HepHIV2019 Bucharest Conference: challenges of timely and integrated testing and care

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The HepHIV2019 conference was held in Bucharest, Romania, between 28-30 January 2019. More than 200 people gathered for the opening of the sixth HepHIV Conference to highlight the European response to HIV, viral hepatitis and other infectious diseases including sexually transmitted infections and tuberculosis. The conference focused on earlier testing, emphasized by the 2019 theme, "Challenges of timely and integrated testing and care."

Since its inception, the conference is organized by EuroTEST (formerly the HIV in Europe initiative) and affiliated partners, and the 2019 conference has been organized jointly with the 3-year EU funded Joint Action INTEGRATE.

With 65 abstracts representing 20 countries presented during the three-day event, the conference featured the latest evidence from research and programmes throughout Europe, lessons learned in the region and how to address the challenges ahead.

The 2019 HepHIV Conference scientific programme has showcased research and interventions throughout Europe that are effectively addressing multiple diseases and are getting more people tested and into treatment. Additionally, almost 20 sessions and abstracts in the scientific programme focused on research from the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region.

The conference included sessions such as: Recent trends and testing initiatives in Romania, The European Commission policy of integration of infectious diseases, HIV and HCV trends in the EU, The WHO targets in the European Region, The European community perspective on stigma as a continued barrier to testing for hepatitis/HIV, Epidemiological and testing policy overview: where are we in reaching the targets?, Fast track cities initiatives: how to expand to other disease areas, The elimination of HIV and hepatitis agenda: what needs to be done?, Linkage to care and treatment for better outcomes: good models and challenges, Integration of services.

The conference also included 45 posters divided over four sessions on the following topics: Monitoring and evaluation, Combination prevention, Integrated testing strategies, and Linkage to care.

The blend of international faculty and participants at the 2019 HepHIV Conference covered various backgrounds and areas of expertise, addressing major current topics related to HIV infection and viral hepatitis.

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