



DATE:	March 2, 2018
TO:	Health Alert Network
FROM:	Rachel Levine, MD, Acting Secretary of Health
SUBJECT:	Recent Increases in Reported HIV and Gonorrhea in Beaver County
DISTRIBUTION:	Beaver, Lawrence, Butler, Allegheny, and Washington Counties
LOCATION:	Beaver County
STREET ADDRESS:	Statewide
COUNTY:	Statewide
MUNICIPALITY:	Statewide
ZIP CODE:	Statewide

This transmission is a “Health Advisory” provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Summary

- In calendar year (CY) 2017 and continuing into 2018 there have been notable increases in gonorrhea, and there has been a nearly threefold increase in the number of new diagnoses of HIV disease among Beaver County residents compared to the average number of new diagnoses in the previous five years.
- The increases in HIV infection were predominately identified in males with the risk factor of men who have sex with men (MSM).
- The increases in gonorrhea were predominately identified in young men and women ages 15 to 24.
- In response to the increases in both HIV and gonorrhea, providers are strongly encouraged to follow the most recent CDC testing recommendations that are listed below.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) is providing the following information in response to increases in new HIV infections and gonorrhea in the Beaver County area.

In calendar year (CY) 2017 and continuing into 2018 there has been a nearly threefold increase in the number of new diagnoses of HIV disease among Beaver County residents compared to the average number of new diagnoses in the previous five years. The increases in HIV infection were predominately identified in males with the risk factor of men who have sex with men (MSM). Additionally, during CY 2017, Beaver County experienced a 34% increase in reported gonorrhea from CY 2016. The increases in gonorrhea were predominately identified in young men and women ages 15 to 24. Individuals identified with new HIV infections also had a high rate of co-infection with other STDs such as syphilis and gonorrhea.

In response to these reported increases in both HIV and gonorrhea, providers are strongly encouraged to follow the most recent CDC testing recommendations:

- **General Population**: All adults and adolescents from ages 13 to 64 should be tested at least once for HIV.
- **Young Women**: Annual HIV, gonorrhea, and chlamydia screening of all sexually active women younger than 25 years, as well as older women with risk factors such as new or multiple sex partners, or a sex partner who has a sexually transmitted infection
- **Pregnant Women**: Syphilis, HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea and hepatitis B screening for all pregnant women at the first prenatal visit. Additionally, at-risk pregnant women should be offered repeat testing for syphilis at the third trimester of pregnancy; at the delivery of a child or at the delivery of a stillborn child.
- **Men who have Sex with Men**: Screening at least once a year for HIV, syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea for all sexually active gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM). MSM who have multiple or anonymous partners should be screened more frequently for STDs and HIV (e.g., at 3-to-6 month intervals).
- **Other At-risk Populations**: Anyone who has unsafe sex or shares injection drug equipment should get tested for HIV, Hepatitis C, syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia at least once a year.
- **HIV Infected Individuals**: Anyone who is known to be infected with HIV should be screened for Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, STD and TB.

Additional Information

Physicians needing additional information regarding HIV and STD screening recommendations or prevention-related resources, including HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) are asked to call the following numbers:

Pennsylvania Department of Health	
Bureau of Communicable Diseases	
HIV Program	STD Program
717-783-0572	717-787-3981

Additional HIV and STD testing information is available online at:
www.cdc.gov/std/prevention/screeningreccs.htm

Reporting Requirements

The Department of Health requires all providers and laboratories to perform electronic reporting of all diseases, infections and conditions listed in 28 Pa. Code Chapter 27, Subchapter B (relating to reporting of diseases, infections and conditions) through its electronic disease surveillance system, PA-NEDSS. Providers are reminded that these reporting requirements expect providers to report diagnosis and treatments for all positive STD infections as well. Providers not registered for PA-NEDSS can do so by contacting the PA-NEDSS Security Officer by email at ddockey@pa.gov or by phone at 717-836-3618.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of March 2, 2018 but may be modified in the future.