

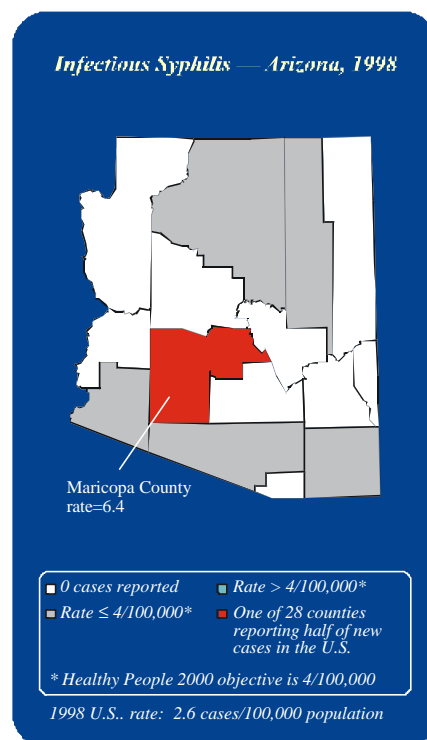
# Eliminating Syphilis Maricopa County (Phoenix), Arizona

## *Why is Syphilis Elimination in the U.S. within our reach now?*

- Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Infectious syphilis is at the lowest rate ever reported: 2.6 cases/100,000 population (6,993 total cases).
- Syphilis is now very concentrated; half of all new cases in 1998 were reported from only 28 counties, which represent less than 1% of all U.S. counties.
- Other industrialized countries have already eliminated syphilis.

## *Why is it Important to Eliminate Syphilis in Maricopa County?*

- **In 1998 Maricopa County ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation** in new cases of infectious syphilis (173 cases) and had a rate greater than 2 times the national rate.
- **To reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in health**
  - S 37% of cases are among Hispanics, 28% are among African Americans and 27% are among whites.
  - S The infectious syphilis rate in Maricopa County for African Americans is 21 times greater, the rate for Native Americans is 7 times greater, and the rate for Hispanics is 5 times greater than the rate for white Americans.
- **To decrease spread of HIV infection**
  - S Syphilis increases HIV transmission at least 2-to-5 fold.
- **To improve infant health**
  - S Syphilis can be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy causing stillbirths or congenital infection, some of which may result in persistent health problems.
  - S In 1998, 23 cases of congenital syphilis were reported from Maricopa County for a rate of 49.4 cases/100,000 births, greater than 2 times the national rate of 20.6 cases/100,000 births.



## *Maricopa County Responds*

- Early in 1999, with assistance from the CDC, Maricopa County conducted a community needs assessment utilizing the Rapid Ethnographic Community Assessment Process (RECAP) to understand the community's perspective on the syphilis increase. Interventions developed as a result of the RECAP are being implemented.
- Maricopa County continues to work with Correctional Health Services (jails), the County Shelter Clinic (homeless), and other community-based organizations to conduct syphilis elimination activities.

### For more information contact:

Frank Slaughter  
Department of Health Services  
(602)230-5905  
(602)230-5818 (fax)

### For media inquiries contact:

National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Office of Communications  
(404) 639-8895

<http://www.cdc.gov/StopSyphilis/>



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention

