

## AIDSIMPACT – MORE THAN A VIRUS

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Delegates from 36 countries gathered in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA, in September 2011 for the 10th AIDSImpact conference, under the theme “More than a Virus”. The conference marked a turning point in bio-psycho-social scientific debate as the new era of integration, evidence-based interventions and the global financial crisis set the scene. The conference marked an occasion to describe tremendous progress and successes. It also elaborated on continued scientific challenges, the effects of the global financial crisis together with a fading interest on the part of the international community to continue to invest in fighting HIV. AIDSImpact, a non-profit charity, was thrilled to reach a record level of attendance assistance through a programme of waivers, support and full scholarships which reached almost 50% of delegates. This was enhanced by the visionary support of a wide range of groups, most notably Sidaction – thereby ensuring attendance from North and South America, Africa, Asia, Australasia and Europe. The rich programme included 479 abstracts, of which 247 were oral presentations. The conference comprised 50 sessions, including plenaries, workshops, discussion groups and a poster exhibition session. In addition, a full parallel Spanish Track was introduced for the first time. This allowed for simultaneous translation of all plenaries and Spanish Language sessions throughout the meeting. The conference was also proud to include in the programme the Marty Fishbein Commemorative meeting as a token of respect to Professor Martin Fishbein and his lifetime’s work before his untimely death. The session included a summary of many of his contributions and provided a forum to enlighten delegates on the psychosocial theoretical background for participants from other fields of social sciences.

The broad programme, with five parallel sessions over four days, allowed for debate, update and dialogue on a number of major issues in HIV at the moment, including the rising challenge of cognitive impairment and mental health, children and family issues, emotional wellbeing, new advances in prevention, palliative care, the importance of gender, challenges around economics and resource con-

straints, in-depth dialogue on quality treatment and care as well as hurdles in relation to roll-out. Sessions were dedicated to exploring evidence and practice involving new technologies, new demands around adherence and ageing, updates and progress in prevention with a critical appraisal of implications of new initiatives and a deep debate on the pathway and problems created by HIV realities as we move towards reaching the millennium development goals.

AIDSImpact continues to be the premier HIV social science conference, offering high-quality input and an opportunity to delve in depth into theory, practice and policy. The on-going initiative would not work without the tireless effort, support and vision of many individuals and groups. AIDSImpact would like to thank Dr Michele Sidibe of UNAIDS for his warm welcoming words and encouragement. We were thrilled to have input from various prestigious bodies such as UNAIDS, WHO, CDC, ANRS, INSERM, HSRC, USAID, REPSSI, RIATT, World Bank and AIDES – among others. The next conference is scheduled for September 2013 in Barcelona, Spain, under the chairmanship of Dr Jordi Blanche. AIDSImpact Sante Fe acknowledge the support of the following:

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