located at the crossroads of Western, Central, and Eastern Europe, regions that face significant disparities in HIV care. Moreover, Greece and Turkiye share an intertwined history, characterised by social, cultural, political, and geographical interactions, providing a robust foundation.

The partnership between Greece and Turkiye to co-organise this meeting will foster an ideal environment for healthcare professionals, public health and community representatives, as well as policymakers from diverse European regions to engage, explore collaborative opportunities, address shared challenges, and build connections.

The overarching objectives of the meeting are:

- To address the disparities in access to HIV and STI care among migrant populations across Europe.
- To discuss the potential consequences of EU migration reform on healthcare access.
- To explore strategies to scale up sexual healthcare services and overcome barriers.
- To establish European standards of HIV care and provide guidance on implementation and improvement.
- To investigate the prevalence and impact of stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings.
- To identify enabling policies and actions to combat stigma and promote inclusivity in healthcare.

Organising committee

The Organising Committee is composed of EACS members, and public health and community representatives from the European region.

Chairs

Cristiana Oprea, EACS Co-Chair (*Romania*)
Ann Sullivan, EACS Co-Chair (*United Kingdom*)

Local Organising Committee

Deniz Gökengin (*Turkiye*)
Konstantinos Protopapas (*Greece*)

Önder Bora (*Positive Living, Turkiye*)
Nikos Dedes (*Positive Voice, Greece*)

Organising Committee

Karoline Aebi-Popp (*Switzerland*)
Kerstin Aimla (*Estonia*)
Natalia Bolokadze (*Georgia*)
Maria Jose Fuster (SEISIDA)
Dilara İnan (*Turkiye*)
Ole Kirk (*Denmark*)
Mojca Maticic (*Slovenia*)
Cristina Mussini (*Italy*)

Teymur Noori (*ECDC*)
Milosz Parczewski (*Poland*)
Antonios Papadopoulos (*Greece*)
Nicoletta Policek (*EATG*)
Jürgen Rockstroh (*Germany*)
Elena Vovc (*WHO*)
Sime Zekan (*Croatia*)

Participants

- Experienced clinicians and/or academia/public health institutions, key opinion leaders in the field of HIV and related co-infections from all over Europe (with focus on Greece and Turkiye)
- Representatives from ECDC, EuroTest, UNAIDS, WHO, and national and EU policymakers
- Representatives from national and international community NGOs

In order to ensure interaction, the number of participants is limited to a hundred delegates and the conference is on invitation only.

Preliminary Scientific Programme

Day 1 – 16 October 2024

Opening lecture: Standards care for all: Embracing those left behind

Session 1 – HIV and STI care among migrants across Europe

The objective of this session is to review access to and provision of HIV and STI testing and care for migrant populations, including barriers, and the related possible consequences of the EU migration reform.

Presentations:

1. Current status of access to testing, treatment, continuum of care and retention in care for migrant populations
2. EU migration reform and its potential consequences
3. Scaling-up sexual healthcare services-how to address barriers
4. Group discussion

Session 2 – ECDC/EACS standards of HIV care in Europe workshop

The objective of this session is to provide an overview of the standards of care project to date, including implementation, and present the plans for the next three modules in order to seek feedback from participants.

Presentations:

1. European standards of HIV care
2. Aims, objectives, and utility of the standards
3. Standards of care for HIV Testing and PrEP
 - Overview of the HIV Testing and PrEP standards
 - Implementing the standards and how to measure and improve performance –step by step guide on what countries/services need to do next and the tools they can use
 - Breakout groups to discuss challenges and to report back 2-3 areas they need assistance with or further guidance on. 3 groups based on region/similar healthcare systems/monitoring
 - Report from the breakout groups
4. Introduction of new Standards of Care modules. Objective: Leads to provide brief description of module and highlight 1 or 2 areas, quality statements or indicators that were controversial or required a lot of discussion by the writing group in order to get feedback from audience on these specific points
 - Antenatal screening
 - Commencement of ART
 - HIV and co-morbidities
 - Panel and group discussion
5. Wrap-up from the day and next steps

Day 2 – 17 October 2024

Session 3 – Fighting stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings

The objective of this session is to review reported HIV related stigma in healthcare settings, with a focus on Greece and Turkiye, and explore potential interventions to address this.

Presentations:

6. Report on the survey on stigma in healthcare settings
7. A focus on Greece and Turkiye
8. Enabling policies and actions
9. Group discussion on required policies and interventions to address stigma in healthcare settings

Session 4 – Health for all

Presentations:

10. Summary of the meeting with recommendations
11. Closing

Expected results and outputs

- To Increase awareness and understanding of the challenges faced by migrant populations in accessing HIV and STI care across Europe.
- To identify potential consequences of EU migration reform on healthcare access and implications for policy and practice.
- To develop strategies to scale up sexual healthcare services, addressing barriers such as language, cultural differences, and legal constraints.
- To establish a clear European standards of HIV care document, providing a framework for consistent and high-quality care across the region.
- To enhance knowledge and capacity among healthcare professionals and policymakers regarding the importance of addressing stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings.
- To identify actionable policies and initiatives to address stigma and discrimination, promoting a more inclusive and supportive healthcare environment.
- To strengthen collaboration and networking among stakeholders, including healthcare providers, researchers, policymakers, and community organisations, to collectively address HIV, STIs, and related challenges.
- To publish a paper on the content and conclusions of the meeting and future steps.

These results aim to contribute to improving the quality and accessibility of HIV and STI care, reducing disparities, and fostering a more supportive and inclusive healthcare system across Europe.

Venue

Technopolis Athens, located in the Gazi neighbourhood of Athens, Greece, has repurposed the former gasworks site into a cultural and educational complex. It hosts a diverse array of events and houses museums, galleries, and startup spaces, contributing to Athens' cultural landscape while honouring its industrial heritage.

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[Re-audit of hepatitis care in European HIV services finds improvement in most areas despite challenges](#)

[PrEP chaos: how central Europe is suffering from inconsistent guidelines, random access, and healthcare stigma](#)

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[European PrEP programmes face two big issues: how to get more people coming forward, and how to serve them if they do](#)

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