



Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) Law in Effective June 14, 2016

TO: West Virginia Healthcare Providers, Hospitals and other Healthcare Facilities
FROM: Rahul Gupta, MD, MPH, FACP, Commissioner and State Health Officer, Bureau for Public Health, WVDHHR
DATE: March 24, 2016

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY HEALTH PROVIDERS, HOSPITAL-BASED PHYSICIANS, INFECTION CONTROL PREVENTIONISTS, LABORATORY DIRECTORS, AND OTHER APPLICABLE PARTNERS

OTHER RECIPIENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ASSOCIATION MEMBERS, STAFF, ETC.

Definitions:

On February 25, 2016, Governor Earl Ray Tomblin signed Senate Bill 123 into law, allowing Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) in West Virginia. EPT is the clinical practice of treating the sexual partners of patients diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea by providing a prescription or dispensing medications to the patient to take to his/her partner without the healthcare provider first examining the partner. The purpose of EPT is to decrease the rate of reinfection and transmission to other partners and is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Liability:

EPT is not a mandate; but is available to healthcare providers who provide expedited partner therapy in good faith without fee or compensation. Physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners and pharmacists are not subject to civil or professional liability in connection with the provision of the therapy, counseling and materials, except in the case of gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct. A healthcare professional is not subject to civil or professional liability for choosing not to provide EPT.

A healthcare professional who provides EPT shall provide counseling for the patient, including advice that all women and symptomatic persons, and in particular women with symptoms suggestive of pelvic inflammatory disease, are encouraged to seek medical attention. The healthcare professional shall also provide in written or electronic format, materials provided by the WVDHHR to be given by the patient to his or her sexual partner and advise to notify the partner of medication contraindications including allergies or medications that could interact with the recommended treatment.

Resources/Questions:

You may find additional material regarding EPT on the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/std/treatment/EPTFinalReport2006. Additional information on treatment guidelines for STDs is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6403a1.htm>. For questions regarding EPT in West Virginia, please visit the Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services website at www.dhhr.wv.gov/oeps/std-hiv-hep/Pages/ or call the Division of STD, HIV and Hepatitis at 1 (800) 642-8244.

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health to local health departments and professional associations. Receiving entities are responsible for further disseminating the information as appropriate to the target audience.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance. Warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation. May not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation. Unlikely to require immediate action.