NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Nirav R. Shah, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Thomas A. Farley, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

March 2011

Dear Colleague,

In 2009, Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) was signed into law in New York State (NYS). Article 2312 of the NYS Public Health Law permits health care providers (i.e. physicians, midwives, nurse practitioners and physician assistants) to provide *Chlamydia trachomatis* (Ct) patients with antibiotics or a written prescription for antibiotics to deliver to his or her sexual partner(s) without prior clinical assessment of those partners. This law is intended to decrease the morbidity caused by Ct infection and re-infection. It does so by enabling timely treatment of Ct within partner networks.

Ct is a leading cause of tubal infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), infertility and ectopic pregnancy. In 2009, over 92,000 Ct cases were reported in NYS. Untreated partners are an important source of re-infection, and each re-infection increases the risk of negative reproductive health outcomes. EPT has been shown to reduce Ct re-infection, and augments provider options for managing the care of partners of Ct patients.

In NYS, the use of EPT is limited to Ct infection only. The recommended EPT treatment for Ct is **1g of azithromycin in a single oral dose**. Other key provisions of the law are listed below:

- EPT should not be provided to Ct patients concurrently infected with gonorrhea or syphilis.
- EPT use is *not* recommended for treating men who have sex with men due to a high risk of HIV co-morbidity in partners.
- EPT prescriptions must include the phrase: "EPT" in the body of the prescription. Prescriptions can be provided to patients without name, address or date of birth of the sex partner; the written designation of "EPT" shall be sufficient for the pharmacist to fill the prescription. If needed, pharmacists can obtain the demographic information at the time of prescription drop-off or pick up.
- **Health care providers or pharmacists who dispense EPT in accordance with this law shall not be subject to liability or be deemed to have engaged in unprofessional conduct.**
- EPT issued as medication or as a prescription to the original patient must be accompanied by written materials for patients and partners, addressing possible side effects and contraindications to EPT medication.

For these written materials and other resources available to health care providers and pharmacists, please visit the NYS Department of Health web site (health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/std/) or the New York City Health Department website (nyc.gov/html/doh/html/std/ept.shtml). Questions may be sent to the NYS Department of Health at ept@health.state.ny.us or the New York City Health Department at ept@health.nyc.gov.

We look forward to working with you during the implementation of EPT in NYS. Thank you for your efforts to help ensure treatment of persons infected with Ct, and to decrease the spread of Ct in NYS.

Sincerely,

Nirav R. Shah

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