

Sexually transmitted infections: An evidence-based online course 2026



Course Guide

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1. Introduction

Sexually transmitted infections: An evidence-based online course (STI 2026) has been part of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research online training course series since 2010. In 2026, the course was entirely updated by a team of experts based on WHO guidelines.

This course provides participants with the latest evidence-based knowledge and practical skills for STI prevention, diagnosis, treatment, programme implementation, and research, drawing upon WHO recommendations and international field experience. The course aims to strengthen the capacity of health professionals to deliver evidence-based prevention, diagnosis, treatment, programme implementation, and research in sexually transmitted infections through a comprehensive online course.

2. Organizers

The Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO)

3. Course

Sexually transmitted infections: An evidence-based online course (STI 2026)
<https://www.gfmer.ch/2026-courses/sti/index.htm>

3.1 Course period

Start date: 21 October 2026
End date: 01 December 2026

The course lasts six weeks, with an expected study time of six hours per week. The total study time for the entire course is 36 hours.

3.2 Course structure

There will be a total of six modules over the course of six weeks. That is, one module per week.

Week 1 (21-27 October 2026)

Module 1: STIs as a global public health challenge: past, present and future

Week 2 (28 October - 3 November 2026)

Module 2: Epidemiology of STIs, including interactions between HIV and STIs

Week 3 (4-10 November 2026)

- **Module 3: Prevention of STIs: Vaccination, HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), Doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis (doxy-PEP)**

- **Live webinar on syphilis prevention and care**

Week 4 (11-17 November 2026)

Module 4: STI screening and diagnosis (STI screening, Laboratory diagnosis, Point-of-care testing)

Week 5 (18-24 November 2026)

Module 5: STI treatment (Clinical management of STIs, Syndromic management; Etiological diagnosis and treatment, STI management during pregnancy)

Week 6 (25 November - 1 December 2026)

- **Module 6:**
 - **STI programmes and service delivery (Monitoring and evaluation, Surveillance, Programme design and implementation)**
 - **Sexual health, human rights and STIs**
- **Live webinar: Antimicrobial-resistant gonorrhoea**

For each module, the study materials will be published on the course website every Wednesday morning. Participants will be informed via an email titled “GFMER STI 2026 – course weekly schedule”. However, participants are advised to visit the course website regularly. All materials are provided in electronic format. You can access the course via this link:

<https://www.gfmer.ch/2026-courses/sti/index.htm>

3.3 Teaching language

The teaching language of the course is English.

4. Study materials

To compensate for the lack of live meetings and instructions, the reading and writing requirements in online courses are usually more substantial than in traditional courses. The advantage is that you acquire knowledge not only through the course materials and your own time management, but also by learning how to communicate in an online learning environment. To complete the courses, you need self-discipline and good time management skills.

4.1 Presentations

Each module contains a set of slides and a video. They are available on the related sites and can be accessed whenever the participant wishes. Presentation files can be downloaded in PDF format.

The presentations and audio-visual materials can also be accessed by smartphone and tablets.

4.2 Integrated key readings

We have selected reference documents from a wide range of sources. You can find these required readings by following the links in each module. We also provide suggestions for further reading.

5. Online meetings

5.1 Online meetings:

- Course opening meeting: Thursday, 22 October 2026, 14:00–15:00 (Geneva time, GMT+2)
- End-of-course meeting: Wednesday, 9 December 2026, 14:00–15:00 (Geneva time, GMT+1)

5.2 Webinars:

Webinar 1: Syphilis prevention and care

- Date: Thursday, 5 November 2026
- Time: 14:00–15:00 (Geneva time, GMT+1)
- Presenter: Dr Remco Peters, WHO

Webinar 2: Antimicrobial-resistant gonorrhoea

- Date: Thursday, 26 November 2026
- Time: 14:00–15:00 (Geneva time, GMT+1)
- Presenter: Dr Ismail Maatouk, University of Balamand

Zoom invitations will be sent one week before each webinar. Please save these dates in your calendar.

6. Study support

6.1 Course coordinators

Course coordinators have specific areas of interest and are actively involved in course management. They are responsible for ensuring the academic quality of course materials, and are involved in course development, teaching and assessment.

6.2 Coaches

Each participant is assigned a personal coach. The role of the personal coach is to facilitate the participants' learning process, review their assignments and provide feedback. The personal coach is the participant's primary point of contact via email, WhatsApp and Zoom.

7. Participant's ID

Each participant will be assigned a unique number to use as their participant's ID. Participants are asked to use this ID in all communications with GFMER. You can find your participant ID in the email confirming your acceptance onto the course.

8. Assignment's code

Each assignment will be given a unique number as its code. When submitting an assignment, participants should use both their participant's ID and the code as part of the file name and in the content. An assignment template will be provided during the course.

For this course:

Written assignment codes are: STI1, STI2, STI3, STI4, STI5, STI6

MCQ codes are: MCQ1, MCQ2, MCQ3, MCQ4, MCQ5, MCQ6

9. Assignments

The short paperwork assignments and multiple-choice questions are to enable participants to familiarise themselves with the presentations and accompanying documents, and to apply their knowledge.

9.1 Written assignments

For each module, participants should:

- Study the slide sets and/or watch the video.
- Read all accompanying documents.
- Complete the short assignment in a WORD file and send it as an attachment via email to:
 - Their coach (for review and scoring);
 - CC: sti@gfmer.org (course administrator for record).
- Review the feedback provided by their coach

9.2 Multiple-choice questions

There are 10 multiple-choice questions in each module. Participants will receive a link to submit their answers online. The course administrator will provide feedback directly to each participant.

Notes:

- Participants are expected to have basic computer skills in word processing programs, for example the Microsoft Word application.
- Timely submission of assignments is taken into consideration for the final evaluation and certification of participants.

10. Final evaluation and certification

To validate the course and obtain the certificate, participants must successfully complete the multiple-choice assessment and written assignment for each module.

Participants should also complete and submit the end of course evaluation.

Successful participants will receive a certificate of completion.

11. The online learning environment

This is an online training course. The course materials will be posted online on a weekly basis, and participants and coaches will be informed via email. There is no fixed start or end time. Participants learn at their own pace, but must respect the course schedule to fulfil their obligations.

Below are some information about the learning mode:

11.1 Online communication

Online communication provides administrative and technical support and offers the opportunity to expand your education. You can download electronic documentation, access links to other relevant resources and find information about important events. Course-specific discussion rooms give you the chance to raise both academic and non-academic issues with course coordinators, coaches and other participants. The diversity of the participant community and the network facilitated by the programme provide wonderful opportunities to learn from and share experiences with people from different countries.

11.2 Google Groups

Google Groups is a Google product that allows internet users to create online discussion and sharing platforms about specific subjects.

Link: <https://groups.google.com>

Group name: STI2026

The Gmail address you provided on your application form will be added to the group directly. Once you have logged in with your Gmail account, you can create new discussion topics or respond to any topics posted for weekly discussion.

Google provides clear online instructions on how to access the group. Only participants can view group content and the member list, upload files and post topics.

Information on how to use Google Groups can be found at this link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XEliJboxef-w3o0pxWbRquAeSk9WJg0t/view>

11.3 WhatsApp, Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams

These common computer and mobile applications allow you to send messages and make free calls or video calls to other people (internet charges may, however, apply). The applications can be downloaded for free.

During the course, course organizer and coaches will use these applications to facilitate communication and interaction with participants.

Course organizer will create a WhatsApp group for each group of coaches and participants.

11.4 Social media

Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube are social platforms that connect people with friends and others. You can easily find instructions to sign up and create your personal profile.

GFMER will post activities on these platforms. You can then become 'friends of GFMER' and share with us your professional activities. To take part in the 'Picture of the Week' feature on the GFMER website and social media, please feel free to send a photo with a description to the course administrator (please specify the location, city and country)



12. Contact

Course email:

Sexually transmitted infections: An evidence-based online course

sti@gfmer.org

For any question and instruction please contact:

Dr Raqibat Idris, GFMER Course Manager

Email: raqibat.idris@gfmer.org

Fionna Poon, GFMER Course Administrator

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