



International Union Against
Tuberculosis and Lung Disease

Health solutions for the poor

PRESS RELEASE

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The 43rd Union World Conference on Lung Health will tackle issues from multidrug-resistant TB to tobacco control and raise the profile of lung disease

More than 3,000 lung health experts and advocates from countries around the world will come together in Kuala Lumpur on 13-17 November 2012 to discuss the latest opportunities and challenges in the fight against lung disease. The 43rd Union World Conference on Lung Health, organised by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), will be held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. Programme details and registration information may be found at www.worldlunghealth.org

The Union World Conference is the largest annual meeting focusing on lung health issues as they affect low- and middle-income countries. This year's theme is "Driving Sustainability through Mutual Responsibility", highlighting the need for the health care community, governments, donors, civil society and patient advocacy groups to work together to sustain progress and reach international targets for lung health.

Lung diseases currently cause some 10 million deaths a year, with more than 80% occurring in low- and middle-income countries. Key challenges that will be discussed at the conference include:

- The rising incidence of drug-resistant tuberculosis, including the threat of an incurable totally drug-resistant TB
- The needs of 2 million patients who require simultaneous treatment for both tuberculosis and HIV each year
- The increase in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which is predicted to become the 3rd leading cause of death by 2030 – and how to reduce the impact of the major risk factor: tobacco use
- The neglect of childhood lung diseases: including pneumonia (the leading killer of children under 5), childhood TB (widely undiagnosed, treated and monitored), asthma (poorly funded despite being the most common chronic condition among children), and acute lower respiratory infections (often caused by indoor air pollution from solid fuel used inside for cooking, heating and light)
- The pandemic of diseases caused by tobacco use, the leading cause of preventable death that kills more than 5 million people each year.

The five-day scientific programme involving presenters from 65 countries will include more than 150 postgraduate courses and workshops, symposia, plenary sessions, abstract-driven and poster-related sessions, meet-the-experts and a late-breaker session on TB research. Highlights will include:

- Prof Lee Reichman (USA), author of *Timebomb: The Global Epidemic of Multidrug-Resistant TB*, giving the Sir John Crofton Memorial Lecture on "Timebomb Revisited Ten Years Later: Can we sustain progress or are we losing the war?" (Wednesday, 14 November, 17:30-19:00)

- Prof Guy Marks (Australia) analysing “The Global Burden of Respiratory Disease” at a plenary session (Thursday, 15 November, 11:30-12:30)
- Dr Sheila Tlou (Botswana) on “Preparing the workforce for the responsible rollout of new tools” at a plenary session (Friday, 16 November, 11:30-12:30)
- Dr Anneke Hesselink (South Africa) making the case for “Childhood TB: We need to do more” at the final plenary session (Saturday, 17 November, 9:00-10:00).

Complete details about the 43rd Union World Conference on Lung Health may be found on the conference website at www.worldlunghealth.org

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About The Union

The mission of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) is to bring innovation, expertise, solutions and support to address health challenges in low- and middle-income populations. With members and subscribers from 150 countries, The Union has its headquarters in Paris and offices serving the Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America and South-East Asia regions. Its scientific departments focus on tuberculosis and HIV, lung health and non-communicable diseases, tobacco control and research. Learn more at www.theunion.org

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