**POSITION PAPER**

**Conference:** TEDUMUN 2025

**Committee:** World Health Organization ( WHO )

**Topic:** 1) Preventing Misuse of Mental Health Medication and Transforming Mental Health For All 2) Reducing the Global Incidence of Sexually Transmitted Infections ( STIs )

**Country:** United States of America

 **Delegate:** İpek Canalp

1. **Topic Background**

Sexual Transmitted Diseases or STDs are infections that primarily spread through sexual

contact. They affect both men and women and can be transmitted through various forms of

sexual activity or from mother to child during childbirth or breast feeding. The CDC

estimates that one in five of our citizens has an STD. There are more than 20 million

estimated new cases in our country each year and the rates are increasing day by day. Most of

the time the reason for this transmission occurs because of unprotected intercourse with an

infected person. Among heterosexual couples, this issue sometimes stays undermined due to

the usage of long-term contraceptives and male condoms. Yet some parts of the society are

more prone to spreading these infections without applying protection barriers for safe

intercourse. Some prisoners that are less concerned with reproduction have promoted the

prevalence of gonorrhea, gay and bisexual men, despite their small share of the population,

have induced the spreading of male syphilis in 2016 according to the Centres for Disease

Control ( CDC ), and alongside that, other special groups like sex workers, drug addicts have

also contributed to the extension of the STD rates in the USA. The most common STDs in

our country are chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, genital herpes, and the HPV virus. HPV is by

far the most prevalent SDT in our country. Because most of the time the symptoms remain

undercover. Also, in the USA chlamydia makes up the largest cases, with over 1,16 million

cases reported to the CDC in 2021. To avoid such disasters it is crucial to have HPV

vaccination, be educated, have STD testing, use condoms, and be cautious with people that

we are sexually interacting with.

The prevalence of mental health disorders in our country is gradually increasing. 23.08% of

adults experienced a mental illness in the past year, equivalent to nearly 60 million

Americans. Considering the major population that is suffering from mental health diseases,

we can say that consulting a doctor, or physician and as a result using medication has

become crucial. These actions have posed a problem in our lives, the problem being abusing

the usage of mental health medicines and misuse of prescription drugs. These misuses mostly

occur due to patient actions. The patient mostly consult to drugs to ease its sleeping, relieve

the tensions, deal with and balance its feelings, relieve physical pain, or get high. Yet with the

immense or non prescripted usage of these medicines, the consequences can be major,

leading up to even overdose deaths. In 2021, more than 35 thousand people died because of

overdose in our country. More than 23 million adult Americans have struggled with

problematic drug use. For prevention, the patient’s will is a must. It is important for patients

to consult their physician, tell them their symptoms, their history with medication in an

honest way so that they can create an effective treatment and recovery path with their doctor.

Also, the doctor’s or physician’s duty of keeping track of the patient’s usage of drugs and

detecting the abuse , if there is any , plays a crucial role in the treatment process as well.

1. **Past Actions and Country Policy**

After 1981, the pandemic of HIV/AIDS shaped the need for proper instructions for sexual

transmission such as how to use contraceptions, and condoms to prevent STIs and

premature pregnancy. In the late 1990s, our government adopted a sex education program

regarding adolescents’ sexual health. Abstinence only until marriage program ( AOUM ) was

funded within various domestic and foreign aid programs with 49-50 states accepting federal

funds to promote AOUM in the classroom. There are also the AIDS Education and Training

Centers establishments in our country, providing education on HIV and other related STDs

for health care providers in the USA with 11 regional training centers and over 130 associated

local performance sites. AETC were established in 1987 through federal funding from the

Health Recourses and Services Administration. There are also various numbers of STD

clinics in our country, enabling patients to get appointments easily, with welcoming

atmosphere and staff. STD clinics in our country provide special care to patients including

HIV testing and counseling as well as on site injectable medication for the treatment of

gonorrhea and syphilis in an environment that helps to reduce the role of stigma in seeking

this kind of care.

There are some institutions in the USA, regarding the accomplishment of treatment for

mental disorders. National Institute of Mental Health ( NIMH ) aims to supply aid via basic

and clinical research, paving the way for recovery, prevention, and cure. The Mental Health

Parity and Addiction Equity Act ( MHPAEA ), with the final touches that have been made to

the regulation, seeks health plans that cover mental health and substance use care benefits.

The fundemental purpose of the act is to ensure that all of our citizens have access to mental

health and substance use benefits as they do physical health benefits and make the

accessibility for all by helping families lower their health care costs by facilitating care with

affordable amounts. There are also federal acts that have a role in mental health services in

our country as well. With those acts; the accessibility, research, and support has become alive.

1. **Solution Ideas**
2. **For agenda item 2 ( Reducing the Global Incidence of Sexually Transmitted Infections ( STIs )**
* Encouraging patients to be open and transparent about their past intercourse partners and history of their sexual activities to their family physicians.
* Having mandatory sex education programmes in middle and high schools regarding usage of contraceptives, condoms, and any other barriers during intercource.
* Encouraging citizens to be cautious about their sex partners and showing them the importance of a mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner in the prevention of STIs.
* Encouraging governments to apply HPV vaccination to every schools’ student between the age of 12-15.
* Decreasing the usage of common needles, and unsterilized equipments that are used in sex such as sex toys.
* Encouraging family physicians to communicate with their patient and educate the patient on how important it is to keep track of sexual partners’ history and to limit the number as much as possible to minimize the risk of getting infected.
* Spreading the screening of foetus in pregnant women to detect syphilis via using advanced technology.
* Creating volunteering programs and raising the awareness for STIs.
* Creating campaigns, getting financial contributions from organizations such as the maternity and child health, non-communicable diseases sectors and using these funds to open STI clinics in rural areas, and making the accessibility possible and easy for low budgeted people as well.
1. **For agenda item 1 ( Preventing Misuse of Mental Health Medication and Transforming Mental Health For All )**
* Encouraging patients to consult their doctor with honesty by telling them about any and all drug usage for proper medical care.
* Physicians shall invest in the drug history of the patient by correctly communicating with them to help patients recognize that the problem exists and set recovery goals and seek the proper treatment.
* Encouraging doctors to keep track of their patients’ drug usage by having constant visits with them until the treatment ends. And encouraging doctors to consider the patient’s refilling of the medicine needs comprehensively.
* Giving education to every intern mental health disease related doctors regarding how to communicate with the patient and how to encourage them in the recovery process to prevent early withdraws.
* Keeping track of every doctor and session that the patient has visited to prevent “ doctor shopping “, moving from provider to provider to obtain more prescriptions that leads to drug abuse. Every hospital that the patient goes to shall screen the patient’s medicine history and the prescriptions that the patient got.
* Encouraging doctors and pharmacists to guide the patient about how to use the medicine, how much time a day, in what hours, and what other medicine, drink, or food the patient shouldn’t be consuming during this process to avoid any negative effects and create a proper usage of the medicine.
* Any unused or expired medicine shall be given to the related doctor or government drug administrations to avoid misuse.
* Encouraging countries to increase the usage of prescription monitoring programs to assist medical professors in identifying patients who are getting prescriptions from multiple sources. The pharmacists shall log each filled prescription on the website.
* Establishing socializing programmes for discharged patients to include them in public and make them a part of the society again after their recovery.
1. **Bibliography**

*Prevention and management of sexually transmitted infections*. (n.d.). AAFP. <https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/prevention-sti.html>

Pearson, W. S., Kumar, S., Habel, M. A., Walsh, S., Meit, M., Barrow, R. Y., Weiss, G., & Gift, T. L. (2020). Sexually transmitted disease clinics in the United States: Understanding the needs of patients and the capabilities of providers. *Preventive Medicine*, *145*, 106411. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ypmed.2020.106411

Wikipedia contributors. (2024, July 17). *AIDS education and training centers*. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AIDS\_Education\_and\_Training\_Centers

USAFacts. (2023, September 1). How common are STDs in the US? *USAFacts*. https://usafacts.org/articles/how-common-are-stds-in-the-us/

*Topic: Sexually transmitted diseases in the U.S.* (2024, January 12). Statista. https://www.statista.com/topics/3485/sexually-transmitted-diseases-in-the-us/#topicOverview

The Economist. (2018, July 18). Why STDs are on the rise in America. *The Economist*. https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2018/07/18/why-stds-are-on-the-rise-in-america

*Sexually Transmitted Infections - Healthy People 2030 | odphp.health.gov*. (n.d.). https://odphp.health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/sexually-transmitted-infections#:~:text=Healthy%20People%202030%20focuses%20on,higher%20risk%20of%20getting%20HIV.

Terlizzi, E., & Norris, T. (2021). *Mental health treatment among adults: United States, 2020*. https://doi.org/10.15620/cdc:110593

*Server error*. (n.d.). https://www.uspharmacist.com/article/misuse-of-prescription-psychotropic-drugs%20https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/misuse-prescription-drugs/what-scope-prescription-drug-misuse

*National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)*. (2024, August 19). National Institutes of Health (NIH). <https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/what-we-do/nih-almanac/national-institute-mental-health-nimh>

Volkow, N. D., M.D (2011). Prescription Drug Abuse. *National Institute on Drug Abuse Research Report Series*, (Preventing and recognizing prescription drug abuse), 10-11.