Evaluation Report

HepHIV 2019 Conference:

Challenges of Timely and Integrated Testing and Care

28-30 January 2019, Bucharest, Romania

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HepHIV 2019 Conference Evaluation

The sixth HepHIV 2019 conference was held from 28-30 January 2019 in Bucharest, Romania under the Romanian EU presidency (January-July 2019). The conference was attended by **243 people from 37 countries** around the world. Of the attendees, 36% of the attendees were community representatives, 21% were policymakers/public health institution representatives; and 14% were clinicians. Only a small fraction (8%) of the attendees represented epidemiologists, statisticians and social scientists.

The main objectives of the HepHIV 2019 conference were to:

- Provide an overview of innovative initiatives and best practices on optimal testing and earlier care for HIV and viral hepatitis from different settings across Europe, including progress and challenges in the integration of services;
- Provide opportunities for multi-stakeholder dialogue to develop creative solutions to unresolved challenges in research and implementation of HIV and viral hepatitis, TB and STI policies and programmes to improve early diagnosis and care;
- Sustain and fuel the political discussion of testing policies, increase political commitment and public awareness by discussing how to translate global and regional goals, objectives and targets into local implementation plans.

For the overall evaluation of the conference, participants were given paper questionnaires to voluntarily complete on the final day of the conference, and these were collected at the conclusion. A total of 50 participants completed the survey. Data from the paper questionnaires were then inputted into Excel and analysed.
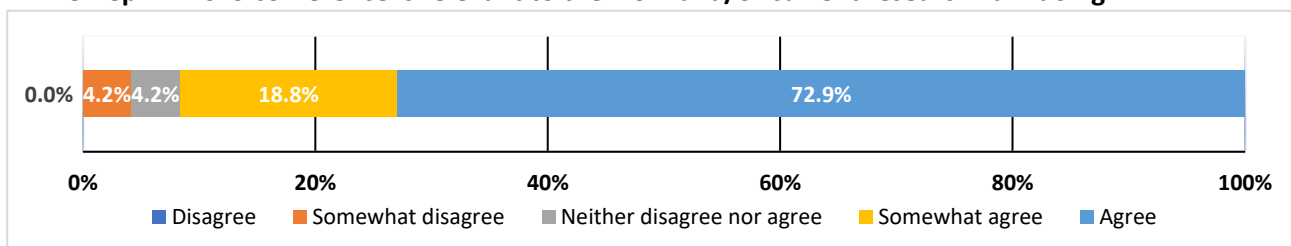
Overall Impression

93.8% of the 48 respondents agreed that the overall conference was useful and informative, and 91.7% also agreed that it was relevant to their field of work and/ or current research. Approximately, 42 out of the 48 respondents were generally satisfied with the whole conference and said it met their expectations.
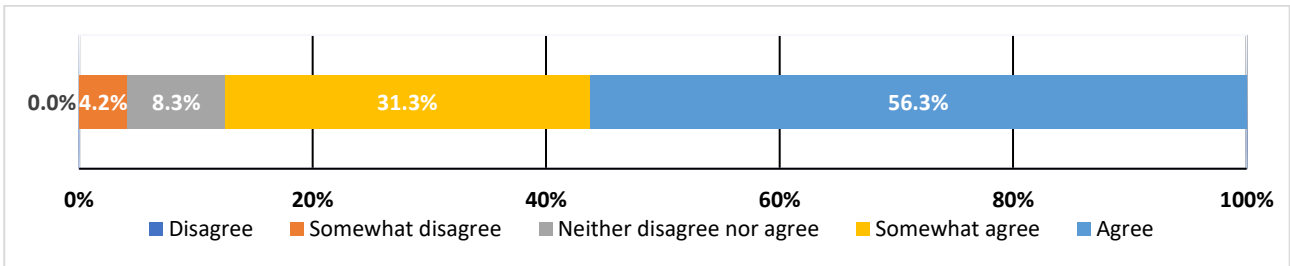
1. Overall, the HepHIV 2019 was informative and useful.
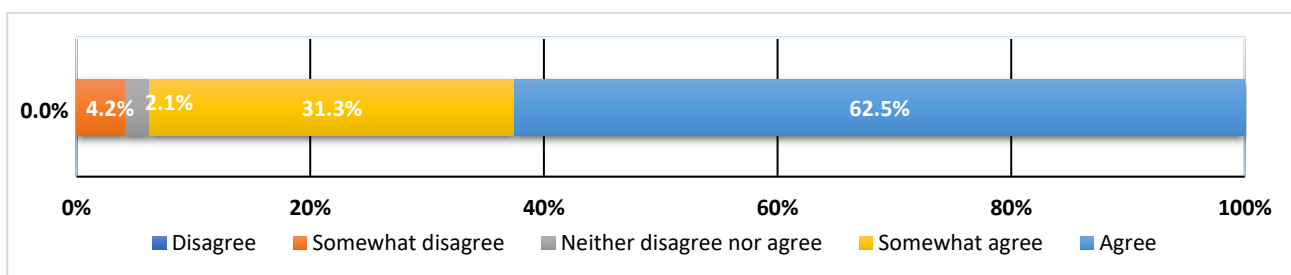
2. The HepHIV 2019 conference is relevant to the work and/or current research I am doing.

3. The HepHIV2019 conference met my expectations.

0.0% 4.2%	8.3%	31.3%	56.3%	

Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither disagree nor agree Somewhat agree Agree

Overall, comments regarding the entire conference included:

'…all issues at the conference were really useful and relevant to our work in this field..'

'…Good varied agenda…'

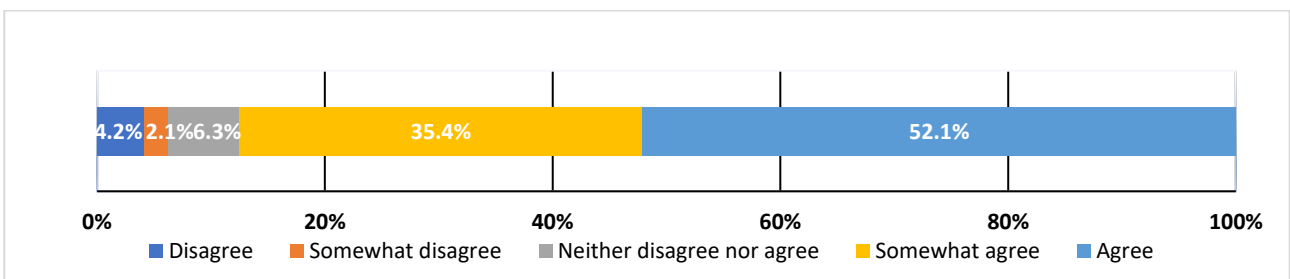'…Fantastic conference though more contribution from Eastern/Central EU countries is needed…'

Scientific Programme

The overall impression of the presentations from the scientific programme was positive, with approximately 89.6% agreeing that they were informative and interesting. Although the overall consensus was that the scientific programme covered a variety of disease areas (87.5%) and had a wide range of geographical representation (87.6%); some of the respondents highlighted that some key groups were underrepresented, and some disease topics not fully covered (HBV).
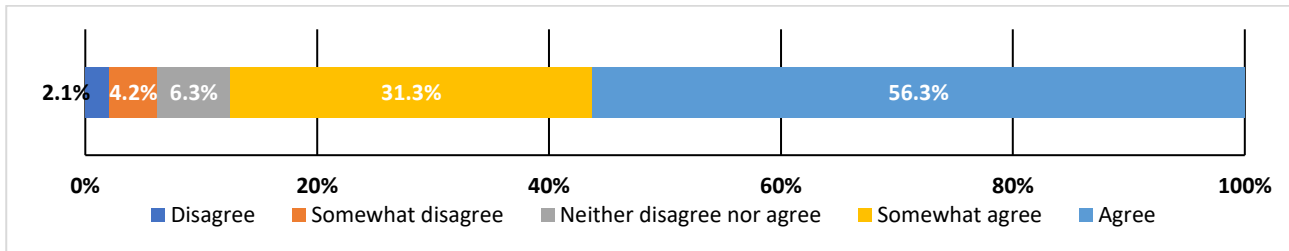
4. Overall, The HepHIV2019 scientific programme was interesting and informative.

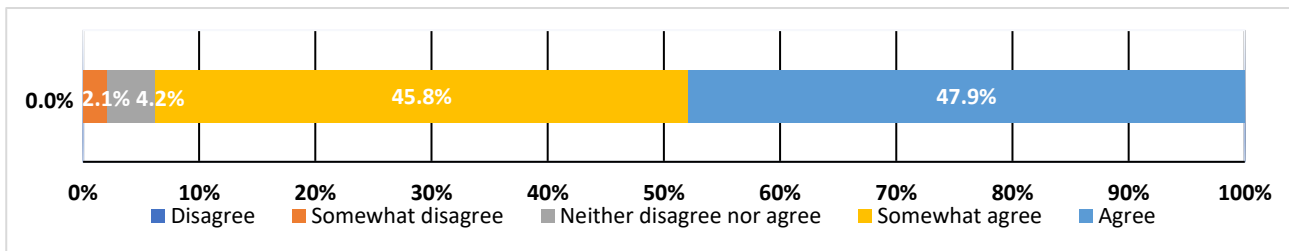Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither disagree nor agree Somewhat agree Agree
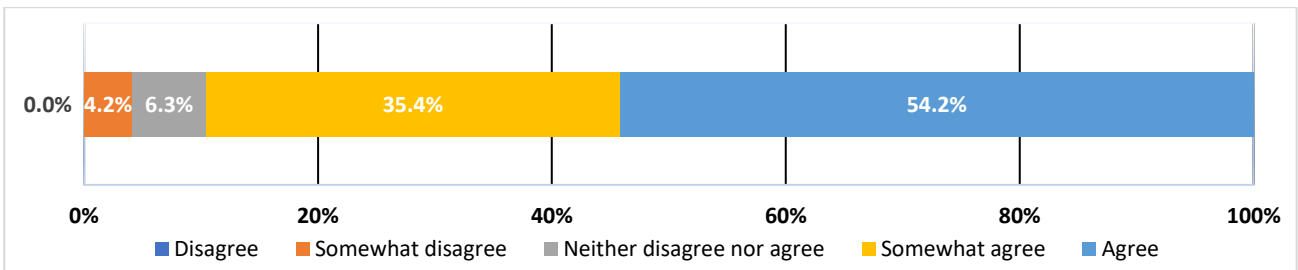
5. The HepHIV2019 scientific programme covered a variety of disease areas including STIs and TB.

Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither disagree nor agree Somewhat agree Agree

6. The HepHIV2019 scientific programme had a wide range of geographical representation.

2.1%	4.2%	6.3%	31.3%	56.3%

Legend: ■ Disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither disagree nor agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Agree

7. The topics chosen for presentation were appropriate.

0.0%	2.1%	4.2%	45.8%	47.9%

Legend: ■ Disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither disagree nor agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Agree

Comments on the overall topics presented at the conference included:

'…more interactive formats to let people discuss in smaller groups more. Less plenary sessions…'

'…very little representation of Trans and sex worker issues...'

'…very little information on HBV…'

Some of the participants noted that the conference mainly focused on positive outcomes of programmes and suggested including different perspectives discussing 'what went wrong' to allow organisations to draw lessons learned from their experience.

Based on the feedback, several respondents felt that there were topics missed at the conference. Missed topics included:

'…Missing sessions on 'what went wrong'. We should talk more about mistakes and failures and if possible, with a prize for 'the best mistake…'

'…topics around other key populations like migrants and sex workers..'

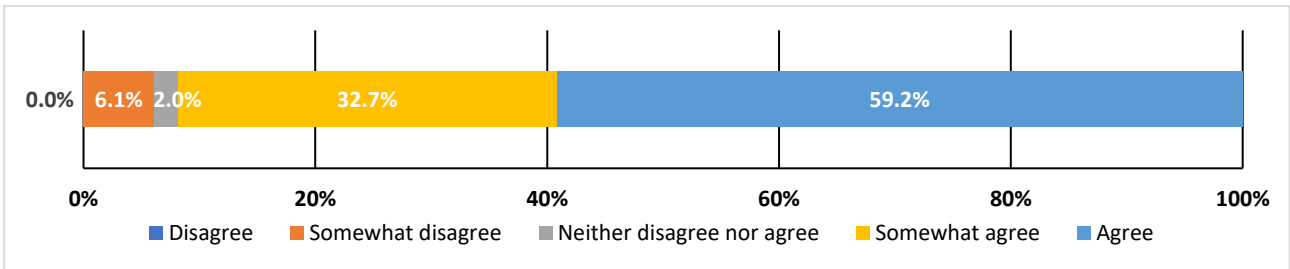'…linkage-to-care cascade for HCV/HBV among MSM and Transgenders and PrEP in key populations...'

'…topics on TB and other STIs…'

One participant highlighted the need for more topics on combination therapy programmes, while another participant suggested including discussion on diagnostic technology and products, and possibly having diagnostic representatives for these discussions.
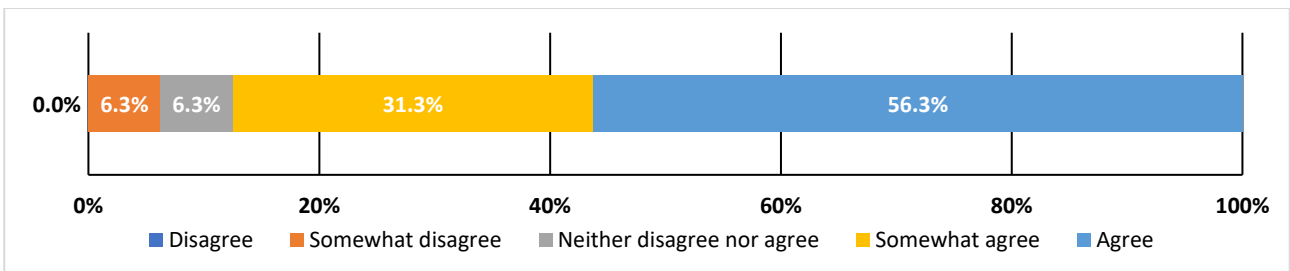
Time allocation

Regarding time spent on the various agenda items, the majority (91.9%) agreed that the time allotted was just right. However, some respondents felt that there should have been less time allocated to the plenary sessions and more time for smaller group discussions.
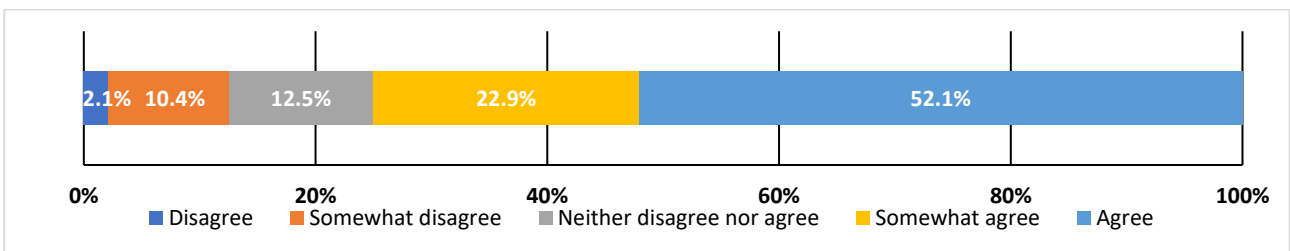
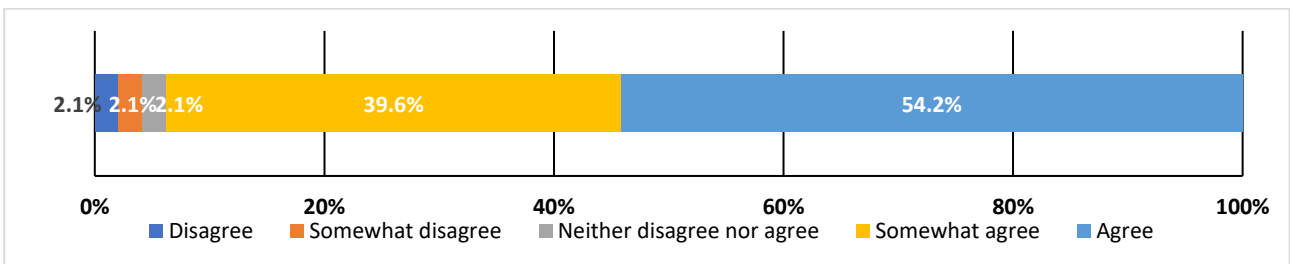**8. The length of time spent on plenary sessions were appropriate.**

0.0% | 6.1% | 2.0% | 32.7% | 59.2%

Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither disagree nor agree | Somewhat agree | Agree

9. The length of time spent on parallel sessions were appropriate.

0.0% | 6.3% | 6.3% | 31.3% | 56.3%

Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither disagree nor agree | Somewhat agree | Agree

10. The length of time spent on discussions were appropriate.

2.1% | 10.4% | 12.5% | 22.9% | 52.1%

Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither disagree nor agree | Somewhat agree | Agree

11. The length of time spent on poster sessions were appropriate.

2.1% | 2.1% | 2.1% | 39.6% | 54.2%

Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither disagree nor agree | Somewhat agree | Agree

12. The length of time spent on social/networking opportunities were appropriate.

0.0% | 2.0% | 4.1% | 24.5% | 69.4%

Disagree | Somewhat disagree | Neither disagree nor agree | Somewhat agree | Agree
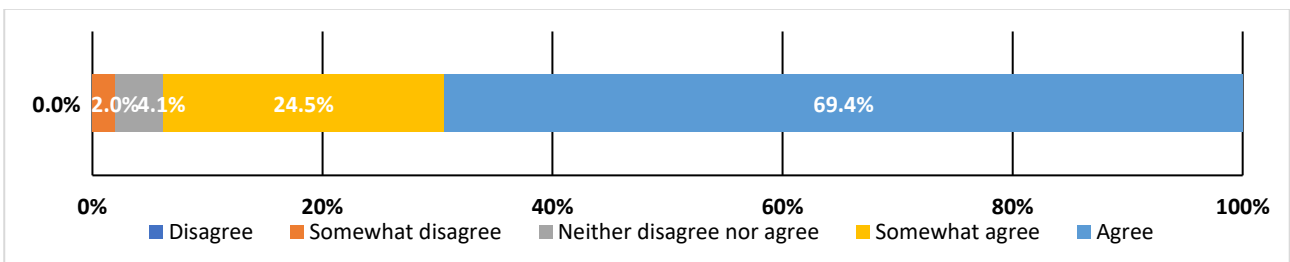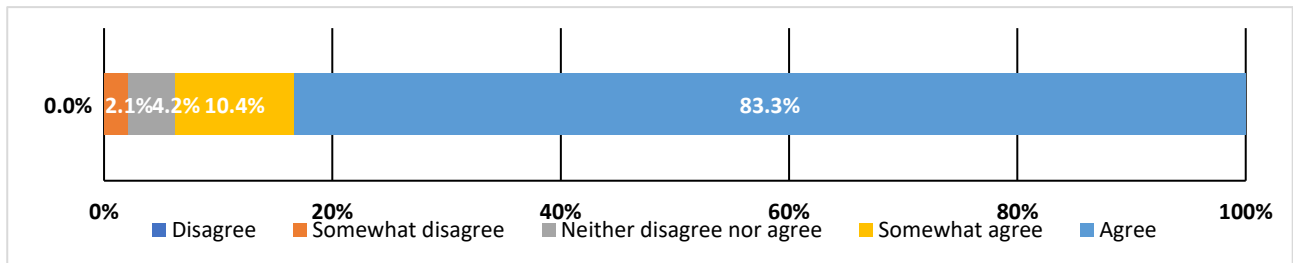
Other respondents commented and suggested that:

> '…there should have been fewer parallel sessions…'

> '…more discussions and workshops on testing strategies…'

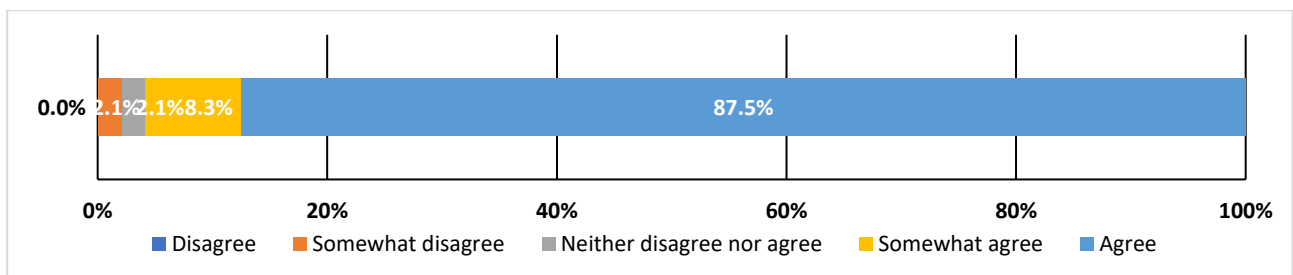## Communication

Attendees were asked to provide their overall impression with how information regarding the conference was communicated. The majority of respondents (93.8%) reported not experiencing any issues with finding information about the conference nor did they report issues with registration (95.8%). Regarding ease of communicating with conference organisers, 98% of respondents reported that communication was easy. Lastly, regarding the HepHIV2019 Conference app, 90% of respondents reported that it was helpful and useful.
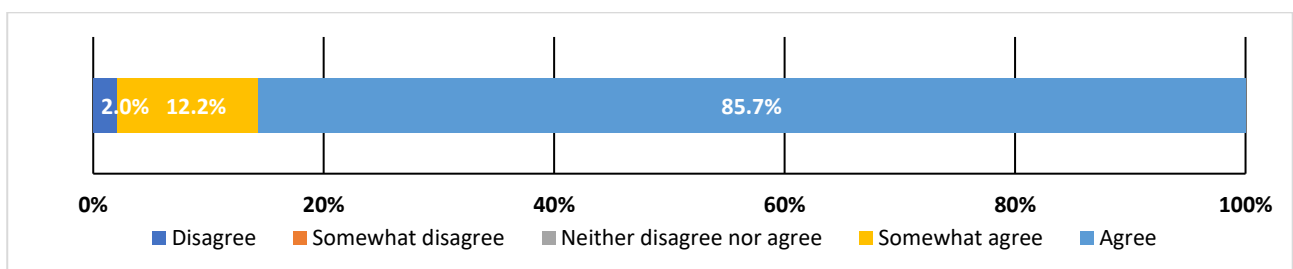
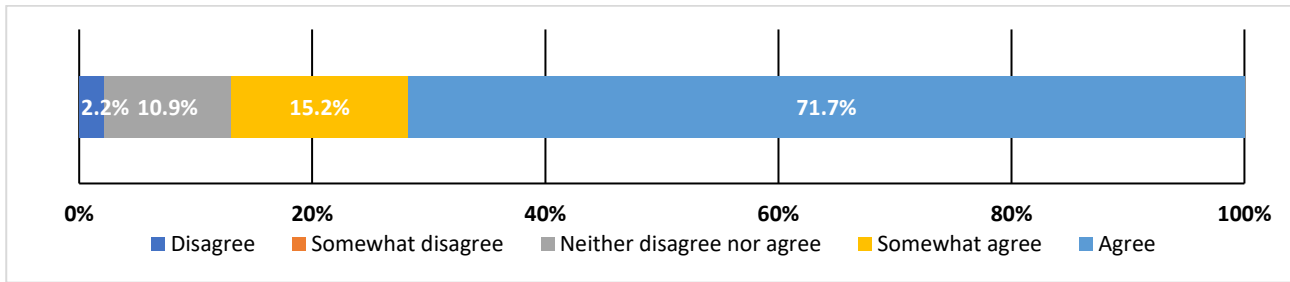**13. I did not experience issues with finding information on the conference.**

0.0% 2.1% 4.2% 10.4% 83.3%

■ Disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither disagree nor agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Agree

14. I did not experience issues with registering for the conference.

0.0% 2.1% 2.1% 8.3% 87.5%

■ Disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither disagree nor agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Agree

15. It was easy to communicate with the conference organisers.

2.0% 12.2% 85.7%

■ Disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither disagree nor agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Agree

16. The HepHIV2019 Conference app was helpful and useful.

2.2%	10.9%	15.2%	71.7%	

■ Disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Neither disagree nor agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Agree

Comments on communication included:

'Organisation was superb!'

'Really like app'

'Well organised'

The conference ended with a call to action addressing implications for policy and implementation agendas in the field of earlier and integrated testing following up on the HepHIV 2017 conference call to action