



October 4, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

On Friday, October 7, we recognize the 11th annual [National Disease Intervention Specialists \(DIS\) Recognition Day](#). This day is a special opportunity to honor the remarkable and ongoing contributions of DIS, who remain steadfastly committed to protecting the health of our nation. We are deeply indebted to these remarkable individuals working on the frontlines of public health. They have applied their expertise in working tirelessly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and now also in the monkeypox outbreak.

Supporting emergency response is only one part of what they do. Local, state, and federal DIS defend our nation against infectious disease and intrinsically promote health equity. They are our boots-on-the-ground disease detectives and contact tracers who not only fight to stop sexually transmitted infections (STIs), tuberculosis, viral hepatitis and support work to [end the HIV epidemic](#), but are also vital in efforts to respond to outbreaks and emerging public health threats. And they've continued to do so despite facing unprecedented caseloads and battling burnout.

We are still learning and recovering from the incredible toll COVID-19 has taken on the nation in general, and on [STD programs and DIS](#). Even during these tremendously challenging times, there is promise in supportive actions like [new opportunities](#) to expand and bolster the DIS workforce. Investments like this can help [strengthen the capacity of public health departments](#) to respond to emerging disease threats like COVID-19 and monkeypox by building the surge capacity needed to respond to emergencies and outbreaks. We are encouraged to see that STD programs have begun to scale up, and [progress](#) is underway in the 5-year effort to begin to build a response ready workforce of disease intervention specialists.

To all DIS, we would like to say **thank you**. Thank you for your commitment, flexibility, and can-do attitude that you bring to work every day. We see the difference you make in communities across this nation, especially during these times of crisis. Please know that we are deeply grateful to each of you. We encourage you to take care of yourselves too, both your [physical and emotional health and wellbeing](#), as we continue to address the many emergencies that affect our nation – and rely upon the DIS workforce.

With our sincerest gratitude,

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