



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY EXPECTED TO REDUCE STD INFECTIONS

HONOLULU -- The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) has developed new informational materials available online for the treatment of patients with chlamydia or gonorrhea. The materials are part of a new effort to educate healthcare providers, patients, and the public about Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) options now available in Hawaii.

Signed into law this year, the Hawaii EPT Law or Act 250-13 is an important public health measure to reduce the transmission of sexually transmitted infections. Hawaii's new law enables patients diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea to deliver medication or a prescription to their partner(s) in situations where the partner is unlikely to seek medical treatment. This helps assure the patient does not get reinfected by their partner, because their partner also receives treatment quickly.

"Expedited Partner Therapy will help healthcare providers in Hawaii prevent an estimated 1,000 cases of pelvic inflammatory disease in women and an additional estimated 1,000 cases of infertility that occur each year in Hawaii," said Dr. Glenn Wasserman, chief of the DOH Communicable Disease and Public Health Nursing Division. "The law uses evidence-based guidelines that have proven success in many states."

Legislative efforts to permit EPT in Hawaii were led by the Hawaii Section of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and other health providers for women and youth, with support from the Department of Health.

"Sexually transmitted infections disproportionately affect women and particularly young women," said Dr. Lori Kanemoto, Hawaii ACOG Chairperson. "EPT will help prevent the serious medical complications that can occur with these infections in women, including pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, chronic pelvic pain and ectopic pregnancy. This law is about helping our patients, Hawaii's population and public health."

In 2012, there were nearly 6,500 reported cases of chlamydia in Hawaii with 70 percent in women. Forty-seven percent of these women were between 15-24 years of age. Sixty percent of Hawaii's total reported chlamydia and gonorrhea infections in 2011 and 2012 occurred in people under the age of 25.

EPT partner information sheets developed by DOH must be used by healthcare professionals to inform partners about EPT and what to be aware of with the medications. The EPT law, partner information sheets, and other related information for healthcare providers may be downloaded from the DOH website at <http://health.hawaii.gov/std-aids/for-providers/>

For questions about EPT related to the control of sexually transmitted infections in Hawaii, please contact the department's STD Clinic at Diamond Head Health Center at (808) 733-9281.

Additional information on EPT is also available from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/std/ept/>

For questions regarding the regulation of pharmacy practices, go to the Hawaii State Board of Pharmacy at www.hawaii.gov/dcca/pvl/boards/pharmacy/.

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