

U.S. Health Department Releases First-Ever STI Federal Implementation Plan

The new plan outlines federal actions to reduce the burden of sexually transmitted infections in the United States through 2025.

June 16, 2023 By Department of Health and Human Services

[On June 8, 2023], the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released the [STI Federal Implementation Plan](#) to detail how various agencies and departments across the federal government are taking a comprehensive approach to making meaningful and substantive progress in improving public health. This new plan builds on other key HHS actions to protect the public's health by addressing the growing threat of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in America.

STIs have risen dramatically between 2020–2021, with more than 2.5 million cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis reported in the United States. In 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported:

- A 4.1 percent increase in chlamydia infections from 2020, with 1.6 million cases in 2021.
- More than 700,000 cases of gonorrhea, which increased 28 percent since 2017.
- A 74 percent increase in all stages of syphilis since 2017, with 176,000 cases in 2021.
- Congenital syphilis increased 203 percent in the last five years.

When left untreated, STIs can lead to long-term, irreversible health issues, such as chronic pelvic pain, infertility, and in some cases, cancer. STIs can also increase a person's risk of getting or transmitting HIV. The rising rates of STIs profoundly impact millions of Americans.

"The data we are seeing across the country calls for immediate and sustained action," said Admiral Rachel Levine, MD, Assistant Secretary for Health. "We know that the impact of the STI epidemic does not fall equally across all populations, and we're going to keep pushing to ensure every person has access to high-quality services that are free from stigma and discrimination."

The STI Federal Implementation Plan highlights more than 200 actions that federal stakeholders will take to achieve its five goals:

Goal 1: Prevent New STIs

Goal 2: Improve the Health of People by Reducing Adverse Outcomes of STIs

Goal 3: Accelerate Progress in STI Research, Technology, and Innovation

Goal 4: Reduce STI-Related Health Disparities and Health Inequities

Goal 5: Achieve Integrated, Coordinated Efforts That Address the STI Epidemic

“These goals are meant to focus federal efforts on innovative and effective solutions to combat STIs, including expanding access to clinical care and developing new vaccines, point-of-care diagnostic tools, and therapeutics,” said Kaye Hayes, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Infectious Disease and the Director of Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy (OIDP). “With the publication of the first-ever STI Federal Implementation Plan, these efforts serve as a call to action for collaboration across sectors in a coordinated national response to STIs.”

With the release of the STI Federal Implementation Plan, HHS will continue to build on the work laid out in the STI National Strategic Plan. Through coordinated efforts, HHS will work with communities who are underserved and disproportionately affected to prevent STIs and improve access to care, while also advancing health equity. HHS will also measure targets on indicators to track progress through 2030.

Read the [STI Federal Implementation Plan](#).

Read the [STI National Strategic Plan](#).

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