



## **SHE European Program and Bristol-Myers Squibb Announce New Resources for Women Living with HIV and Physicians at the XIX International AIDS Conference**

### **SHE program establishes “SHE UNITS” in key hospitals and clinics across Europe**

(PARIS, France, July 23, 2012) – “SHE” – Strong, HIV positive, Empowered Women/Strong, HIV positive Women Educational Program – a comprehensive and innovative program for women living with HIV and their healthcare providers, launched new [websites](#) at the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) in Washington, D.C. from July 22<sup>nd</sup> through the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Developed by women living with HIV and healthcare providers, SHE is a peer support and medical education program, which addresses the challenges faced by women living with HIV and healthcare providers, by providing them with educational and scientific tools to be used in the clinical and community settings in Europe.

The SHE website, [www.SHEtoSHE.co.uk](http://www.SHEtoSHE.co.uk), was first launched in the United Kingdom in October 2011 and is now available in Spanish, [www.SHEPrograma.es](http://www.SHEPrograma.es) and Italian, [www.SHEProgramma.it](http://www.SHEProgramma.it). Additional sites will be launched in German, French, Polish and Portuguese later this year.

These new online resources deliver relevant and factual information focused on critical topics and issues such as diagnosis, disclosure, sex and relationships, accessing and using healthcare services, human rights and well-being. The websites also feature video testimonials from women, as well as a customizable version of [the peer support](#) toolkit, which can be used in clinics and community centers to support women living with HIV. Peer support models complement formal clinical care with the aim to empower women living with HIV and build a positive dialogue with their physicians.

### **SHE to SHE: Peer Support and Tailored Resources to Address Women’s Specific Needs**

Research shows that women represent one third of new diagnoses of HIV in Europe.<sup>1</sup> Despite improved prognosis, HIV remains complex, imposing unique challenges for women living with HIV and their healthcare providers.<sup>2</sup> Although women are one of the most vulnerable groups to HIV, few resources are tailored to address their specific needs.<sup>2,3</sup>

“After my HIV diagnosis I felt very alone and just wanted to hide; I had so many questions,” said Silvia Petretti, a member of the SHE community advisory board. “Today, women like me across Europe, in countries where HIV is still highly stigmatized, can turn to SHE to seek answers, support and learn from others who have faced the same situation.”

### **SHE Units Established and New Resources Available for Physicians in Europe**

The SHE program has established “SHE Units” in key hospitals and clinics across Europe.

“SHE Units bring together a woman’s entire healthcare team – HIV specialists, peer support workers, gynaecologists, family planning, fertility specialists, clinical trial nurses, psychologists and more – as a way to offer better care and

support for women living with HIV,” said Professor Margaret Johnson, SHE Medical Co-Chair and Clinical Director of the HIV Clinic at the Royal Free Hospital, London. “This way of care is distinct in its approach and addresses the particular needs of women living with HIV.”

A new toolkit now available for physicians identifies data gaps and encourages best practice sharing surrounding the clinical care of women living with HIV at all stages of their lives. Healthcare providers also have the opportunity to join the SHE network to share experiences and best practices through the SHE Lab in Phys<sup>z</sup> [www.physz.com](http://www.physz.com), an independent networking web-platform for healthcare providers only.\*

### **About SHE**

SHE is a European program addressing specific challenges facing women living with HIV, by educating healthcare providers in their care and treatment and by supporting women to feel empowered throughout their lives. The program was developed by an independent advisory board of women personally impacted by HIV and healthcare professionals, along with input from policymakers, from 11 European countries (France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain, UK, Russia, Denmark, Sweden and Ireland). SHE is funded and organized by Bristol-Myers Squibb.

For more information, visit the website [www.SHEtoSHE.co.uk](http://www.SHEtoSHE.co.uk).

The SHE program will be a featured exhibit in the Global Village, booth #686, at AIDS 2012 in Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

### **About Bristol-Myers Squibb Company**

Bristol-Myers Squibb is a global biopharmaceutical company whose mission is to discover, develop and deliver innovative medicines that help patients prevail over serious diseases. For more information about Bristol-Myers Squibb, visit [www.bms.com](http://www.bms.com) or follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/bmsnews>.

\*This website is not intended for members of the public or patients, and access to the SHE Lab is by invitation only.

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### **References**

<sup>1</sup> ECDC/WHO. HIV/AIDS Surveillance in Europe, 2010. available online: [www.ecdc.europa.eu/](http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/). Accessed July 2012.

<sup>2</sup> UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNFEM: “Women and HIV/AIDS: Confronting the Crisis.” 2004. Available at [www.unfpa.org/hiv/women/report/index.htm](http://www.unfpa.org/hiv/women/report/index.htm). Accessed July 2012.

<sup>3</sup> World Health Organisation: “Gender inequalities and HIV.” Available at [www.who.int/gender/hiv\\_aids/en/](http://www.who.int/gender/hiv_aids/en/). Accessed July 2012.