

Information Note and Agenda

MEETING OF THE WHO STRATEGIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HIV AND VIRAL HEPATITIS (STAC-HIVHEP) & STI PARTNERS 28-30 October 2020

Virtual Meeting – ZOOM/WHO HQ
Links to be shared on 26.10.2020

Background to STAC-HIVHEP

- *The WHO Strategic and Technical Advisory Committee for HIV (STAC-HIV)* was established in 2004 by the Director-General to provide strategic and technical advice to WHO on its work related to HIV. STAC-HIV met nine times and was comprised of 15-25 individual members, selected on the basis of their scientific and technical competence.
- *The Strategic and Technical Advisory Committee for Viral Hepatitis (STAC-HEP)* was established in 2014 with a similar mandate and terms of reference as STAC-HIV, but to provide advice to the Director-General on issues related to viral hepatitis. STAC-HEP met twice and also had 15-25 members.
- In 2016 the two committees were merged to create a *the Strategic and Technical Committee on HIV and Viral Hepatitis (STAC-HIVHEP)*. STAC-HIVHEP met twice with between 45 and 50 members. Members were requested to serve on the combined STAC for three years with the possibility for renewal once and/or at the discretion of WHO.
- STAC-HIVHEP was predominantly focused on advising on the content and implementation of Global Health Sector Strategies on HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) for the period 2016-2021 – the strategies were adopted at the 69th session of the World Health Assembly (resolution WHA69.22). The three strategies use a common universal health coverage framework, and highlight the synergies across these disease areas.
- Many linkages exist across the three responses – many of the populations at greatest risk are the same; modes of transmission are similar; there are common interventions and models of service delivery; and structural barriers, such as access to affordable medicines and addressing stigma and discrimination, are common challenges.
- While the STAC-HIVHEP focused predominantly on HIV and hepatitis it also provided an important strategic steer in relation to STIs. The STI strategy was also considered, alongside the HIV and hepatitis strategies, in the deliberations of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group of RHR¹/HRP and the RHR-convened and Gender Advisory Panel (GAP).

Rationale for convening a virtual meeting of the STAC-HIVHEP in October 2020

- The three global health sector strategies on HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections 2016-2021, are coming to an end. Each of the strategies seeks to ensure the epidemics are ended as public health threats by 2030, yet despite considerable progress in

¹ Note that RHR is now the WHO Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research (SRH).

some areas of prevention and treatment, in most cases, interim 2020 targets across the strategies will not be reached.

- Even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the pace of progress in reducing new HIV infections, increasing access to treatment and ending AIDS-related deaths was slowing.
- And major advances in hepatitis prevention, testing and treatment were still failing to reach the 290 million people globally unaware they are living with viral hepatitis. And prior to the pandemic more than 1 million sexually transmitted infections (STIs) continued to be acquired every day worldwide with more than 350 000 adverse birth outcomes including 200,000 stillbirths and newborn STI-related deaths occurring annually.
- Each epidemic requires a revised strategic framework and strengthened political commitment to guide the final push to reach the SDG and WHA-adopted. As such the HHS Department is seeking to develop 2022-2030 strategies for these areas. The strategy development phase starts in final quarter of 2020 with a view to WHA consideration of finalized strategies in 2022.
- The Department of Global HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infections Programmes (HHS) works across all three levels of WHO and has integrated its work across the three disease areas with teams focused on strategic information, access to medicines and diagnostics and addressing prevention and the needs of key populations focused on all three epidemics.
- A final meeting of the existing STAC-HIVHEP would provide a timely and strategic steer to WHO at the start of the post 2021 strategies' development process and offer advice related to the convening of a smaller and more focused STAC, with a clear mandate to cover STIs as well as HIV and hepatitis, from 2021 onwards.

Terms of reference of the STAC-HIVHEP

- For the final meeting of the existing STAC-HIVHEP existing terms of reference will be used. In 2021 the HHS department will convene a new STAC with the inclusion of explicit STI expertise.

Membership of STAC-HIVHEP

- The 48 STAC members who attended the 2017 meeting were identified to ensure good geographic and technical representation.

STAC-HIVHEP Chairs and co-chair

- At the last meeting of the STAC in 2017 two overall chairs were identified, one with an HIV focus and the other with a hepatitis focus. The chairs were supported by two co-chairs. One of the co-chairs resigned in 2020 due to a recent conflict of interest. For the October 2020 meeting the STAC-HIVHEP chairs are as follows:

HIV Chair	Salim Abdool Karim, South Africa
Hepatitis Chair	Margaret Hellard, Australia
STAC-HIVHEP Co-Chair	Adele Benzaken, Brazil

Secretariat and observers

- The WHO HHS Department will act as Secretariat to the STAC-HIVHEP.
- Regional Offices will be represented by Directors of Communicable Diseases or equivalent.
- The HHS Department and other HQ departments staff will participate as technical resource people or observers in relevant sessions.
- A number of STI partners and experts will be invited to join as observers.
- Key partners will be invited to send representatives as observers to the meeting.
- Hein Marais, has been re-engaged to act as rapporteur for the meeting following his work with the STAC-HIVHEP in 2017.

Expected Deliverables

- A background briefing paper will be developed as an input to the meeting together with a table summarizing WHO reflections on the 2017 STAC-HIVHEP recommendations
- A Meeting report will be produced that includes:
 - Summary of major issues discussed
 - Recommendations to the Director-General and to WHO technical units
 - Recommendations on how to convene a smaller more focused STAC from 2021 onwards.

Meeting format and agenda

- The meeting will be held over three afternoons, 28-30 October to ensure optimal engagement for all time zones (agenda follows)
- Guidance to ensure the Zoom platform work well will be shared in advance of the meeting. Any participants new to Zoom are encouraged to view brief introductory videos: <https://zoom.us/resources>
- It is advised that participants download the Zoom platform to a reliable device or computer well in advance of the meeting.
- The meeting objectives and agenda may further evolve in consultation with the STAC chairs and co-chair and with WHO Regional Offices.
- While observers and partners will be invited to make contributions and express opinions and ideas during the meeting only STAC-HIVHEP members will be asked to make and shape recommendations to WHO.

Annex 1: Draft Agenda (final agenda will be shared on 25.10.2020)
28 October 2020, 1300-1500
Day One – *The Context we are working in*

Time	Session	Speakers
1300-1320	Welcome and introductions Chair: Salim Abdool Karim <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening remarks • Introductions • Declarations of interest • Objectives, agenda and process 	Ren Minghui, ADG UCN Meg Doherty Chairs: Salim Abdool Karim Margaret Hellard Co-chair: Adele Benzaken
1320-1420	Presentations: Our changing context Chair: Salim Abdool Karim <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HHS Director’s Overview: review of last STAC recommendations and progress related to the Global health sector strategies on HIV, hepatitis and STIs (2016-2021); the COVID-19 context, HIV, hepatitis and STIs; rationale for 2022-2030 strategies • Strategic opportunities for advancing sexually transmitted infections • Regional perspectives 	Meg Doherty Regional Directors for communicable diseases (or equivalent) Andrew Ball
1420-1500	Facilitated discussion on context Chair: Margaret Hellard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capturing of overarching STAC recommendations on the unique context in 2020 and beyond 	Salim Abdool Karim Margaret Hellard Adele Benzaken

29 October 2020 : 1300-1500
Day Two – *The What we need to do*

Time	Session	Speakers
1300-1315	Day one recap and orientation to Day 2 Chair: Adele Benzaken	Salim Abdool Karim Margaret Hellard Adele Benzaken
1315-1500	BREAK OUT SESSIONS BY DISEASE AREA (HIV, hepatitis, STIs) Facilitated discussion focused on the following questions:	Salim Abdool Karim Margaret Hellard Adele Benzaken

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What critical elements, themes or principles should be highlighted in the 2022–2030 global health sector strategies on HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections? • In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic what should WHO do to maintain and further accelerate and expand access to HIV, hepatitis and STI prevention, testing and treatment services, medicines, diagnostics and other commodities? • How best should WHO focus on disease specificity while also building sustainable, people-centered health systems that make clear contributions to universal health coverage goals? • How can WHO raise the profile of STIs and address the unmet challenges of STIs? 	WHO technical leads
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30 October 2020 : 1300-1530
Day Three – *The How* we need to do it and recommendations to WHO

Time	Session	Speakers
1300-1330	Report back from Day 2 break-out sessions Chair: Margaret Hellard	Salim Abdool Karim Margaret Hellard Adele Benzaken
1330-1340	Options for a renewed STAC and linked advisory mechanisms Chair: Margaret Hellard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO guidance on advisory bodies • Strategic engagement around the strategies' development process 	WHO staff
1340-1430	STAC recommendations and STAC member feedback and messages	STAC members
1430-1530	Presentation of 2020 STAC recommendations to WHO leadership Chairs: Salim Abdool Karim and Margaret Hellard	WHO Director-General Salim Abdool Karim Margaret Hellard Adele Benzaken Ren Minghui