



March 31, 2008

Dear Colleague,

Annual chlamydia screening of sexually-active women age 25 years and younger is a preventive practice recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, CDC, and other major professional health organizations. The top priority of the Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP) at CDC is to increase adherence to this recommendation. Part of our plan to support increased adherence is the creation of a National Chlamydia Screening Coordinator position in the DSTDP Office of the Director. The purpose of this letter is to introduce the new Coordinator, Raul Romaguera, DMD, MPH, who will begin his transition later in April.

Dr. Romaguera comes to DSTDP from the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention, where he has been Acting Associate Director for Health Disparities for the past eight months. Concurrently, he was also Dental Director and Associate Director for Prevention in Care in the Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention. Dr. Romaguera's 23 years of experience in the Public Health Service includes work in the Health Resources and Services Administration and at CDC in the Division of Reproductive Health, Division of Oral Health, and the Division of Public Health Surveillance and Informatics. With his broad experience in numerous health care settings, he has successfully established partnerships with many individuals and organizations in the private sector around key preventive health initiatives, an ability which will be especially valuable as he works with the fledgling National Chlamydia Coalition (NCC) to increase adherence to chlamydia screening guidance widely across the U.S.

Comprised of a wide array of engaged, energized partners from all sectors (private, public, non-profit, philanthropic), the NCC will focus on one overarching mission: achieving a high level of adherence to the clinical guidance for annual chlamydia screening of sexually-active young women. This important initiative addresses the continued high burden of chlamydia infection among women, over 10 years after initial screening recommendations were made. In 2006, 1,030,911 cases of chlamydia were reported to CDC, representing the highest annual number of any notifiable disease ever reported. Prevalence of infections persists at a steady level among young women attending family planning clinics; the median region-specific positivity rate in 2006 was 6.7%.

While CDC continues to recommend annual screening, estimates suggest that less than 50% of eligible women seeking healthcare are screened for chlamydia. Efforts to increase chlamydia screening must target those women already utilizing healthcare who are not screened, as well as encouraging women who are not accessing care to seek screening. Dr. Romaguera's leadership will help coordinate CDC's efforts on this priority and will help CDC strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones to address this important women's health issue.

Please join me in welcoming Raul Romaguera to the Division of STD Prevention.

Sincerely,

/John M. Douglas, Jr./

John M. Douglas, Jr., MD, Director
Division of STD Prevention
National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention