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# WISCONSIN PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCIL

*Assure safe and healthy people by monitoring progress on the state health plan, Healthiest Wisconsin 2010, and on the readiness for public health emergencies.*

## **RESOLUTION: February 12, 2010**

In the interests of meeting the goals of Healthiest Wisconsin 2010, the state health plan, for reducing sexually transmitted diseases acquired through high-risk sexual behaviors, the Public Health Council submits this resolution to the Governor and to the Legislature:

**Whereas**, there are more sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) reported than all other reportable communicable diseases combined in Wisconsin; and

**Whereas**, over 30,000 cases of STDs were reported in Wisconsin in 2008. These are the reported numbers. CDC estimates that approximately half of new Chlamydia and gonorrhea infections occurring each year remain undiagnosed and unreported; and

**Whereas**, approximately 47% of Chlamydia cases and 67% of gonorrhea cases in 2008 were from Milwaukee County; and

**Whereas**, Milwaukee ranked 2nd highest for rates of both chlamydia and gonorrhea in 2006 and 2007 of the 50 largest metropolitan areas in the U.S. which include Chicago, Minneapolis, and Detroit; and

**Whereas**, adolescents are disproportionately impacted by STDs. In Milwaukee, among adolescents 15-19 years of age, 1 in 18 were reported with a Chlamydia infection and 1 in 50 with gonorrhea in 2008 alone; and

**Whereas**, STDs disproportionately impact communities of color and the rate of reported STDs among black adolescents 15-19 years of age is eighteen times that of whites in Wisconsin; and

**Whereas**, chlamydia infections and gonorrhea are often asymptomatic, and undiagnosed and untreated STDs cause at least 24,000 women in the U.S. each year to become infertile; and

**Whereas**, effectively treating a patient with an STD requires treatment of the patient's current sex partners to prevent re-infection; and

**Whereas**, expedited partner therapy (EPT) is a treatment option for partners of a patient diagnosed with STDs without a medical evaluation of the partner, and allows the patient to deliver oral medication or prescriptions to his or her sexual partner; and

**Whereas**, a study conducted in King County, Washington, found EPT was more effective in preventing re-infection of gonorrhea (by 73%) and chlamydia (by 15%) when compared to standard partner management methods; and

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**Whereas**, the Public Health Council recognizes that EPT is a safe and effective option for STD care among individuals with chlamydia, gonorrhea and trichomoniasis infections who are unlikely or unable to otherwise receive treatment such as those who are uninsured, unavailable to seek treatment during clinic hours, or too embarrassed to seek treatment;

**Now, be it resolved** that Wisconsin should permit EPT for treating partners of individuals with chlamydia, gonorrhea, and trichomoniasis infections as proposed in 2009 Assembly Bill 653 and 2009 Senate Bill 460 though explicitly allowing medical providers including physicians, physician assistants, and certified nurse prescribers to dispense medication or prescribe EPT and pharmacists to dispense medication for EPT for chlamydia, gonorrhea and trichomoniasis.