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October 17, 2019

Dear Colleague,

With full support of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Department of Public Health's Division of HIV and STD Programs (DHSP) is continuing its public health education campaign to increase provider awareness of congenital syphilis and rising rates of syphilis in women.

- Increases in **female syphilis** cases has led to a dramatic and steady **increase in congenital syphilis** cases in LA County with a total 44 cases in 2017, 54 cases in 2018, and 53 cases to date in 2019.
- Congenital syphilis is a *preventable* condition that results from untreated syphilis during pregnancy, with potentially severe consequences for infected infants.

This **Syphilis in Women Action Toolkit** includes clinical resources for your practice and educational materials for your patients. The kit is structured around these *four* core syphilis prevention practices for women:

1. **Take a thorough sexual history** from all patients as part of routine medical care.
2. **Screen all women of reproductive age** (15-44 years) for syphilis at least once.
3. **Screen all pregnant women** for syphilis during the first trimester or at their initial prenatal visit. **Re-screen pregnant women** for syphilis early in the third trimester (28-32 weeks) **and** at delivery.
4. **Stage syphilis correctly in order to treat correctly.** Assess for signs and symptoms of syphilis in last 12 months to determine if early or late syphilis.

For help interpreting test results and guidance on appropriate staging and timely treatment, call the Clinical Guidance & Nursing Unit consultation line at 213-368-7441 Monday to Friday from 8:00 AM-5:00 PM .

We look forward to partnering with you to reinforce these important syphilis prevention strategies.

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