



April 26, 2023

Dear Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Colleagues:

As sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including the recent mpox outbreak, continue to have a disproportionate impact on people with HIV, the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) HIV/AIDS Bureau's (HAB) Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) plays a critical role in addressing STIs for people with HIV. This includes access to treatment for STIs through RWHAP AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) formularies.

ADAPs ensure that eligible people with HIV can access medications that improve individual health outcomes and reduce HIV transmission. Similarly, affordable access to STI treatment decreases the potential for STI transmission. While many ADAP formularies may already provide access to medications used to treat STIs, ADAPs are encouraged to review their formulary to ensure that all preferred and second line medications recommended in the STI treatment guidelines are included, especially in jurisdictions with higher STI prevalence.

The [2022-2025 National HIV/AIDS Strategy \(NHAS\)](#)¹ identifies HIV and STIs as syndemic conditions that adversely interact with each other and contribute to a greater impact of disease and ongoing health disparities and inequities. Rates of STIs are higher among people with HIV than people without HIV, and people with HIV who have one or more STI are more likely to transmit HIV to a partner. Furthermore, people without HIV with one or more STIs are more likely to contract HIV.² Overall, STI rates have increased across the U.S. since 2017, posing an alarming risk both for people with HIV and for new HIV infections,³ especially impacting NHAS priority populations including communities of color, men who have sex with men (MSM), heterosexual women, and youth.⁴

Per the RWHAP statute, RWHAP recipients and subrecipients are required to follow the federally approved HIV clinical practice guidelines, including the [Guidelines for the Prevention and Treatment of Opportunistic Infections in Adults and Adolescents with HIV](#), which cover the treatment of STIs. In addition, the [2021 STI Treatment Guidelines](#)⁵ from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) include updated treatment recommendations and expanded risk factor-based testing for select STIs. When implemented as recommended, the revised guidelines can reduce barriers to STI treatment, decrease transmission rates, and improve cure rates.

¹ [National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States 2022-2025](#)

² [Sexually transmitted infections and HIV in the era of antiretroviral treatment and prevention: the biologic basis for epidemiologic synergy.](#)

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/std/hiv/stdfact-std-hiv-detailed.htm>

⁴ [National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States 2022-2025](#)

⁵ [CDC Releases 2021 STI Treatment Guidelines](#)

During the recent mpox outbreak, the infection was primarily spread through sexual contact. Although an effective response that included vaccination has led to a decrease in new cases and the expiration of the mpox public health emergency,⁶ low-level mpox transmission is still occurring and could lead to another outbreak, especially among individuals engaging in sex while attending large community gatherings. Therefore, it is important to remain aware of current mpox vaccination and testing recommendations, particularly for people with HIV who are immunocompromised, as they are more likely to have severe mpox disease. New resources are now available on the CDC's website about how individuals [can stay healthy throughout the summer](#).⁷ Please also visit the [HRSA HAB mpox webpage](#)⁸ for more information, including how RWHAP services can support mpox vaccination.

Please contact your HRSA HAB project officer if you have questions. Thank you for working with us to support the health and safety of people with HIV.

Sincerely,

/Laura W. Cheever/

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⁶ [Statement From HHS Secretary Becerra on mpox](#)

⁷ <https://www.cdc.gov/lgbthealth/summer/index.html>

⁸ <https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/resources/mpox>