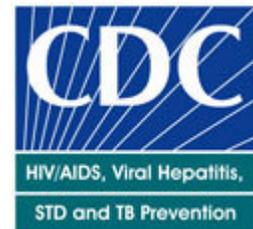




Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention  
National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention  
Division of STD Prevention

**Tuesday, September 10, 2013**

## **September Letter from DSTDP Director**



Dear Partners in Prevention,

CDC's Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP) welcomes you back from beach trips, cookouts, and other summer fun. We are planning for a busy autumn and are always seeking new ways to better support your STD programs. Our mission, as ever, is to listen to your feedback and provide you with appropriate resources to implement the most efficient, effective STD prevention and control programs possible.

### **Seeking Your Input**

This month DSTDP will solicit feedback from all STD directors. This feedback will in turn help the Division find ways to provide the best support to our project areas and better answer programmatic questions being asked by our Agency.

DSTDP will solicit additional information from all STD directors via an online survey that we will distribute later this week. The survey will gather STD directors' assessments of DSTDP program consultants and federal field staff, also known as direct assistance (DA). The survey will seek your insight in three key areas:

- Their value to your program;
- Their knowledge, skills, and abilities;
- Identification of any new skillsets or training need to support program efforts based on your local epidemiology and health care environment.

Results from the 38-question survey will help DSTDP implement appropriate work experiences and training to enhance our staff's skills, and will also inform the development of a five year DA staffing plan.

A second survey developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials with input from the National Coalition of STD Directors and DSTDP, was developed to assess STD program infrastructure. This survey will specifically examine:

- Services currently being offered;
- How program staffing and budgets have changed in recent years;
- Successes health departments have had;
- Challenges health departments are facing.

This survey will be sent to STD directors in both state and local health departments. Expect to see this survey in your email inbox at the end of September.

Finally, CDC's Office of Surveillance, Epidemiology and Laboratory Services (OSELS) in collaboration with DSTDP have completed a draft of the newly developed Public Health Information Network (PHIN) STD Message Mapping Guide. Please see the attachment to this letter titled, "STD Case Notification Message Mapping Guide," to review the current draft of the Guide. The purpose of the STD-specific guide is to collect standardized, PHIN-compliant information to improve reporting to CDC of national notifiable diseases for all STDs except congenital syphilis. This new format will allow programs to receive and send richer data related to individual cases.

We are looking specifically for comments from STD directors and STD surveillance staff related to implementation of the message mapping guides, as we have received few comments from STD programs after OSELS sent a request in July. The comment period has been extended through September 24, so we invite you to review and provide feedback, particularly on any issues you feel are ambiguous or need further explanation in order for you to implement the Guide. Please email your comments using the attached feedback template to Megan Smallwood ([MSmallwood1@cdc.gov](mailto:MSmallwood1@cdc.gov)) with a cc to Hillard Weinstock ([HWeinstock@cdc.gov](mailto:HWeinstock@cdc.gov)). Questions regarding this transition to PHIN messaging guides should be directed to Hillard Weinstock.

We realize that all of you have a lot going on right now as you push to meet end-of-year deadlines but we strongly encourage all STD programs contacted to complete both surveys and also provide feedback on the proposed PHIN STD Message Mapping Guides. We intentionally waited until after the STD AAPPs FOA applications were completed before requesting this information to avoid placing an undue burden on you and your programs. The survey and feedback are critical for DSTDP to better support STD prevention and surveillance capacity and STD program infrastructure.

### **Revisions to case definitions**

The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) has recently approved new position statements for gonorrhea ([ID-13-03](#)) and syphilis ([ID-13-04](#)). The position statements are available on the [CSTE website](#). The changes include revisions to the surveillance case definitions for gonorrhea and syphilis, to become effective January 1, 2014. Division staff are working on a fact sheet to further explain these changes and how they will impact data collection and management for these STDs. We will email this document to you and post it to our website in October.

### **Preparing for Changes in Healthcare**

Beginning next month, millions of Americans will have a new way to find affordable health coverage—including many free preventive services—in the new Health Insurance Marketplace. The Marketplace will offer Americans a whole new way of shopping for health insurance to gain greater access to affordable healthcare services, such as physician visits, preventive care, hospital stays, and prescriptions. Through the same streamlined application process at the Marketplace, many will find out if they are eligible for Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Community health centers and other

organizations will be funded to help consumers navigate the new Marketplace. Consumers can learn more about the Marketplace now and get ready to enroll by visiting [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov), or the Spanish-language site [CuidadoDeSalud.gov](http://CuidadoDeSalud.gov), or by calling the new 24-hours-a-day consumer call center at 1-800-318-2596. Hearing impaired callers using TTY/TDD technology can call 1-855-889-4325 for assistance.

## **New Resources**

The Division is working hard to develop resources you can use in your outreach efforts. Earlier this summer DSTDP launched the [STD Tx Guide](#) app, a mobile application that enables healthcare providers to quickly access STD diagnostic information and the current STD Treatment Guidelines. The app is free and available for Apple and Android devices.

Additionally, DSTDP collaborated with multiple Divisions across CDC to develop a white paper titled, "[Adolescents, Technology and Reducing Risk for HIV, STDs and Pregnancy.](#)" This paper examines how digital technology can be used to improve adolescents' health as it relates to sex. We know that digital technologies are changing how adolescents access information and interact with each other, and understanding how adolescents use technology can help inform and enhance HIV, STD, and teen pregnancy prevention efforts. This white paper provides an overview of the digital technologies that youth use most frequently, an examination of their potential for application in sexual health promotion, and examples of innovative adolescent sexual health interventions using digital technology to improve their reach and effectiveness.

## **2014 STD Prevention Conference**

We are planning an exciting STD Prevention Conference in Atlanta next June 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>. The call for abstracts has officially opened, and I encourage you to submit an abstract that falls in line with our program science format and conference theme: *More STD Prevention for the Money: Maximizing Impact, Efficiency, and Return on Program Investments*. Abstract submissions are peer-reviewed for scientific content, logical presentation, and current interest of the topic to the scientific community. More information, including deadlines and submission requirements, can be found on the [STD Prevention Conference website](#).

## **Upcoming Events**

September 16: Release of *Antibiotic Resistance Threats in the United States, 2013*, a comprehensive report developed by CDC's Office of Antimicrobial Resistance that demonstrates the current state of antibiotic resistance for the pathogens having the greatest impact on human life.

September 19, 2:00–3:00 pm: DSTDP and the American Sexually Transmitted Diseases Association present the *STD Prevention Science Series: [HIV Transmission Dynamics: From Viral Particles to Sexual Networks. Implications for HIV Prevention](#)* by Dr. Thomas Quinn.

October 4: Celebrate [National DIS Recognition Day](#), an opportunity for project areas to acknowledge the Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) in their county, city, state or

territory.

Best Regards,

Gail

Gail Bolan, M.D.  
Director  
Division of STD Prevention

Stay in touch with the Division of STD Prevention by following us on Twitter [@CDCSTD](https://twitter.com/CDCSTD) and reading our newsletter, [DSTDP Connect](#).



Have health insurance questions?

**GET QUICK ANSWERS**

Thank you for your commitment to CDC's Division of STD Prevention.

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