

Texas Department of State Health Services Announces Changes to HIV/STD Reporting Requirements for 2010

The coming new year brings several changes to HIV/STD reporting rules for healthcare providers and laboratories serving Texas.

Effective January 1, 2010, Texas healthcare providers must report all primary and secondary syphilis diagnoses by telephone within one working day of diagnosis. In addition, all public health, hospital and commercial laboratories serving Texas will be required to report the following information:

- All CD4 T-lymphocyte (CD4) counts for adults and adolescents over the age of 12
- All HIV viral loads (both detectable and undetectable)
- Positive and negative HIV DNA or RNA virologic test results for infants up to 3 years of age
- Positive and negative confirmatory syphilis test results within 3 working days
- HIV genotype resistance results (FASTA files)

The new rules also allow use of a Texas-specific HIV/AIDS case report form and clarify that point-of-care HIV tests (HIV rapid tests) are reportable. These rule changes will help increase the number of STD cases identified, facilitate early public health intervention to control the spread of STDs and improve medical care for HIV-infected patients.

Healthcare providers and laboratories not using electronic reporting should report to their designated local health authority. In most areas of the state, this is the local or regional health department. In addition, hospital-based laboratories are now required to report test results directly to their local health authority and cannot report results via a delegate, such as an infection control officer.

Laboratories reporting electronically should report to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) central office in Austin. Although paper laboratory results will continue to be accepted, electronic laboratory reporting is encouraged as a way to reduce the burden associated with reporting and improve the timeliness of reporting.

Call your local or regional health department to obtain reporting forms or ask questions about reporting. HIV/STD reporting information is also available at www.dshs.state.tx.us/hivstd/healthcare/reporting.shtm. The text of the revised Texas Administrative Code, Chapters 97.131-97.134 can be viewed at www.dshs.state.tx.us/hivstd/policy/TAC_Ch97_SubF.pdf.

If you have questions about the reporting rule changes, contact Nicole Hawkins, DSHS Epidemiologist at 512-533-3043. To learn more about electronic laboratory reporting, contact Jennifer Chase, DSHS Epidemiologist at 512-533-3046.