

Positive Lab Results Requiring Treatment Guidance for Follow-up of STDs/STIs

Local health departments must have a policy and procedure which clearly define the process for follow-up of positive STD lab results. The process should include at least three methods (e.g. telephone call, written notice(s), home visit, etc.) for assuring a client is notified regarding the need for treatment. If the follow-up efforts do not result in treatment of the STD, document the attempts in the medical record and in NC EDSS. This process can be described in the agency's Communicable Disease Investigation and Reporting Policy and Procedure.

The follow-up process with private providers regarding treatment of reportable sexually transmitted infections should also be reflected in policy and procedure. A generic letter signed by the health director may be utilized. The letter may be one of at least three attempts to obtain required lab and/or treatment information. If the necessary information is unattainable, submit the event to the State Registrar for closure. Please note on the NC EDSS event dashboard, "No response from MD or client. Unable to complete investigation. Closed to follow-up in accordance with agency policy and procedure."

The process for giving any test result over the phone should assure confidentiality by requiring unique identifiers to verify the caller. Date of birth and social security number are unlikely to sufficiently confirm the caller's identity because this information may be known by others.