

Highlights from the Infectious Disease (ID) Week 2017 Conference



Infectious Disease (ID) Week, an annual conference which started in October 2012, has just completed its sixth meeting in San Diego, earlier in October 2017. Establishing itself as a meeting based on medical research, it is now expanding its repertoire into basic research too. With over 300 talks spanning over six themes and over an incredible 2200 posters, ID Week really spoils you for choice when it comes to updates in the world of infectious diseases!

With focus on the local and regional healthcare systems in the USA, East and South Africa, ID Week highlighted and called for individuals in the healthcare profession to aid in the abolishment of the continued stigma against HIV, STDs and other infectious diseases. Huge strides have been made in programmes into educating and re-educating individuals in the openness for sexual health education and youth friendly services.

A keynote lecture given by Dr Connie Celum (University of

Washington) showcased the amazing work undertaken in areas such as Kenya, in which a programme empowers women, creating positive messaging and confidence in women to take charge of their sexual health and be assertive in their lifestyle choices ([Hosek et al, 2016](#)), which is still ongoing now. Other programmes in a similar vein include “The Stylish Man” intervention in Uganda, described by Dr Kate Grabowski (John Hopkins University), promoting men’s sexual health ([Billieux et al, 2017](#)). It is the hope that with the increased awareness in STDs and HIV, this will in turn reduce the number of STDs and create a demand for HIV prevention. Now, with the availability of HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), many studies are also rolling out to test the different formulations for PrEP, such as intramuscular injections, subcutaneous implants, pills or in gel formulation, to compare the efficacy of long term PrEP versus adherence to the different prophylactic regimes.

With annual “One Health Day”, on 3 November, a keynote lecture by Dr James Hughes (Emory University) reflected on the relevance of the One Health Concept and highlighted how we need to work together on a global scale ([Lammie & Hughes, 2016](#)). Dr Hughes emphasized how climate change, poverty, social equality and a lack of political will, can impact the research leading to a breakdown in public health. With the rise in emerging diseases and re-emerging vaccine preventable infections, we need to make plans, collaborations and programmes to ensure that the reporting of future outbreaks is optimal and not hindered, or hidden. Raising awareness such as this, has renewed motivations to remind ourselves of the neglected tropical diseases still killing millions around the world.

To read more about the conference visit: [ID Week](#)

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