

ASIA-PACIFIC CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCREENING AND TESTING FOR SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS – A MODIFIED DELPHI METHOD

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Background/Purpose:

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are among the most common infectious diseases globally. Several country-specific and international guidelines are available to guide the screening, testing, and management of *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, but limited guidance is available on the testing of for *Trichomonas vaginalis*, and *Mycoplasma genitalium*. In addition, no region-specific guidelines exist for Asia Pacific (APAC), and practices vary across the region.

Approach:

Thirteen experts from institutions across APAC were identified based on their expertise, comprising clinical experience, relevant publication, and any previous contributions to local or international STI treatment guidelines. The consensus was developed in accordance with the modified Delphi-based approach. Experts were asked to anonymously vote on the statements, with $\geq 70\%$ agreement considered consensus and $\geq 90\%$ participation/statement considered strong agreement.

Outcomes/Impact:

A total of 28 consensus statements were identified by experts regarding seven clinical questions: (1) testing and screening recommendations for *C. trachomatis*, *N. gonorrhoeae*, *M. genitalium*, and *T. vaginalis* and frequency of screening; (2) test of

cure; (3) antimicrobial resistance testing; (4) optimal method of testing; (5) optimal specimen types for testing; (6) role of self-/patient-collected samples for testing; and (7) role of sample pooling (multiple sites from an individual or pooling of the same sample type from different individuals) in testing. All statements achieved 'strong' ($\geq 90\%$) agreement.

Innovation and Significance:

Accurate diagnosis and appropriate and timely testing for STIs can reduce symptoms, sequelae/complications, and ongoing transmission of STIs. The evidence-based guidance and expert opinion provided in this document can be used as a reference to inform, standardize and optimize the testing and screening strategies for *C. trachomatis*, *N. gonorrhoeae*, *M. genitalium*, and *T. vaginalis* infections in the APAC region.

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