

June 27, 2019

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) Partner Packs for heterosexual partners of chlamydia and gonorrhea cases

Actions Requested

- **Temporarily discontinue the use of DOH provided partner packs** if used in your practice, and the prescription form used to access pharmacy partner packs (page 3 of the STD Case Report) until further notice
- If partner packs are used in your practice, do not request additional DOH partner packs from DOH until further notice
- **Continue to offer and provide partner management via your normal prescription process; EPT is still considered best practice to prevent patient reinfection**
- **Look for updates** to come on DOH partner packs

For questions, please contact our Communicable Disease staff at 360-728-2235.

Background

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) to treat partners of people diagnosed with chlamydia and gonorrhea is a longstanding part of Washington's strategies to combat rising rates of these infections. We have had an extensive system of partner pack distribution across the state for several years to ensure that EPT reaches everyone in need. The medications the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) distributes as EPT partner packs have been purchased using 340B discount pricing for which DOH is eligible because of the federal STD grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

DOH is currently in the process of a Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) directed audit of the use of EPT as STD treatment and control. **While investigating, they have learned that some methods of distribution may not be allowable under these HRSA 340B regulations; this includes supplying EPT to private medical providers and commercial pharmacies.** Knowing this, DOH cannot continue to distribute EPT purchased via 340B discount pricing program to these facilities until it is clear what is allowed under the regulation. Distribution of DOH provided partner packs to local health jurisdictions and DOH safety net clinical services providers does appear to be allowable and will continue. For Kitsap County, these locations are Kitsap Public Health District and Planned Parenthood Bremerton. **DOH is exploring options and the timeline for this freeze in supplying partner packs to private medical providers and commercial pharmacies is currently unknown.**

We apologize for the disruption to the EPT distribution system and DOH is working to explore alternatives to the current method of supply. Thank you for your continued partnership in STD prevention, treatment, and control.