Chlamydia Screening

Provider Toolkit

Tools to increase chlamydia screening rates in your practice
# Contents

Performance Improvement Project: Chlamydia Screening in Women ............................................................ - 3 -

Provider and Clinic Interventions ...................................................................................................................... - 3 -
Supporting Existing Strategies .......................................................................................................................... - 3 -

The Significance of Chlamydia in Minnesota ................................................................................................. - 4 -
Chlamydia Infections Are Statewide ................................................................................................................ - 4 -
Complications of Untreated Chlamydia ........................................................................................................... - 5 -

Chlamydia Screening Recommendation ........................................................................................................ - 5 -

Patient and Parent Education Materials ......................................................................................................... - 6 -

Provider Materials ........................................................................................................................................ - 8 -

Sexual History Taking ..................................................................................................................................... - 8 -
Tests for Chlamydia Screening ......................................................................................................................... - 9 -
STD Treatment Guidelines ............................................................................................................................. - 9 -
Repeat Testing After Positive Results ............................................................................................................ - 10 -

Expeditied Partner Therapy ............................................................................................................................. - 10 -

Creating a Youth-Friendly Clinic Environment .............................................................................................. - 11 -

Sample Office Policies, Protocols and Procedures ......................................................................................... - 12 -

Social Media .................................................................................................................................................... - 13 -

Sharing Best Practices – Profiles of Four Minnesota Clinics ......................................................................... - 14 -

Continuing Education Opportunities ............................................................................................................. - 17 -

Bibliography .................................................................................................................................................... - 18 -
Performance Improvement Project: Chlamydia Screening in Women
This performance improvement project (PIP) is a collaborative effort among four Minnesota health plans: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, HealthPartners, Medica, and UCare (hereafter called the Collaborative), with project support provided by Stratis Health.

The goal of this PIP is to increase the rate of chlamydia screening in sexually active women ages 16 to 24 who are enrolled in Prepaid Medical Assistance Program (PMAP) and MinnesotaCare (MNCare).

Provider and Clinic Interventions
The Collaborative will work with clinics in a variety of ways to positively impact the chlamydia screening rates for PMAP and MNCare members:

1. **Provider Trainings.** The Collaborative will offer periodic online provider trainings on the topic of chlamydia, including the medical issues related to the disease such as symptoms, prevalence, treatment options, and short and long-term effects. Available training opportunities can be found at [http://www.stratishealth.org/pip/chlamydia.html](http://www.stratishealth.org/pip/chlamydia.html).

2. **Provider Toolkit.** The Collaborative has compiled this toolkit to help clinics and providers across the state improve their clinic processes and awareness of the issue.

3. **Targeted outreach to clinics.** Using Minnesota Community Measurement data, each health plan partner will identify clinics in their network for targeted outreach, and support these clinics in using this toolkit to improve their chlamydia screening rates.

Supporting Existing Strategies
Recognizing that the increasing rate of chlamydia infections is a public health issue, the Collaborative believes that the medical community cannot impact this issue alone. To that end, the Collaborative will participate with organizations already working on this issue. Examples of partnership support by the collaborative:

- Working with local public health, public high schools, and health services at colleges, universities, vocational and technical schools.
- Attending health fairs to share information on the importance of chlamydia screening with health plan members and the public.
- Attending conferences to share the toolkit and other resources available to impact chlamydia screening rates.
- Supporting the [Minnesota Chlamydia Partnership](https://www.mnchlamydia.org) in implementing the [Minnesota Chlamydia Strategy](https://www.mnchlamydia.org). Many details and graphics in this toolkit were provided by the Minnesota Chlamydia Partnership from their publication, *A Special Report: Chlamydia Prevention*, published in September 2012 and available online [here](https://www.mnchlamydia.org).
The Significance of Chlamydia in Minnesota

Chlamydia is a growing public health challenge. It is the most frequently reported sexually transmitted infection in Minnesota as well as the United States (Minnesota Department of Health, 2012). The number of chlamydia cases has steadily increased over the past 20 years with over 1.4 million cases reported in 2011 (CDC, 2012). In Minnesota, 16,898 cases of chlamydia were reported in 2011, at double the rate of 2001 (see Figure 1). Minnesotans ages 15-24 represent 14% of the population but account for 69% of diagnosed chlamydia cases (Minnesota Chlamydia Partnership, 2012).

Figure 1: Minnesota Chlamydia Rates, 2001-2011 (per 100,000 population)

Chlamydia is known as a “silent” disease because so many who have the infection are asymptomatic. Up to 30% of males infected with chlamydia are asymptomatic compared to 70-90% of women (Minnesota Department of Health, 2012). Lack of symptoms promotes transmission and reinfection of the disease. People are often reinfected by having sex with partners who have not been screened and/or treated. Chlamydia is typically indicative of high risk behaviors that can result in additional health consequences if not addressed and treated.

Chlamydia Infections Are Statewide

Chlamydia is not just an urban problem. Rural and suburban counties in Minnesota account for over half of the chlamydia infections among young people (see Figure 2). Not surprisingly, the counties with the highest rates of chlamydia infection are often those with the least resources and the greatest challenges. Researchers have long known about the link between poverty, health and academic achievement. (Jensen, 2009)
Complications of Untreated Chlamydia

Complications from chlamydia represent a serious threat to a woman’s reproductive health now and in the future. Up to 40% of women with unknown chlamydia will develop pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). More than 1 in 7 women of reproductive age receive treatment for PID each year, a condition that accounts for approximately 200,000 hospitalizations in the United States (Minnesota Department of Health, 2011).

Long term reproductive consequences for women with a history of PID include ectopic pregnancy, chronic abdominal pain, and infertility. Ectopic pregnancy affects about 9% of women with PID and can be life threatening. Of those with PID, 20% of women will become infertile and 18% of women with PID will have chronic pelvic pain which can be debilitating the rest of their lives.

Chlamydia Screening Recommendation

The recommendation to screen all sexually active females 25 years of age and younger for chlamydia infection annually is supported by the following organizations (Minnesota Chlamydia Partnership, 2012):

- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American College of Preventive Medicine
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- American Medical Association
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- US Preventive Services Task Force
- Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI)
Patient and Parent Education Materials

Patient Education
Providing your sexually active patients with educational materials on chlamydia infection may provide them with information that they might not otherwise ask about. The following materials are available as resources for your patients. Some brochures and posters can be ordered for free or low cost to be available in your clinic.

- **Chlamydia: The Facts** (brochure), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  A plain language brochure of basic information about chlamydia.

- **Chlamydia in Minnesota** (handout), Planned Parenthood of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota
  A patient resource with information specific to Minnesota, and Planned Parenthood’s response to increasing chlamydia rates.

- **STD Facts: Chlamydia** (fact sheet for patients), Minnesota Department of Health
  A fact sheet on chlamydia including information on signs/symptoms, transmission, testing, and prevention.

- **Minnesota Family Planning and STD Hotline** (hotline, texting and online chat for teens), Minnesota Department of Health and Family Tree Clinic
  A hotline that provides reliable, medically-accurate and confidential sexual health information via phone, text, and web chat.

- **The Low Down on STIs** (website for teens), StayTeen.org
  Designed specifically for teens, this website provides information on sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including how to reduce their risk.
Parent Education

Parents should play the primary role in sexual education, but bringing up this sensitive topic can be a challenge to parents who may not have all the facts. As a provider, you have the opportunity to help arm parents with the information they need to have these conversations.

The following websites offer materials and resources to assist parents in preparing and talking to their children about sexual health.

- **It’s That Easy: A Guide to Raising Sexually Healthy Children**, Teenwise Minnesota
  An initiative that offers parent educators the training and tools they need to empower parents to connect with their children, share their family’s values and engage in meaningful conversations about sex, sexuality and relationships.

- **Shoulder to Shoulder: Raising Teens Together**, Invitation Health Institute
  An organization that shares practical, evidence-based information and tools to support parents of teens.

- **Sexuality Websites for Parents/Providers**, Minnesota Department of Health
  Links to websites for parents who are navigating conversations with their kids about sensitive health topics.

- **Infections: Chlamydia**, KidsHealth/Nemours
  A website dedicated to the health and development of children that provides a parent section containing factual information on a number of health-related topics.

- **Parents’ Sex Ed Center**, Advocates for Youth
  The Advocates for Youth website includes the Parents’ Sex Ed Center dedicated to providing parents with information to help them become their child’s best advocate. The site includes topics such as Growth and Development, Getting Started: Helping Parents and Children Talk, and Advice from Parenting Experts.
Provider Materials
Research suggests that providers who are less knowledgeable about chlamydia and its effects are less likely to screen their adolescent patients (Wiesenfeld, Dennard-Hall, Cook, Ashton, Zamborsky, & Krohn, 2005). The following materials and resources will help improve your knowledge and understanding of chlamydia trachomatis.

- **Why Screen for Chlamydia – An Implementation Guide for Health Care Providers**, Partnership for Prevention with assistance from the National Chlamydia Coalition
  This document provides the latest information and tools for healthcare providers to improve delivery of chlamydia screening to patients. It covers topics such as taking a sexual history, tips on providing services to adolescents and creating a welcome environment for the teen patient.

- **Chlamydia Resource Exchange**, National Chlamydia Coalition
  This web-based resource library provides access to high quality, accurate, multi-media public awareness and education materials on chlamydia and other sexual health issues. You can download customizable public awareness and educational materials, and/or share your own resources.

- **Talking Points for Providers: HPV and Chlamydia**, Meridian Health Plan
  A handout to equip providers in having a successful conversation with parents and adolescents about necessary screenings such as HPV and chlamydia.

Sexual History Taking
It is important to take an adequate sexual history every time you see an adolescent for care. A sexual history dialogue allows you to provide risk-reduction counseling and identify young women at risk for chlamydia infection.

- **A Guide to Taking a Sexual History**, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  A booklet designed to help guide providers through a thorough sexual history based on “The 5 Ps of Sexual Health”: partners, practices, protection from STDs, past history of STDs, and prevention of pregnancy.

- **Guide to Sexual History Taking & Questionnaire**, BCBS of North Carolina
  A guide for providers, including a sample sexual history form for patients to fill out.

- **Annotated HEADSSS Assessment**, Adolescent Health Working Group, Adolescent Health Care 101, pp. 18-20
  The HEADSSS (Home, Education/Employment, Activities, Drugs, Sexuality, Suicide/ Depression, Safety) Assessment is a commonly used tool designed to help walk a provider through an interview or assessment of their patient and learn about issues that could be addressed with counseling or intervention.
**Tests for Chlamydia Screening**

Molecular tests called Nucleic Acid Amplified Tests (NAATs) are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as the chlamydia diagnostic assay of choice (CDC, 2010). NAATs are easy to administer, cost effective, provide greater sensitivity and specificity than previous chlamydia testing methods, and can be used to test cervical, urine or vaginal specimens.

  A document discussing current diagnostic and testing methods; preferred specimens; new specimen types, such as urine and vaginal swabs; rectal and pharyngeal specimens; and alternative venues for screening.

**STD Treatment Guidelines**

Following the CDC’s recommended treatment regimens prevents sexual transmission of chlamydia to others. Chlamydia treatment should be provided promptly for all persons testing positive for infection to prevent complications of chlamydia infection such as pelvic inflammatory disease.

- **Sexually Transmitted Disease Treatment Guidelines, 2010: Chlamydial Infections**, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- **2010 STD Treatment Guidelines for iPad, iPhone and iPod Touch**, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  An e-version of the most up-to-date guidelines. You will need the iBooks app to read this ebook (iBooks is available for download through the App Store). Open [http://www.cdc.gov/std/2010-ebook.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/std/2010-ebook.htm) on your portable device, and select “Open in iBooks” to complete download.

---

**Figure 4: CDC Chlamydia Treatment Recommendations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CDC Chlamydia Treatment Recommendations</th>
<th>Adolescents and Adults</th>
<th>Pregnancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recommended regimens</strong></td>
<td><strong>Alternative regimens</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recommended regimens</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azithromycin 1gm PO x 1</td>
<td>Erythromycin base 500mg PO QID x 7D</td>
<td>Azithromycin 1gm PO x 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Erythromycin ethylsuccinate 800mg PO QID x 7D</td>
<td>OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doxycycline 100mg PO BID x 7D</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Erythromycin ethylsuccinate 800mg PO QID x 7D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No “test of cure”</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Ofloxacin 300mg PO BID x 7D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Test of cure in 3-4 weeks after completion of treatment</td>
<td>No “test of cure”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Repeat Testing After Positive Results**

Except in pregnant women, the CDC does not recommend a “test-of-cure” for patients who have tested positive and been treated for chlamydia with the recommended or alternative regimens unless therapeutic compliance is in question, symptoms persist, or reinfection is suspected. The validity of diagnostic testing at less than three weeks after completion of treatment has not been established and may result in a false positive result. However, due to a high prevalence of reinfection in women and men who have been treated for chlamydial infection, the CDC recommends that patients who test positive and are treated for chlamydia have a repeat screening 3-4 months following chlamydia treatment. If retesting in 3-4 months is not possible, the rescreening should be completed whenever the patient returns to the clinic in the next 12 months. The CDC’s Treatment Guidelines for Chlamydia can be found here.

**Expedited Partner Therapy**

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) is the practice of treating sex partners of persons with chlamydia in the absence of medical evaluation or prevention counseling (MDH, 2011). EPT is implemented through the delivery of, or prescription for, therapy by the case patient to their partners.

EPT has been legal since 2008 when Minnesota pharmacy statutes were amended to remove legal barriers to implementing EPT. According to Minn. Stat. Ann. § 151.37 Subd. 2(g) (2012), “Nothing in this chapter prohibits a licensed practitioner from issuing a prescription or dispensing a legend drug in accordance with the Expedited Partner Therapy in the Management of Sexually Transmitted Diseases guidance document issued by the United States Centers for Disease Control”.

Providing EPT in a “paperless” clinic with an electronic prescribing system takes additional steps because prescriptions cannot usually be issued if the partner is not a patient in the system. Some providers have found success in creating a letter in their EMR system that will print a blank prescription without a patient name that can be hand-written for the index patient to give to their partner. Other providers have increased the number of doses and written in the comments section of the electronic prescription, “treatment for patient and partner”; however, if the patient has prescription drug coverage it may not cover a partner’s treatment.

The following tools may help you implement EPT in your clinic:

- [Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) for Chlamydia trachomatis and Neisseria gonorrhoeae: Guidance for Medical Providers in Minnesota](https://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/gonorrhea/guidance_ept.htm), Minnesota Department of Health Guidelines for implementing EPT in your practice, including rationale, dispensing options, and legal guidance specific to Minnesota physicians.
- Legal Status of EPT in Minnesota, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
A CDC clearinghouse of the current legal status of EPT in the United States.

- Best Practices for the Prevention and Early Detection of Repeat Chlamydial and Gonococcal Infections: Effective Partner Treatment and Patient Retesting Strategies, California Department of Public Health
This document outlines current best practices to prevent repeat infections of chlamydia and gonorrhea by focusing on partner management and retesting. The prevention strategies focus heavily on patient retention and the importance of expedited partner therapy.

Creating a Youth-Friendly Clinic Environment
Create an environment that is welcoming to youth from the moment they step in the door. From providing teen-friendly reading material in the waiting area, to establishing a practice-wide policy of spending time with minor patients without a parent present, the following resources will help get you started.

- Youth Health Rights and Responsibilities Poster, Adolescent Health Working Group
An 8.5x11” poster to post in the lobby of your clinic to empower young patients.

- Best Practices for Youth-Friendly Clinical Services, Advocates for Youth
Research-based information for youth-friendly clinical services.

- Teen- and Male-Friendly Clinic Check List, California Department of Public Health
A check-list for clinics to help determine if their clinic is teen- and male-friendly.

- Recommendations for Youth Friendly Clinics, California Family Health Council
Providing descriptions for key areas of youth friendliness plus links to many additional resources.
Sample Office Policies, Protocols and Procedures
The following tools will help you create and implement clinic-level policies, protocols and procedures to improve chlamydia screening in your practice.

- **Tribal HIV/STD Policy Templates** (Policy #6) and **Policy for Syphilis, Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and HIV Screening and Patient and Partner Management within IHS, Tribal and Urban Indian Healthcare Facilities**, Indian Health Service (IHS)
  These documents, created by IHS with assistance from the Office of Minority Health and the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, provide guidelines and templates for use in policy formation.

- **Best Practices for the Prevention and Early Detection of Repeat Chlamydial & Gonococcal Infections**, California Infertility Prevention Project Collaborative
  This document outlines current best practices to prevent repeat infections of chlamydia and gonorrhea by focusing on partner management and retesting. The prevention strategies focus heavily on patient retention and the importance of expedited partner therapy.

- **Why Screen for Chlamydia – An Implementation Guide for Health Care Providers**, Partnership for Prevention with assistance from the National Chlamydia Coalition
  This document provides the latest information and tools for healthcare providers to improve delivery of chlamydia screening to patients. It covers topics such as taking a sexual history, tips on providing services to adolescents and creating a welcome environment for the teen patient.

- **Consent & Confidentiality - Providing Medical and Mental Health Services to Minors in Minnesota: Guidelines for Professionals**, Hennepin County Medical Center Department of Pediatrics
  This document was developed in 2002 to provide a brief review of the laws that guide the provision of health care to minors in the state of Minnesota. The information has not changed and remains accurate. It is intended to:
  - Encourage providers to become knowledgeable about the legal parameters of minor consent,
  - Discuss the legal parameters of confidentiality as they pertain to the care of minors, and
  - Differentiate between the mandated reporting of sexual abuse and the voluntary reporting of sexual assault.
Social Media
Due to the ever increasing influence of social media in our communication, especially with youth and young adults, it is vital that health care providers are knowledgeable about the power of utilizing social media to connect with their patients.

The following documents are guides to using social media to improve the reach of health messages, and to improve health communication efforts.

- [The Health Communicator’s Social Media Kit](https://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/health_communicator_social_media_kit.html), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [CDC’s Guide to Writing for Social Media](https://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/writingguide.htm), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Social Media Pages

- [National Chlamydia Coalition](https://www.chlamydiacoalition.org/) FaceBook page
- [GYT: Get Yourself Tested](https://www.facebook.com/GetYourselfTested) FaceBook page
- [GTF: Get the Facts](https://www.facebook.com/GTFGetTheFacts) FaceBook page
- [Teensource.org](https://www.teensource.org)
- [Minnesota STD Hotline](https://sexualhealthmn.org/) Twitter page

Possible Social Media Messages
Use these messages to jump start your social media campaign:

- **Chlamydia is not a flower....but it is the most frequently reported infectious disease in Minnesota, with nearly 17,000 cases reported in 2011, most of them in females under age 25.** [http://www.mnchlamydiapartnership.org/](http://www.mnchlamydiapartnership.org/)
- **Valentine’s Day may have passed, but it’s never too late to talk to your friends, partners and providers about STDs and the importance of getting tested!** [http://www.itsyoursexlife.com/gyt/talk/party/](http://www.itsyoursexlife.com/gyt/talk/party/)
- **Do you know where your clinic is? Young people can find a sexual health clinic near them by contacting the MN Family Planning and STD Hotline. 1-800-78facts text: 66746** [http://sexualhealthmn.org](http://sexualhealthmn.org)
- **Did you know something as simple as chlamydia screening could reduce the incidence of pelvic inflammatory disease by 60%?**
- **Did you know that most people who have chlamydia don’t know it? Untreated, this sexually transmitted infection can lead to pelvic inflammatory infection, and even infertility.**
- **Sexually transmitted infections can affect anyone. Rates are increasing in the rural and suburban communities as well as the urban areas of Minnesota. To find out more about STIs, check out [http://sexualhealthmn.org](http://sexualhealthmn.org)**
- **April, STD Awareness Month, is right around the corner! Check out the Chlamydia Resource Exchange to download customizable sexual health materials to help get your clinic ready.**
Sharing Best Practices – Profiles of Four Minnesota Clinics
This section profiles quality improvement programs at four clinics in Minnesota whose rates and confidence intervals are performing above the 2011 medical group average on the Chlamydia Screening in Women Ages 16-24 quality measure, as measured by Minnesota Community Measurement (MNCM). These clinics represent a variety of health care settings in a variety of geographic locations. Each clinic has its own unique characteristics yet has implemented system-wide changes to increase chlamydia screening rates.

Table 1: Steps to Improve Chlamydia Screening Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps to Improve Chlamydia Screening Rates</th>
<th>NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center</th>
<th>Allina Health Clinics</th>
<th>Open Cities Medical Center</th>
<th>Western OB/GYN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinic(s) have identified an internal “champion” to lead chlamydia screening improvement efforts.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies and procedures in place for chlamydia screening.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chlamydia screening is seen as a priority in the clinic(s).</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workflows include chlamydia screening setup for all patients ages 16-24.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic medical record aids in identifying patients needing chlamydia screening.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinic(s) have a policy to provide Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT).</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer chlamydia or STD patient education materials to all sexually active females ages 16-24.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center
NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center, formally Pilot City, is a private non-profit health and human services agency serving North Minneapolis residents. NorthPoint has a long history as one of the original community health centers in the country, providing comprehensive health care in a low-income community.

NorthPoint is located in 55411, the zip code with the highest prevalence of chlamydia in the state. The clinic has the second highest chlamydia screening rate in the state, according to the MNCM 2011 Health Care Quality Report. “Screening for chlamydia is part of our culture”, states Dr. Paul Erickson, Medical Director of NorthPoint. Providers at NorthPoint encourage a “Teen Screen” for all adolescents, which includes chlamydia screening if sexually active, every 6 months as part of any appointment (C&TC, Sports Physicals, Family Planning, acute visits, etc.). Because the clinic normalizes the test as being standard practice, it becomes an opt-out screening for sexually active adolescents and young adults.
They also encourage rescreening anyone testing positive 3-6 months later, and provide partner treatment for all partners without an appointment.

“We don’t get a lot of patients opting-out of the chlamydia screening” says Dr. Erickson, although they do see a number of patients who won’t consent to testing if they know an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from their health plan could get sent to their household. NorthPoint has created a confidential appointment modifier in their Electronic Medical Record so that they do not send any mail to the patient, but they cannot control the mailings from the health plans. Dr. Erickson admits they “write off a lot of STD screenings in these situations” where they cannot seek payment through the health plan.

NorthPoint’s electronic health record has chlamydia screening set as part of the health maintenance function so the entire care team can help to identify patients needing to be screened. “We are expanding the tasks of identifying and ordering the needed health maintenance items to our nurses and medical assistants”, states Dr. Erickson. For patients coming in for a urine pregnancy test, a more commonly requested test, they almost always include a chlamydia and gonorrhea test on the urine sample. “If they are at risk for pregnancy, they are at risk for an STI. The urine testing ability has greatly increased our screening prevalence – it is easy now.”

When asked what advice he would give to a clinic seeking to improve their chlamydia screening rate, Dr. Erickson says “to destigmatize the test by describing it to the patient as standard practice” and make chlamydia screening standard practice for all sexually active adolescents and young adults.

Quello Clinic, LTD., now part of Allina Health Clinics
Quello Clinic has five neighborhood primary care clinics located in the Twin Cities southwest metro area. They serve mostly adults for their internal medicine needs, and see a small percentage of adolescents and young adults. Although they do not see a lot of at risk women needing chlamydia screening, they perform well on screening those who do.

Jana Beckering, a Quality Specialist for Allina Health, explains that all Allina Health clinics (Allina Medical Clinics, Aspen Medical Group, and Quello Clinics) follow the same work flows and use the same EMR. Their standard rooming protocol for all adolescents and young adults includes a chlamydia screen, and there is a health maintenance alert in their EMR that fires for all females, ages 16 to 24 years, to screen for chlamydia. They also give a chlamydia brochure to any adolescent or young adult, male or female, who indicate on their health history form that they are sexually active. Jana believes that these standard workflows are a simple step that any clinic can make toward improving chlamydia screening rates.

Additional education is underway with Allina Health providers on the urine chlamydia test, now that Pap protocol has changed and is not indicated for women younger than age 21. Allina Health clinics share the same confidentiality issue that NorthPoint described, and Jana confirmed that a number of patients “decline testing even if they’re sexually active and at risk” because they do not want an EOB sent to their household. Patients can ask to be directly contacted with screening results rather than through a parent.
Jana would like to see providers encouraging more men to be screened, as they can be asymptomatic carriers of the infection.

**Open Cities Health Center**
Open Cities Health Center, formerly Model Cities Health Center, serves the Midway neighborhood in St. Paul with medical, dental and mental health services at two locations. About 30% of their patients are uninsured and pay for health care on a sliding fee scale. Open Cities is one of the top 10 clinics in the state for positive chlamydia screens, and had the state’s third highest screening rate according to the MNCM 2011 Health Care Quality Report.

Dr. Deborah Mielke, Medical Director of Open Cities Health Center, believes that having a standing order for chlamydia screening is what makes them successful on this measure. “Most patients coming in for physicals leave a urine sample prior to seeing the clinician, so the sample is ready for chlamydia testing”, states Dr. Mielke. All patients are offered testing but may opt-out, desensitizing chlamydia screening and making it standard practice for all sexually active adolescents and young adults.

**Western OB/GYN**
Western OB/GYN is an independent practice serving the outer-ring western suburbs with locations in Waconia and Chaska. Western OB/GYN sees women at all stages of life, and ranks in the top ten for Chlamydia Screening in Women, according to MNCM’s 2011 Health Care Quality Report.

Western OB/GYN credits their internal procedures and workflows for their high chlamydia screening rate. It is standard practice to test all sexually active adolescent and young women for chlamydia unless the patient declines – it is built into their electronic medical record template, health history form, and flow sheets. Their advice to other clinics who are trying to improve their screening rate? Build it into your systems so it is automatic and makes chlamydia screening hard to miss.
**Continuing Education Opportunities**

Periodically there will be STD- or chlamydia-specific continuing education courses available locally, online, or through webinars. CMEs may or may not be available. Current educational opportunities will be listed on the [project website](#) for the duration of the project (Jan. 1, 2013 through Dec. 31, 2015).

Occasionally the CDC will offer webinars, self-study modules and online courses relevant to chlamydia screening. CMEs may or may not be available. Visit the CDC’s [Sexually Transmitted Diseases Continuing Education Online](#) for current offerings.
Bibliography


