

July 31, 2024

Dear Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Colleagues:

Sexually transmitted infection (STI) rates continue to rise in the U.S. In 2022, more than 2.5 million cases of syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia were reported nationally,¹ underscoring the need for increased public health efforts to reduce the incidence of STIs. The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) would like to reiterate the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program's (RWHAP) pivotal role in addressing and mitigating the risk of STIs for individuals with HIV.

In June 2024, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released [clinical guidelines](#) on the use of doxycycline postexposure prophylaxis (doxy PEP) for prevention of bacterial STIs.² Doxy PEP is a novel STI prevention medication that has demonstrated benefit in reducing the incidence of bacterial STIs in certain populations. Specifically, CDC's guidelines recommend gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men and transgender women who were diagnosed with a bacterial STI (specifically syphilis, chlamydia, or gonorrhea) in the past 12 months to receive counseling on the use of doxy PEP as postexposure prophylaxis to prevent STIs. Providers may prescribe doxy PEP to these populations to be self-administered within 72 hours after having condomless oral, vaginal, or anal sex. Providers should refer to CDC's guidelines for more information on prescribing doxy PEP.

HRSA HAB recommends that RWHAP recipients and subrecipients adopt CDC's guidelines to establish doxy PEP practices in clinical settings for administration to at-risk populations. The RWHAP Part B AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) formularies provide coverage for a broad range of medications that treat STIs, enhancing individual health outcomes and reducing HIV transmission. As described in [Policy Clarification Notice #16-02 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Services: Eligible Individuals and Allowable Uses of Funds](#), RWHAP Parts A, C, and D recipients may contribute RWHAP funds to ADAPs to purchase medications and/or health care coverage and medication cost sharing for ADAP-eligible clients.³ Under the scope of allowable costs, RWHAP funds may be used to purchase doxy PEP for eligible RWHAP clients. [HRSA HAB encourages ADAPs to add doxy PEP to their formularies to ensure access and coverage for eligible RWHAP clients. Additionally](#), RWHAP recipients and subrecipients should continue to follow federally approved HIV clinical practice guidelines for the screening and treatment of STIs.⁴

¹ See <https://www.cdc.gov/std/statistics/2022/default.htm>.

² See *CDC Clinical Guidelines on the Use of Doxycycline Postexposure Prophylaxis for Bacterial Sexually Transmitted Infection Prevention, United States, 2024*, available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/rr/rr7302a1.htm>.

³ See *Policy Clarification Notice #16-02 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Services: Eligible Individuals and Allowable Uses of Funds*, available at: <https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/ryanwhite/grants/service-category-pcn-16-02-final.pdf>. The scope of allowable ADAP treatments is included in the "Core Medical Services" section.

⁴ See *Guidelines for the Prevention and Treatment of Opportunistic Infections in Adults and Adolescents with HIV*, available at: <https://clinicalinfo.hiv.gov/en/guidelines/hiv-clinical-guidelines-adult-and-adolescent-opportunistic->

In addition, ongoing mpox transmission remains a concern, particularly among cisgender men and individuals who identify as gay or bisexual.⁵ Awareness of current mpox vaccination and testing recommendations, especially for the immunocompromised, is vital to prevent future outbreaks. The mpox vaccine is now accessible commercially at locations where other vaccines are offered. HRSA HAB is monitoring mpox trends nationally and continues to communicate information on how RWHAP recipients and subrecipients can support mpox vaccination, testing, and treatment.⁶ However, the lack of available vaccines and limited chemoprophylaxis options for other bacterial STIs, such as syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea, underscores the need for continued research and public health interventions.

Incorporating CDC's doxy PEP and other federal STI guidelines, as well as providing access and coverage of STI medications in ADAP formularies, is part of a comprehensive approach RWHAP recipients and subrecipients can implement to improve individual health outcomes and reduce STI transmission for individuals with HIV. By adhering to these guidelines, RWHAP recipients and subrecipients can help reduce barriers to STI treatment, decrease STI transmission rates, and improve STI cure rates for RWHAP clients.

The RWHAP Part F AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC) Program offers numerous training resources on STI prevention and treatment, including trainings on the effectiveness and use of doxy PEP.⁷ Additionally, the RWHAP Part F Special Projects of National Significance *Addressing STIs: Ask. Test. Treat. Repeat.* initiative has developed [resources to implement interventions to increase routine STI screening and testing](#).⁸ Please visit the [CDC STI web page](#) and the [RWHAP website](#) for additional STI information and resources.⁹ We also encourage you to contact your HRSA HAB project officer with questions that may arise.

HRSA HAB appreciates your ongoing commitment to support the health and safety of people with HIV.

Sincerely,

/Laura W. Cheever/

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[infections/whats-new](#). See *Sexually Transmitted Infections Treatment Guidelines, 2021*, available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/>.

⁵ See https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7320a4.htm?s_cid=mm7320a4_w.

⁶ For RWHAP mpox resources, please visit: <https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/resources/mpox>.

⁷ For RWHAP AETC resources on STIs, please visit: <https://aidsetc.org/topic/sexually-transmitted-infections>.

⁸ For information on this initiative, please visit: https://targethiv.org/intervention/addressing-stis-ask-test-treat-repeat?utm_source=bpURL.

⁹ See <https://www.cdc.gov/sti/index.html> and <https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/>.