

The Impact of STIs in Delaware

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Welcome to spring! We are pleased to share with you the successful launch of the Delaware Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment (DMOST) program on Friday, April 1, 2016. To the incredible group that came together to make that possible, we thank you all - staff, volunteers, our colleagues in other nonprofit agencies, and in the State. This will continue to be a shared effort on behalf of all Delawareans, and we've got a great team.

This issue is dedicated to Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) also commonly referred to as STDs. We use the term STIs to reflect the reality that medically, infections are only called diseases when they cause symptoms. As we know, people can be asymptomatic for varying periods of time (including for their entire life), and so prevention, detection, surveillance, and early treatment are key to addressing STIs in our community.

The impact of STIs in Delaware is far reaching. First, let's look at HIV. Delaware ranked 35th among the 50 states in the number of HIV diagnoses in 2013. Among adolescents, 59% were reported to have had sexual intercourse (at least once), and 58.7% did not use a condom during last sexual intercourse. Hopeful news on the HIV front is PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) and PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis). On May 26, 2016 the Academy/DPHA is partnering with the Delaware HIV Consortium for a PrEP Conference to engage the provider community in this important area of prevention & treatment.

Beyond HIV, there are the other STIs, such as Syphilis, Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, HPV, Hepatitis B and C - and now Zika virus. How do we respond to these old and new STIs, and how do we change the culture and the conversation around them? These are some of the topics covered in this issue, and we welcome Dr. Awele N. Maduka-Ezeh, MD, MPH, Medical Director, Delaware Division of Public Health as our guest editor for this issue.

We also have exciting news about our Annual Meeting – coming up soon! - on Thursday, April 21, 2016, where we will bestow the Public Health Award to an individual for the first time. That recipient will be Delaware Governor Jack Markell, and we recognize him for the transformational role he has had in our state's healthcare delivery system, as well as for championing initiatives in reproductive health, addictions, clean air, tobacco cessation and the expansion of Delaware's greenways and bikeways. We hope you'll join us at this event by registering online at www.delamed.org/annualmeeting.

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