

Journal/ Articles for June 2008

Note: PDFs are available upon request from Dan, email: dan@jba-cht.com

STDs

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- Potterat, JJ. Disease Intervention Specialists as a Corps, Not Corpse. STD July 2008. <pdf only>
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Program and Training Branch (PTB) Thursday Report
Monthly Highlights from the STD Programs
May 2008

MAINE

1. The Maine STD Program initiated and jointly funded, along with other Maine CDC programs, the first Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) Health Summit May 29, 2008. The Health Summit addressed health disparities, included a variety of topic sessions, and had interactive working sessions where state and local health officials, members of the LGBTI community, community advocates, and state policy makers met and strategize ways to 1) increase awareness of health disparities, 2) address data collection issues for the LGBTI community, and 3) increase self advocacy in consumers.

2. The City of Portland STD Clinic was selected as one of the sites participating in the Quality of Care in STD Clinic Projects.

3. The Maine STD Program, in conjunction with the Department of Education; the Family Planning Associate of Maine; the New Beginnings Youth Agency; the State Teen and Young Adult Health Program; and the University of Maine at Farmington sponsored the 3rd Annual Comprehensive Sexuality Education Conference: Sexually Healthy, The Way Maine Should Be. The conference was a great success and was highlighted by the keynote speaker, Dr. Marilyn Volker, Sexologist from Miami, Florida. Conference sessions included Current Issues in Teen Sexuality; Sex, Internet and Youth Culture; Today is Love Your Body Day!; Sexuality and Disability: Focus on Autism, What's New in Contraception; and Safety for All Students—including GLBT!

4. In January 2008, the Maine STD Program implemented routine HIV testing in the STD clinics. This change occurred after the Maine state law changes that went into effect September 2007 to routinize HIV Testing in clinical settings. Any HIV tests completed during clinic time are offered free to clients. After one quarter of this change, anecdotally more tests are being done at the STD Clinics.

5. For Hepatitis Awareness Month, the City of Bangor STD clinic and the City of Lewiston STD clinic will be showing educational videos about hepatitis C and highlighting hepatitis awareness month in their waiting rooms. Additionally, testing and vaccination at University of Southern Maine Health Fair will be done by the City of Portland, Public Health Division, STD clinic and the Frannie Peabody Center. They will offer free hepatitis C and HIV tests as well as free hepatitis A and B vaccinations to all who qualify.

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MINNESOTA

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) implemented two STD prevention campaigns in 2007. The campaigns were designed to reach sexually active teens and young adults, 15 - 24 years of age, experiencing the highest STD rates among Minnesota African-Americans and Latinos. The African-American campaign was implemented in April 2007 during National STD Awareness Month, and the Latino campaign was implemented in October 2007 during Hispanic Heritage Month and National Latino AIDS Awareness Day (NLAAD). The campaigns were developed in response to a record number of STDs that were reported in the previous year in Minnesota.

The goals of the campaigns were to raise awareness on how to prevent the spread of STDs through increased condom usage, routine testing, and informing sex partners if infected. In addition, information about HIV was included with the Latino campaign materials to allow the materials to be used in conjunction with NLAAD.

Russell Herder Advertising was selected through a competitive bidding process to assist in campaign material development. To assure that the campaign was community-driven, six focus and field testing groups were held involving over 60 African-American and Latino youths and young adults from inner-city Zip Codes with the highest STD rates.

Based on the findings from the focus and field-testing groups, several new campaign messages and materials were developed such as Internet banner ads, bus shelter ads, restroom ad faces, posters, radio Hip Hop raps, tattoos, and outreach cards. In addition, two campaign web sites were developed to allow target audiences to learn more about on how to prevent, recognize, and test for STDs. The campaign web sites <http://www.WrapTestTreat.com> and <http://www.NoMasSTDs.com> also include downloadable posters and radio ads.

Overall, the WrapTestTreat web site received over 700 “visitor sessions” (at least 10 minutes on the site) during the campaign month of April 2007 and the NoMas web site had nearly 1,200 visitor sessions during the campaign month of October 2007.

For more information, contact Roy Nelson, STD and HIV Section, MDH, by email at roy.nelson@health.state.mn.us or by phone at (651) 201-4027.

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NEW YORK CITY

The New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Bureau of STD Control (BSTD) has partnered with the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community Center (the Center) to offer substance abuse screening, intervention, and referral to treatment in three STD clinics (Chelsea, Central Harlem, and Morrisania). Screening is performed using a modified CAGE instrument given to each patient at triage. Patients 18 and over who screen positive on the CAGE are offered an opportunity to speak to a substance abuse counselor. Counselors also see patients referred by other clinic

personnel including public health advisors and physicians. The interventionists were hired by the Center and placed in the STD clinics in February 2008. The interventionists conduct counseling sessions using screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) and brief motivational interview (BMI) techniques to help patients evaluate their own substance abuse patterns, their desire for change, and their strategies for effecting change. Through OASAS's relationship with treatment providers in the NYC area, we are able to make appropriate referrals to outpatient treatment within 48 hours. In the first thirteen weeks of implementation, 5,286 patients (22% screened positive) were screened; counselors met with 678 patients; and 76 patients received full referrals to outpatient substance abuse treatment. The project is funded through a grant from SAHMSA and is renewable for up to five years.

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SAN FRANCISCO

1. As part of STD Awareness Month, the STD Prevention and Control Section conducted a myriad of community-based activities to highlight the importance of getting tested for STDs. Activities included:

- A three-hour dog walk in the Castro neighborhood of San Francisco (the largest men who have sex with men (MSM) neighborhood) by the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. The dog walk featured dogs that were part of the "Dogs are Talking" syphilis prevention social marketing campaign casting call. The Sisters, who are well known by those in the MSM community, chatted up men on the street about the importance of getting tested for syphilis.
- A five-hour STD screening event in the Castro neighborhood, featuring celebrities from 92.7 radio and Steve Cruz, the new spokesperson for Raging Stallion Porn Studios.
- Distributing our "Dogs are Talking" reusable canvas tote bags in the Delano Supermarket, the only supermarket in the Castro neighborhood in San Francisco.
- Speaking on KTVU, a Saturday morning TV show, about the "Dogs are Talking" syphilis prevention social marketing campaign.
- Conducting two separate poster contests, one for MSM and the other for Youth, specifically from Bayview-Hunter's Point area, the area with the highest STD morbidity among youth, to develop posters on getting tested for STDs. Contestants were asked to show what sexual health and the promotion of STD testing looked like to them. Community members voted for and selected their favorite posters, which will be used throughout the year to reinforce STD testing and awareness efforts.
- Replacing the plain white napkins used by bars in the Castro with our "Dogs are Talking" napkins.
- Putting "Dogs are Talking" urinal pads in the bottom of the urinals in bars in the Castro and South of Market areas of San Francisco which turn color when wet.

- Having “Dogs are Talking” posters prominently displayed in bus routes in the Castro and South of Market areas of the city. Funding for this was donated by the San Francisco AIDS Office.

2. City Entertainment, an adult bookstore in San Francisco, has agreed to stamp the back of every receipt they issue with the following message:

Play Smart
Get tested for STDs every 3-6 months
www.STDtest.org www.SFCityClinic.org

3. Blow Buddies, a very popular bar and club in the Castro area, has agreed to provide more internal STD messaging for their patrons by adding our website information to the “Blow Buck,” a promotion they run in collaboration with the Magnet, Gay Men’s Sexual Health Clinic. Blow Buck cards are given out in a variety of community venues and are stamped with the same stamp being used by the City Entertainment adult bookstore.

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TEXAS

During the second half of 2007, the Houston STD Prevention Program, with the assistance of Legacy Community Health Services and the local Syphilis Elimination Advisory Committee (SEAC), developed a syphilis intervention health promotion campaign titled “Don’t Sleep On It—Ignoring Syphilis Won’t Make It Go Away.” The public information initiative, which was implemented in January 2008, is targeted at the African-American community, reflecting the shifting early syphilis epidemic that is affecting various risk groups in the African-American population.

The campaign utilizes various media, including billboards, magazines, and community newspapers in zip code areas that contain significant incidence of early syphilis among African Americans. In addition, posters that contain the campaign’s logo and the locations and telephone numbers of local STD clinics are being distributed at business establishments in the targeted areas including barbershops, hair salons, and neighborhood grocers. Other media items that are part of the “Don’t Sleep On It” campaign include T-shirts, pens, draw-string back packs, windshield posters, and condoms. The media campaign will continue through mid-year 2008.

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INFERTILITY PREVENTION PROJECT

The Region VIII Infertility Prevention Project (IPP) recently verified the use of the GenProbe APTIMA Combo 2 assay for the detection of *C. trachomatis* and *N. gonorrhoeae* from rectal and pharyngeal specimens through a multi-state laboratory and

program collaboration in response to region VIII family planning partner requests for such testing. At that time, no Region VIII laboratories had the capability to provide pharyngeal or rectal testing and it was difficult for each lab to perform verification since volumes were quite low. The Utah Public Health Laboratories (UPHL) agreed to act as the regional lab to process these non-genital site specimens.

The verification study was performed at the UPHL. Rectal and pharyngeal samples were collected from patients of the Utah Valley Health Department STD clinic. Samples were tested at the UPHL and forwarded to the San Francisco Public Health Laboratory (SFPHL) for comparison testing. The results of the verification study are below.

PHARYNGEAL SWABS TESTED FOR *C. trachomatis*

	UPHL	SFPHL
Negative	72	72
Positive	5	5
Total	77	77

PHARYNGEAL SWABS TESTED FOR *N. gonorrhoeae*

	UPHL	SFPHL
Negative	62	63
Positive	14	14
Indeterminate	1	0
Total	77	77

RECTAL SWABS TESTED FOR *C. trachomatis*

	UPHL	SFPHL
Negative	49	50
Positive	17	17
Indeterminate	1	0
Total	67	67

RECTAL SWABS TESTED FOR *N. gonorrhoeae*

	UPHL	SFPHL
Negative	49	49
Positive	18	18
Total	67	67
Positive for both CT and GC	11	11

Since the initial verification study, the UPHL has tested more than 1,000 pharyngeal samples, with positive rates of 3.0% for CT and 5.4% for GC. More than 800 rectal samples have been tested, with positive rates of 15.0 % for CT and 6.5% for GC. The vast majority of submitted samples have been from within Utah.

The UPHL is currently collaborating with the other states in the Region VIII IPP to make this testing available to them and to assist those interested in performing their own verification studies.

For additional information, please contact Tom Sharpton at the Utah Public Health Laboratory (tomsharpton@utah.gov), Yvonne Hamby (Yvonne_Hamby@jsi.com)

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