Role of Disease Intervention Specialist

2018 National Latino HIV/HCV Conference/May 18, 2018

Michelle L. Allen, Infectious Diseases Section Director
We will discuss

• What is a Disease Intervention Specialist?
• Why are they important?
• How do they intervene?
• How do they maintain safety in the field?
What is a Disease Intervention Specialist?
What is a DIS?

• Conduct disease investigations
• Known for being able to locate people
• Act as liaisons to medical providers, jails, hospitals
• Link patients to HIV care
• Participate in community outreach
Skills of a Successful DIS

• Non-judgmental
• Professionalism
• Persistence
• Effective listener
• Assertiveness
• Pay attention to details
• Ability to communicate at the patient’s comprehension level
To **prevent** disease, injury and disability; **promote** health and well being; and **prepare** for and **respond** to disasters.
Why Are They Important?
Why are they important?

Prevent the spread of STDs through treatment of infected patients and preventive treatment for partners exposed to:
  • Syphilis
  • HIV
  • Gonorrhea
  • Chlamydia

Promote healthier sexual behaviors

Respond to STD outbreaks
Chlamydia

Figure 4. Chlamydia — Rates of Reported Cases by County, United States, 2016

Georgia is ranked 5th in US for 2016

https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats16/figures/4.htm
Chlamydia

Figure 4. Chlamydia — Rates of Reported Cases by County, United States, 2015

Georgia is ranked 6th in US for 2015

Gonorrhea

Figure 16. Gonorrhea — Rates of Reported Cases by County, United States, 2016

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**Georgia is ranked 3rd in US for 2016**

https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats16/figures/16.htm
Gonorrhea

Figure 16. Gonorrhea — Rates of Reported Cases by County, United States, 2015

Georgia is ranked 7th in US for 2015

Infectious Syphilis

Figure 33. Primary and Secondary Syphilis — Rates of Reported Cases by County, United States, 2016

Georgia is ranked 4th in US for 2016

https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats16/figures/33.htm
Infectious Syphilis

Figure 35. Primary and Secondary Syphilis — Rates of Reported Cases by County, United States, 2015

Georgia is ranked 2nd in US for 2015

How Do They Intervene?
What is Disease Intervention?

Disease intervention is a process that results in treatment of an exposed or infected person, **interrupting the transmission of disease**, preventing further spread of disease.

**Intervention occurs at two levels:**
- Primary – Prevention
- Secondary - Treatment
Four Methods for Contacting a Patient/Partner

- Face-to-face
- Phone
- Hand-delivered referral letter
- Mailed referral letter
Field Notification

DIS should seek to ensure the person contacted:

• Knows the disease for which he or she is exposed to.
• Knows the info is valid and the risk is real.
• Knows that the info is confidential.
• Knows the medical options available.
• Is motivated to act promptly.
Making Contact
Interviewing

The key to every DIS interview is a professional approach using:

- Rapport building.
- Effective communication.
- Open-ended questions (who, what, when, where, why, how).
- Problem solving.
What Are We Trying to Learn?

**What** - What is the infection(s)?

**Where** - Where has the patient been and currently lives?

**When** - When was the infection acquired?

**Who** - Who infected the patient? Who did the patient infect?

**Why** - Why did the patient get infected?
Interviewing includes

- STD Education
- Assessment the patient’s social & sexual history
- Elicitation of partners or persons that would benefit from testing
- Facilitation of the Behavior Change Model with patients
One on One Interview
Partner Notification

- To help partners gain earlier access to individualized counseling, HIV/STD testing, medical evaluation, treatment and other prevention services.
- To educate female partners about perinatal transmission and give them the opportunity to be tested.
- To educate on reinfection.
Case Study – “The Reverend”

- 65 year-old African-American male, tested at a local hospital, infected with HIV.
- 3 lifetime partners
- HIV is first STD
Field Investigation

Conducted to locate and notify patients of:
  • Positive results
  • Exposure to STD
  • Need for treatment or additional lab work
  • Interview

This includes:
  • Patients with a known positive test
  • Sex partner
  • Person suspected of being at risk for infection
How Do They Maintain Safety in the Field?
Appropriate Attire

- Wear shoes that you can move quickly in.
- Clothing too tight, too loose, too short or too long might impede your stride.
- Avoid wearing articles that are or look valuable.
- Avoid carrying articles that are or look valuable.
- Avoid articles that can be grabbed easily (jewelry, scarves, ties, identification badges, long gold chains, handbags with long straps).
While in Your Vehicle

• **Always keep your doors locked**, even during the day and even in neighborhoods where you feel safe.

• **Always keep your windows rolled up** high enough to prevent someone from reaching into your car.

• **Always keep your seat belt fastened**, not only to protect yourself in case of an accident, but also to keep someone from pulling you out of the car.

• **Be aware of your surroundings** at all times.
Parking the Vehicle

• Park as close to your destination as possible.
• Park in a well-lighted area.
• Park with the vehicle facing the direction you intend to leave.
• Park in the street rather than the driveway, when possible.
• Park with the driver’s side door easily accessible.
• Be cautious of vans when in a parking lot.
While in the Home

• Sit in an area near or with easy access to an exit. Be aware of where you sit, taking care not to sit on sharp or wet items.
• Remain alert and observant of the environment and the behaviors of those present.
• Note any unusual smells, such as gas, electrical, or fire hazards, as well as those which may be associated with the manufacture of substances.
Interacting with an Irate Client

- Remain calm. Be aware of the tone of your voice.
- Keep a safe distance between yourself and the client. Stand to the side of the individual, instead of directly in front of them.
- Remove yourself from the situation as soon as possible if you feel threatened.
- Show respect and sincerity.
- Do not tell the client what to do or how you would handle a situation if you were them.
- Ask for assistance from a Program Manager/Supervisor or law enforcement when needed.
When Leaving the Home

- Leave the area immediately. Do not remain outside the residence or in the vehicle to make phone calls or take notes; these activities should be completed when a safe or familiar destination is reached.

- Always wash your hands or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer after completing a home visit.
Latino Community Outreach
# Current Prevention Programs

## Atlanta Comprehensive HIV Prevention Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td>13 Apr</td>
<td>Mobile Unit Testing - Chamblee</td>
<td>12 - 3</td>
<td>(Jerome) Renato</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 Apr</td>
<td>Emory Woodpec Gym 26 Eagle Row Atlanta 30322</td>
<td>10:00 - 4:30</td>
<td>(Jerome) Damenica, Kerry, Reggie</td>
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<td>21 Apr</td>
<td>Testing &amp; Community Mobilization Austin Plaza @ 4421 Glenwood Rd</td>
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<td>(Jerome) William, Treonda, Reggie w/ HIV Prevention Faith-based Ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 Apr</td>
<td>Ogletorpe Univ - Turner Lynch Ctr 4484 Peachtree Rd Atlanta 30319</td>
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<td>Mobile Unit Testing - Decatur</td>
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<td>Exchange Park &amp; Recreation Ctr</td>
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<td>(Jill) Reggie, Takeila, Treonda</td>
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<td>Commissioner Larry Johnson</td>
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<td>Jerell Shearin 404 - 645 - 1392</td>
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<td>1 June</td>
<td>Mobile Unit Testing - East Atlanta</td>
<td>4 - 7</td>
<td>(Jerome) Reggie, Amanda</td>
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<td>5 June</td>
<td>Long-Term Survivor HIV Awareness</td>
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<td>8 June</td>
<td>Caribbean American HIV Awareness</td>
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<td>9 June</td>
<td>Plaza Fiesta w/ Ventanilla de Salud 4166 Buford Hwy Atlanta 30345</td>
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<td>(Jerome) Renato, Ricardo w/ DPH</td>
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<td>Erika Lopez w/ Ventanilla de Salud</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>27 June - National HIV Testing Day 285 Flea Mart @ 4525 Glenwood Rd</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>All Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 June</td>
<td>Queerity Improvement Show sponsored by CDC @ Emory U Mobile Unit HIV Testing LGBTT</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Kate &amp; Nick @ Emory U Nicholas DeGroote (515) 231 - 6446 <a href="mailto:npdegroote@gmail.com">npdegroote@gmail.com</a></td>
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### Months

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