

# ESSTI Newsletter No.1



June 2006



**Welcome to the first edition of the ESSTI newsletter which will provide quarterly updates on ESSTI activities. The newsletter will be emailed direct to all ESSTI collaborators and also be accessible from the ESSTI website ([www.essti.org](http://www.essti.org)).**

Dr Kevin Fenton was the project lead for ESSTI 2001-4 and its success is the result of his vision and commitment to surveillance of STIs across Europe. Kevin has now been appointed as Director of the National Centre for HIV, STD and TB Prevention at the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, USA, following a period of secondment during which he acted as chief of CDC's National Syphilis Elimination Effort. We would like to offer our congratulations to Kevin and wish him every success in his new demanding role. Kevin will remain as advisor to ESSTI and Cathy Ison, previously the microbiology lead, will take over as project lead.

As most of you will be aware the ESSTI network grant was renewed by the EC during 2005 and the project is now funded until the end of 2008. Over recent months a new team has been put in place at the Health Protection Agency in London, the co-ordinating centre for the network. Joining Prof Cathy Ison, the project leader, on the ESSTI team are Dr Gwenda Hughes as the new surveillance lead, Dr Emma Savage, as scientific co-ordinator, Michelle Cole, as microbiologist and Mr Edmund Donovan as the project administrator. Mr Edmund Donovan will be joining our team as the administrator at the beginning of June. ESSTI would also like to welcome our new collaborators from Cyprus, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Turkey.

## Contact details of the ESSTI Team at HPA

For further information on latest developments on ESSTI please contact:

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## Upcoming Events and Activities

### *Epidemiology News*

During the initial phase of ESSTI (2001-2004) we carried out an evaluation of STI surveillance, care and prevention in collaborating European countries. We now need to repeat this process for the new member states. Over the next couple of weeks, we will be sending questionnaires to the new epidemiology collaborators for completion. In addition, we will also be sending data from completed questionnaires to those of you involved in the initial evaluation and ask you to ensure that the information we hold for your country is up to date.

### *Microbiology News*

During ESSTI 2001-4 we carried out a survey of reference or specialist centres for the laboratory diagnosis for gonorrhoea and circulated a panel of isolates as a quality assurance assessment. This has been accepted for publication by the Journal of Antimicrobial Chemotherapy (JAC). The results of the sentinel surveillance study performed in 2005 have also been submitted to JAC and we are awaiting review. ESSTI 2006-8 aims to establish a European Gonococcal Antimicrobial Susceptibility Programme (Euro GASP) and we will be discussing plans to take this forward during the Steering Group meeting in June 2006. We have been very fortunate to receive funding for a microbiologist dedicated to ESSTI for three years.

### *ESSTI Website Update*

We will shortly be updating the ESSTI website ([www.essti.org](http://www.essti.org)) and would be grateful if you could check the "Contact Us" page for accuracy. Please let us know of any changes that need to be made to the contact details for your country. Please also send any other suggestions or feedback to [essti@hpa.org.uk](mailto:essti@hpa.org.uk).

### *ESSTI Meetings*

We will be holding the first ESSTI Steering Group meeting on the 27th-28th June 2006 in London. The meeting will provide the opportunity to plan the course of ESSTI for the year ahead. We will hold an ESSTI collaborators' meeting later in the year.