CONTENTS

Note on terminology

The World Health Organization recommends that the term sexually transmitted disease (STD) be replaced by the term sexually transmitted infection (STI). The term sexually transmitted infection has been adopted since 1999 as it better incorporates asymptomatic infections. In addition, the term has been adopted by a wide range of scientific societies and publications.

Reproductive tract infections encompass three main groups of infection, particularly in women, and sometimes in men. These groups are endogenous infections in the female genital tract (e.g. candidiasis and bacterial vaginosis), iatrogenic infections that may be acquired through non-sterile medical, personal or cultural practices, and some classical STIs. As endogenous infections are not primarily sexually transmitted, clinical and public health actions as recommended for STIs may not apply to them. Given the current state of knowledge and understanding of these non-sexually transmitted infections, treatment of partners is not recommended as routine public health practice. Reassurance and patient education are critical with regard to the nature of these infections.