



January 22, 2010

Dear Colleague,

This annual Dear Colleague letter highlights 2009 activities involving the Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP) and our external STD prevention colleagues and looks forward to issues and activities to be addressed in 2010. We welcome your comments to ensure that this annual letter remains helpful to you.

DSTDP Strategic Planning and Priority Activities

In 2009, DSTDP used its [five-year Strategic Plan](#) to guide DSTDP's decision making, human and financial resource allocation, and programmatic direction. DSTDP focused on the following three goals as top priorities for division activity in 2009 – 2010:

- Prevent STI-related infertility
- Reduce STI-related health disparities across and within communities and populations
- Strengthen STD prevention capacity and infrastructure

Highlights of 2009 progress in these goals include:

- ***Preventing STI-related Infertility***
 - Continued development of the [National Chlamydia Coalition \(NCC\)](#), in collaboration with the [Partnership for Prevention](#).
 - NCC membership grew to 42 national organizations and developed a variety of resources including a [new website](#), a regular e-newsletter, clinical resources, and patient education materials including [Why Screen for Chlamydia? An Implementation Guide for Healthcare Providers](#).
 - NCC and its member organizations successfully recommended that the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) include the Chlamydia screening Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) measure in the 2010 NCQA health plan accreditation score for commercial and Medicaid plans, effective July 2010.
 - Expansion of the number of jurisdictions in which Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) is clearly permissible to 20 states and Baltimore as compared with 10 states in 2006. Details and links to state resources are on the [CDC EPT web pages](#).
 - Collaboration with the Maternal and Child Health Bureau at HRSA to work with state adolescent health coordinators to increase Chlamydia awareness among providers and the public.
- ***Reducing STI-related Health Disparities***
 - Launched a new interactive [STD Health Disparities](#) website.
 - Provided STD technical assistance to National Action Network's "I Choose Life" campaign for African-American communities in the southeastern U.S.
 - Partnered with Indian Health Service and [National Coalition of STD Directors \(NCSN\)](#) to develop [Native STAND](#) (Students Together Against Negative Decisions) training curriculum for peer educators to promote health decision-making among Native youth.
- ***Strengthening STD Prevention Capacity and Infrastructure***
 - CDC's National Network of STD/HIV Prevention Training Centers (NNPTC) collaborated with NCSN, state and local STD programs, and other STD prevention training partners and stakeholders to pilot a three-day STD Program Management Course for new STD Program Managers, now being implemented in each NNPTC region.
 - Expanded the STD Surveillance Network (SSuN) to 40 STD clinics in 12 geographic areas collaborating to monitor trends in STDs and related behaviors, allowing broad and flexible capacity for many STD clinic and population-based surveillance activities.

DSTDP Leadership and Awards

Leadership changes and awards received during 2009:

- **Russell Cantrell** was named Deputy Branch Chief for the Laboratory, Reference and Research Branch.
- **Norman Hayes** was named Special Assistant for Unit Operations in the Syphilis Elimination and STD Disparities Unit.
- **Tom Gift** won the 2009 Kaafee Billah Memorial Award for the article “The Program Cost and Cost-Effectiveness of Screening Men for Chlamydia to Prevent Pelvic inflammatory Disease in Women” published in *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 2008.
- **Lauri Markowitz** won the PHS Distinguished Service Medal for outstanding national leadership in vaccine preventable diseases research and program implementation.
- The CDC **Global Perinatal Integration Working Group** received the NCHHSTP Director’s Recognition Award. Mary Kamb, Tasneem Malik, Jennifer Mark, Lori Newman, Bruce Furness and Lisa Steele represent DSTDP on the group, co-chaired by Mary Kamb and Tasneem Malik.
- **Rachel Kachur** received the Excellence in Innovation Award from NCHHSTP for her work on the NCSD Internet guidelines.
- **Kim Honer** received NCHHSTP’s Outstanding Field Supervisor Award (Domestic) for exceptional leadership to the Ft. Lauderdale STD Program.
- John Heath, Steve Rubin, Paulette Jackson, and Phil Powers, **senior leaders** of our Field Staff, each with more than 30 years of STD prevention experience, retired in 2009.
- Similar to the response across CDC and state/local public health departments, **107 DSTDP staff** played key leadership roles during details in responding to the H1N1 pandemic.

Consultations/Meetings

Consultations allowed engagement with colleagues on a variety of important STD prevention topics:

- The **Senior Public Health Advisor and Field Staff Advisory Committee meeting** (January), provided an opportunity for field and HQ staff to focus on operationalizing program collaboration and service integration and implementing partner service recommendations.
- **Laboratory Guidelines Consultation** (January) reviewed evidence to revise guidelines for laboratory diagnosis of gonorrhea and chlamydial infection and develop guidelines for syphilis; the [meeting report](#) is published on the [Association of Public Health Laboratories](#) website.
- **NCHHSTP’s Corrections and Public Health Consultation** (March) was held to review evidence and develop recommendations to promote STD screening in correctional settings.
- **STD Treatment Guidelines Consultation** (April) brought together experts to weigh evidence and develop recommendations to update the 2006 STD Treatment Guidelines.
- **Health Disparities Stakeholders’ Consultations**, focused on African-American men (April) and MSM (August), engaged community leaders, state and local health care providers, the faith community, and other federal agencies to inform strategies to reduce STD health disparities.
- **Regional Gonorrhea Control Meetings** (May-December) with STD directors, epidemiologists, and other program leaders provided opportunities to review epidemiologic trends, challenges, and effective interventions and develop action plans to enhance GC prevention.
- The **National Association of Community Health Centers** (June) brought together health departments and health centers in the Southeast to identify barriers that hinder collaboration in STD screening and treatment.
- **Preventing STDs, HIV and Teen Pregnancy: Reducing Health Disparities workshop** (July), held in collaboration with the Council of State Governments, brought together 35 state-level elected officials from 16 southern states and Puerto Rico to provide information on policies and programs that work to reduce disparities.
- **Cephalosporin-resistant Neisseria gonorrhoeae National Response Consultation** (September) initiated the formulation of a comprehensive national and state-level public health plan to respond to the threat of the emergence of Cephalosporin-resistant gonorrhea in the U.S.

New Tools

New tools to enhance STD prevention program delivery were developed in 2009:

- **HPV Brochures** for [American Indian Women](#) and [Alaska Native Women](#) were published.
- **STD data** were made available in a variety of forms in 2009:
 - 2007 STD Surveillance Supplements for [Chlamydia](#), [GISP](#), and [Syphilis](#) were published in hard copy and electronic formats.
 - **2008 STD Surveillance Report** was published in November, and new [interactive options](#) were made available for comparing multiple years of data by demographic and geographic categories.
- Meeting report from [Addressing Social Determinants of Health: Accelerating the Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB](#), external consultation was published.

Scientific and Program Development

Important scientific and program developments during the past year include:

- MMWRs and special issues were released:
 - A supplement to [Sexually Transmitted Diseases](#) (February) was devoted to responding to the burden of STD, HIV and viral hepatitis in *correctional populations*.
 - [Chlamydia Screening Among Sexually Active Young Female Enrollees of Health Plans - United States, 2000-2007](#) (April, MMWR).
 - [Primary and Secondary Syphilis – Jefferson County, Alabama 2002-2007](#) (May, MMWR).
 - [Clinic-Based Testing for Rectal and Pharyngeal Neisseria gonorrhoeae and Chlamydia trachomatis Infections](#) (July, MMWR).
 - [Sexual and Reproductive Health of Persons Aged 10-24 Years](#) (July, MMWR).
 - A supplement to [Public Health Reports](#) (November) published a collection of papers describing various *OASIS-related activities* to improve the surveillance of STDs.
- New *provisional ACIP guidance* on use of the quadrivalent HPV vaccine in males and use of the newly licensed bivalent vaccine in females.
- Use of rapid assessment procedures to help state and local health departments in Arizona to identify contextual factors that contribute to *persistent high rates of congenital syphilis* among Latinas.
- The third and final module of the [NCSID Internet Guidelines](#) was released (October), providing guidance for *using the Internet* for health promotion and disease prevention.
- DSTDP engaged in an array of activities to support **STD Awareness Month** (April):
 - Enhancement of the [STD Awareness Month](#) website which provides partners with information and tools to support local STD Awareness Month activities.
 - Partnership with MTV, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and Kaiser Family Foundation to promote sexual health and STD/HIV testing in an award-winning [GYT \(Get Yourself Tested\)](#) initiative.
- DSTDP staff continued *collaborations with other nations, WHO, and other international partners* in priority areas such as:
 - [WHO Global Initiative for the Elimination of Congenital Syphilis as a Public Health Problem](#) with a scaling up of congenital syphilis elimination in 10 high burden countries.
 - A dual antigen point-of-care rapid syphilis test that can detect antibody to both non-treponemal and treponemal antigens has been developed in collaboration with commercial partners and is expected to be licensed internationally and in the U.S. in 2010.
 - Assisting six countries in completing integrated sexual behavior and STD prevalence surveys.
 - Working with WHO to develop HPV vaccine recommendations and guidance for monitoring HPV vaccine impact.
 - [WHO/CDC partnership to enhance gonorrhea antimicrobial susceptibility](#) surveillance in the Western Pacific and Southeast Asia regions to enhance early detection of global emergence of cephalosporin-resistant gonorrhea.
 - New international cooperative agreement with [NICD/STD Reference Centre](#) focusing on lab-related issues furthering STD control in South Africa.

Looking Forward 2010

Several activities for 2010 are already well underway, including:

- To support STD surveillance, *STD*MIS 5.0* will be released in 2010; a [pre-release version of STD*MIS 5.0](#) is now available for download and review.
- A plan to contain or limit the spread of *cephalosporin resistant gonorrhea* will be developed, including state and local level action plans and enhanced surveillance in the Western Pacific.
- A plan to *enhance laboratory capacity* to support syndromic management of STDs in Africa.
- Publication of *Guidelines for the Laboratory Diagnosis of Gonorrhea, Chlamydial Infection and Syphilis* in spring 2010.
- Publication of *Sexually Transmitted Disease Treatment Guidelines, 2010* in the summer 2010.
- Continuation and enhancement of partnership with KFF, MTV, and PPFA for *GYT*, with the theme “Get Yourself Talking” a focus of the 2010 “Get Yourself Tested” campaign.
- The [2010 National STD Prevention Conference](#) will be held March 8-11, 2010 in Atlanta.
- *VD: Values, Rights, Public Health*, a [new exhibit at CDC’s Global Health Odyssey Museum](#) opens February 16 and features the social and cultural history of STDs in the U.S.
- A series of consultations to address important *structural and cross-cutting issues* that will help define the future of STD prevention in a changing health care landscape.
- Additional *EPT policy and implementation efforts* include developing additional EPT implementation tools and collaborations with other federal agencies to identify and address barriers to supporting EPT.
- Publication of a special issue of *The Journal of Infectious Diseases* resulting from the *Chlamydia Immunology and Control* Expert Advisory Meeting held in April 2008.
- Revised *ACIP HPV vaccine statement* with new recommendations on both the bivalent and quadrivalent HPV vaccines.
- CDC *consultation on sexual health* will address sexual health as a framing concept for work across NCHHSTP (April 2010).
- Chlamydia Prevention and Control is the topic of Dr. Frieden’s new [CDC Public Health Grand Rounds](#) series (May 2010).

We in DSTDP anticipate a busy, productive year as we continue to consider what public health and STD prevention could look like in an era of health reform. Exciting discussions begun at the NCSD annual meeting in October will continue at the National STD Prevention Conference in March and in a series of consultations and projects still in development. I look forward to seeing many of you at the National Conference in Atlanta, working with you to optimize our impact on population health, and encouraging all of the many stakeholders in STD prevention to “get ourselves talking”!

Sincerely,

/John M. Douglas, Jr., MD/

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