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Georgia Southern Examines STD Services Delivery Arrangements in Georgia County Health Departments

June 7, 2017



Uniformity, standardization, and evidence-based public health practice are needed to improve the efficiency and quality of services in local health departments (LHDs). Among the highest priorities and most common public health services delivered by LHDs are services related to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The purpose of this study was to examine potential variations in the delivery of sexually transmitted disease (STD) services among county health departments (CHD) in Georgia, to determine if potential variations were due to varied administrative practices, and to understand delivery arrangements so that future cost studies can be supported.

Web-based surveys were collected from 134 county health departments in Georgia in 2015. Screening for gonorrhea, chlamydia and syphilis occurred in all the surveyed CHDs. Sixty-eight percent of the CHDs had one or more staff who performed investigations for persons already screened positive for STDs. Partner notification services provided by the CHD staff occurred in only 35 percent of the surveyed CHDs.

Variances regarding diagnostic methodologies, work time expenditures, and staff responsibilities likely had an influence on the delivery of STD services across Georgia's CHDs. There are opportunities for uniformity and standardization of administrative practices.

[“STD Services Delivery Arrangements in Georgia County Health Departments,”](#) was recently published in the Journal of the Georgia Public Health Association.

Dr. Karmen S. Williams, alumni, was the lead author and Dr. Gulzar Shah, Associate Dean for Research, and Ms. Angie Peden, Assistant Director for the Center for Public Health Practice and Research at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health were co-authors.

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