

Thursday 1 December 2016: for immediate release

MEDFASH and JUSTRI launch HIV booklets for European healthcare professionals

MEDFASH (Medical Foundation for HIV & Sexual Health)¹ and JUSTRI are today jointly launching adapted versions of the MEDFASH booklets ***HIV in Primary Care*** and ***HIV for non-HIV specialists: diagnosing the undiagnosed*** for use by healthcare professionals across Europe.

Many people with undiagnosed HIV use primary care, attend hospital emergency departments or are seen in a range of medical specialties. However, even when presenting with symptoms that might indicate HIV, evidence shows that they are not always offered an HIV test.

Responding to this challenge, the booklet ***HIV in Primary Care - a practical guide for primary healthcare professionals in Europe*** aims to help general practitioners and the primary healthcare team to improve rates of HIV diagnosis and provide high quality care for their patients diagnosed with HIV. ***HIV for non-HIV specialists – diagnosing the undiagnosed*** offers guidance to non-HIV specialist clinicians in secondary care settings who are likely to encounter patients with undiagnosed HIV. Both booklets provide essential information about HIV and its presentation with a range of indicator conditions (with photos), as well as case studies and concrete strategies to help non-HIV specialists implement HIV testing in their daily practice.

Originally developed for the UK, the booklets have now been adapted for readers in other parts of Europe. They are freely available to download in English and requests to translate them into other languages will be welcomed and facilitated.

Ruth Lowbury, Chief Executive of MEDFASH, said today: “Our booklets offer practical guidance on when to consider testing and how to talk to patients about it – they show that HIV testing need not be difficult or time-consuming. We have often been asked for permission to translate the UK versions and are pleased now to be able to offer editions more appropriate for use and translation across Europe.”

Dr Mike Youle, Director of JUSTRI said: “JUSTRI has successfully established an effective network of doctors, nurses and patient advocates across Southeast and Eastern Europe (SEE), the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and also works outside these regions. We provide training and supply locally relevant resources on HIV, viral hepatitis and TB. We will be taking on the promotion and long term development of the two guides from MEDFASH and hope to disseminate them throughout the regions we work in.”

The booklets can be downloaded free of charge from <http://justri.org/hivinprimarycare> and www.justri.org/hivforthenonspecialist or www.medfash.org.uk/publications .

Ends

Notes to editors

1. *HIV in Primary Care: a practical guide for primary healthcare professionals in Europe*. European edition. Adapted by Dr Mike Youle from the UK third edition by Dr Philippa Matthews, Dr Sara Madge, Dr Surinder Singh and Dr Nick Theobald. Published December 2016 by MEDFASH and JUSTRI.
2. *HIV for non-HIV specialists – diagnosing the undiagnosed*. European edition. Adapted by Dr Miriam Taegtmeier from the UK second edition by Dr Ann Sullivan, Dr Emma Devitt and Ruth Lowbury. Published December 2016 by MEDFASH and JUSTRI.
3. MEDFASH (Medical Foundation for HIV & Sexual Health) is an independent registered charity dedicated to quality in HIV and sexual healthcare. It has been supporting and guiding health professionals and policy-makers since 1987. Charity number 1148836. Company limited by guarantee no 07994516 (registered in England and Wales). Registered office: BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP. www.medfash.org.uk

MEDFASH is to close at the end of 2016. See [press release](#).

4. JUSTRI is a UK based, international not-for-profit organisation, established in 2010. It works across Southeast and Eastern Europe (SEE), the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and also outside these regions. A small, dynamic organisation of people who are passionate about tackling problems in practical and creative ways, JUSTRI promotes innovation in the provision of treatment and care for people living with HIV, viral hepatitis and tuberculosis, initiates and micro-finances projects and training, supplies locally relevant resources and has developed a peer mentoring network of leading specialists and practitioners in HIV and allied conditions for under-resourced and isolated health professionals and care givers. Company limited by guarantee no: 07649663 (registered in England and Wales). Registered address: Tradeteam Building, Nutsey Lane, Calmore Industrial Estate, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire, SO40 3NB. www.justri.org
5. Thanks to effective treatments, early diagnosis of HIV saves lives and helps prevent new infections. Over two million cases of HIV have been reported in the WHO European Region since the epidemic began. Many more are still undiagnosed. In the countries of the European Union, almost half of people newly diagnosed with HIV have a late diagnosis, which is associated with a greater risk of serious illness and an up to thirteenfold increased risk of death within a year. In contrast, early diagnosis and treatment leads to better health outcomes and lower healthcare costs. It also lowers infectivity, which dramatically reduces the risk of passing the infection on to a partner. More information and the latest data can be found in [HIV/AIDS surveillance in Europe 2015](#) (2016), published by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe.

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