



October 3, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

On the occasion of the third National Disease Intervention Specialist Recognition Day, it is our honor to recognize the outstanding contributions of Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) to protect the public's health in communities throughout the United States and the U.S. Territories. These specialists are called on regularly to respond to outbreaks of infectious diseases, including STDs, HIV, and TB; food-borne illness investigations; and emergency response efforts. In nearly every community across the nation, they can be found working on the front lines of public health, using their investigative and interpersonal communication skills to respond to outbreaks and interrupt disease transmission.

CDC is committed to supporting DIS and recently funded a five-year Disease Intervention Specialist Training Centers project, or DISTC. This project funds three organizations to provide comprehensive training, including two newly developed trainings: "Linking Patients to Care" and "Passport to Partner Services," a national training needs assessment, and a third new training course on Detailing, which will be piloted next spring. Additionally, a robust evaluation process for all DISTC training sessions is being developed to measure the impact of DISTC on STD Programs, specifically.

Another step to ensure you have the support and training you need is our ongoing work with the National Association of County and City Health Officials and the National Coalition of STD Directors. Together with these organizations a DIS Certification Program is being developed to standardize the roles of DIS. This certification will help decision makers better understand what you do and how critical your role is to stopping the spread of disease.

On this special day, we applaud our DIS colleagues, and confirm our support of your critical role in our public health mission to protect health by helping to stop the spread of infections, increasing access to medical care, educating the public about disease transmission and risk, and linking medical providers with health departments to prevent and control disease. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Mermin, MD, MPH

Director, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov/nchhstp](http://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp)

Gail Bolan, MD

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[www.cdc.gov/std](http://www.cdc.gov/std)