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To: DPH Regional Health Office Directors  
Local Health Department Staff  
Medical Providers  
Family Planning Clinic Staff  
Providers of STD and HIV Prevention, Testing, and Treatment Services

From: Jeffrey P. Davis, MD   
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Bureau of Communicable Diseases

RE: Messages for Medical Providers and Community Members to Reduce Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and HIV in Gay and Bisexual Men in Wisconsin

Some Wisconsin communities are experiencing increases in cases of syphilis, gonorrhea, and HIV, primarily in gay and bisexual men and other men who have sex with men (MSM). The messages below are important in order to help avert transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV, particularly in MSM. Please share this information with other public health and medical providers.

### Information for Providers

- Both HIV-positive and HIV-negative MSM should receive an annual STD screening panel to include syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea. Having a recent negative syphilis test result on file can help determine the stage of a case of syphilis if diagnosed in the future and help avoid intrusive testing and treatment. Extra-genital testing should be offered for chlamydia and gonorrhea at all exposed sites since these infections may appear in the rectum or mouth and can be missed if only a urine or urethral specimen is collected.
- People diagnosed with HIV or syphilis will be contacted by state or local health department staff, known as disease intervention specialists (DIS) or partner services providers. DIS work to ensure that cases are receiving care and treatment, and to elicit names of partners so they can be alerted that they may have been exposed to an infection. DIS do not reveal information about the index case when they contact partners. Patients are generally more receptive to DIS when a medical provider has informed them that they will be contacted. This flyer can also be useful for people recently diagnosed with HIV: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p01184.pdf>
- HIV-negative MSM at high risk, including those with an STD, should be offered pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent acquisition of HIV infection.
- Reportable STDs include all stages of syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, chancroid, and pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). STDs are reportable to the Wisconsin Division of Public Health via the local health department.

- HIV is reportable directly to the Wisconsin Division of Public Health.
- In addition, MSM should be offered vaccination for meningococcal disease, particularly if they travel to Chicago and/or use internet sites or phone apps to find partners. Several outbreaks of meningococcal disease have occurred among MSM in the U.S., including in Chicago.

### **Messages about Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV for Gay and Bisexual Men**

- Syphilis, gonorrhea, and HIV are on the increase among gay and bisexual men in selected communities in Wisconsin.
- Gay and bisexual men should consider annual screening of STDs and HIV and be tested any time they think they may have had a risk exposure.
- Syphilis and gonorrhea are easily transmitted through oral sex.
- HIV-negative gay and bisexual men who have had an STD, or who may be at risk, should consider taking PrEP, a daily pill that can greatly reduce the risk for HIV.
- Gay and bisexual men should consider vaccination against meningococcal disease, particularly if they travel to Chicago and use internet sites or phone apps to meet sexual partners.

### **Webinars**

- Syphilis among MSM: Clinical Care and Public Health Reporting, **June 9**, 2016, 1:00 PM CST: <https://fenwaylgbthealtheducation.webex.com/mw3100/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=fenwaylgbthealtheducation>
- Syphilis 101: How the disease affects people, including those with HIV (13 minutes): <https://wihiv.wisc.edu/resources/libraryDownload.asp?docid=1079>  
Note: Adobe Reader 9.0 or newer is required. If the webinar does not open automatically select the download button from the top right corner and select open with Adobe Acrobat or save the webinar to your computer and open it in Adobe Acrobat.

### **Additional Resources**

- Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Wisconsin: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/std/index.htm>
- HIV in Wisconsin: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aids-hiv/index.htm>
- Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aids-hiv/prep.htm>
- HIV Partner Services: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/aids-hiv/ps.htm>
- Reporting of Infectious Diseases: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/diseasereporting.htm>
- Meningococcal Disease among MSM: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6444a6.htm>