

Sexual Health Services in Jails Webinar

FAQ Answers

1

When these sexual health services are being provided in jails, where does the funding come from?

A few of the sites receive funding from general state funds or a grant from their state health department. Other sites are funded by NACCHO in partnership with the CDC's Division of STD Prevention.

2

What does the process for continuation of care look like after an individual is released from jail?

Recently released individuals with syphilis or other STIs are usually directed to their local health department for future care. For individuals with HIV, they can be referred to a Ryan White clinic or directed to other non-profit organizations in the community that provide HIV services. Sites also expressed that incarcerated individuals may have their care coordinated before they leave the jail. For example, Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) can make plans to contact the individual after release and connect them with a clinic, or a card with resources and contact information can be placed with the individual's belongings for them to take home upon release.

3

What types of support are provided to individuals to help them receive the appropriate treatment after release?

Sites have several supportive resources for individuals to use towards getting treatment for their STIs. A couple of sites offer transportation services for the individuals to use after they are released. Financial supports are used as well, with sites mentioning gift cards and pharmacy vouchers so that individuals can refill their medication if they were not able to complete the treatment while residing in the jail. For more hands-on support in getting treatment, one site offered case management, medical care, substance abuse support, housing support, and other services to those with HIV. DIS are also available to contact the individuals after release to provide a field-delivered therapy visit.

How does the Bicillin shortage affect the treatment plan/treatment options for people with syphilis?

4

Sites largely agreed that they had to switch to an alternative treatment, Doxycycline, and that this change negatively impacted the incarcerated individuals. Sites pointed out that with Doxycycline, the patients are more likely to struggle with compliance because of the longer course of treatment and that some people either refused the medication or were lost to follow up after release. Bicillin was prioritized for females and pregnant females at one site, and fortunately a couple of sites do not currently feel as though they are struggling to access Bicillin.

5

What kind of syphilis tests are used?

For quick results, the sites mentioned using the Chembio DPP HIV/Syphilis test and the Syphilis Health Check test. Positive results of a rapid test were followed up by confirmatory blood draws.

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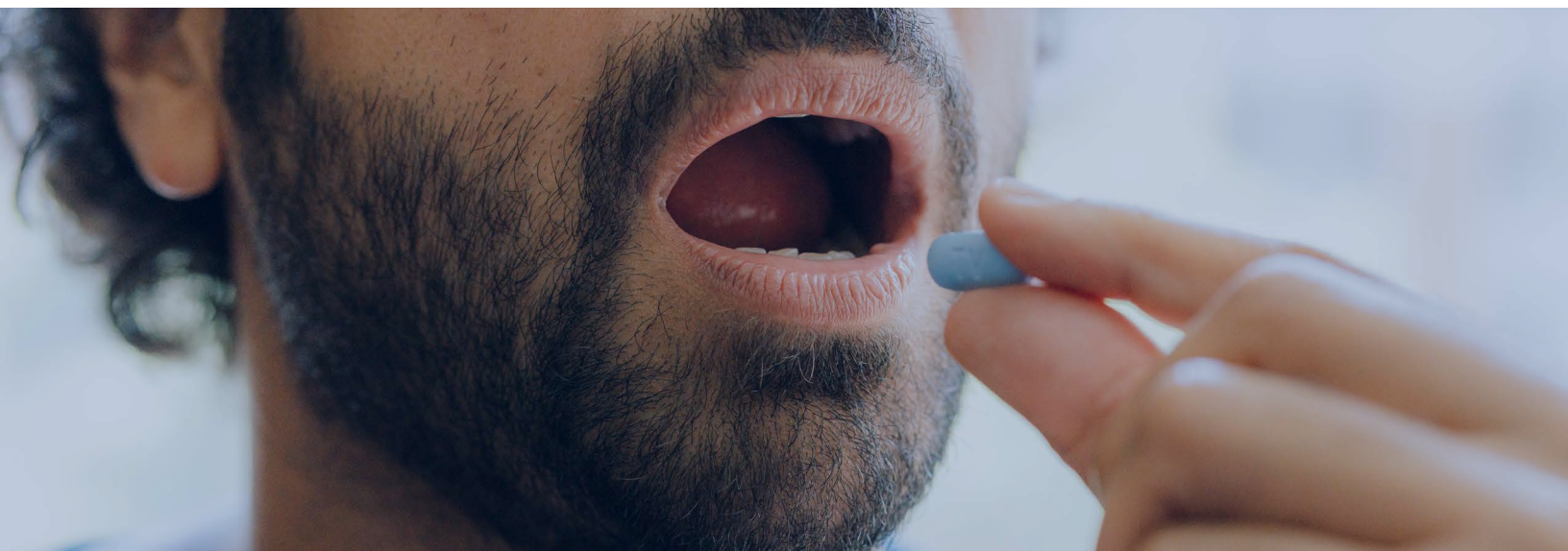
What is the timeline for receiving lab results back for STI tests?

For STI tests, most of the sites reported receiving lab results within a range of 2 to 10 days.

7

What kinds of staff are testing the individuals in jail? How many people are doing the testing, and how frequently do they visit the jail?

One site has 2 DIS visiting the jail for 4 half days per week. A few sites mentioned their testers being nurses; one site had nurses who provide weekly testing in the jail, while another site had a team of three registered nurses who go to the jail 3 times per week. Specially trained health advisors and health educators also contribute their services to get people tested.



How do public health staff interact with the jail staff and coordinate activities with them?

8

When public health staff are working to provide sexual health services in the jails, they interact quite frequently with the jail staff. Sites stress that a good working relationship between public health staff and jail staff is crucial, and that good communication can be the key. Some best practices include having a standing meeting with all relevant staff, being transparent with any data being collected, gathering support from the jail leadership before implementing any new changes in protocol, and trying to maintain a consistent work force so that over time people may become project champions.

How do you engage the necessary stakeholders such as the jail staff, public health staff, public policy officials, legal entities, partnering health organizations, etc?

9

To make sure all stakeholders are properly engaged, sites have held regular meetings to plan activities in advance, collaborate to find solutions to problems that arise, and align perspectives. Clear, concise, and ongoing communication has proven to help reduce the burden on jail and medical staff. It is also important for stakeholders to understand the perspective of the jails; they are not traditionally considered preventative care organizations and they may be focused on financial aspects, so it can help to present these sexual health services in terms of the cost savings to the jail and the community benefits of testing and treating for STIs.

