

STI Express Clinic Guidance Document

Overview of STI Express Clinic

Local Health Departments (LHDs) have the option to implement Express STI Clinic Services to support recommended standards of STI care and efficient clinic flow. Integrating an Express STI Clinic model with the standard STI Clinic services can better utilize nursing staff and allow for increased appointment capacity in STI clinics. **Express STI clinics are intended only for asymptomatic clients who request STI screening, and do not take the place of or remove the need for standard STI Clinic services.** Symptomatic clients or high-risk clients should be routed to standard STI Clinic services.

Express STI Clinic services must include an eligibility component to route clients to appropriate services. Basic Express clinic services should include a brief history, an overview of the screening tests offered, instructions on collection of specimens, and education regarding how test results will be shared and how any necessary follow-up will occur.

The LHD can determine whether Express STI Clinic Services are by appointment, on a walk-in basis, or both. This will depend on availability of staff and resources to support Express STI services. The LHD may also decide how to staff the Express Clinic. Appropriate staff for Express STI Clinic services can include STD ERRNs, RNs, and LPNs. If using LPNs the LHD must ensure appropriate supervision by a RN. The LHD must ensure Express STI Clinic staff are appropriately oriented and trained prior to working in the clinic. If the LHD chooses to use non-clinical staff to conduct Express STI visits, the agency must determine processes for billing/coding, documentation, oversight by a provider, and ordering labs.

Express STI Clinic Policies and Standing Orders

Local Health Departments must implement a policy regarding Express STI Clinic Services AND have appropriate Laboratory Standing Orders for the Express STI Clinic.

The Express STI policy should address the following (but can include other elements):

- a) Purpose of the Express clinic
- b) Services offered via Express, as well as excluded services
- c) Client eligibility for Express clinic
- d) How appointments are scheduled or how walk-ins are managed
- e) Staffing of Express Clinic, to include orientation and training requirements
- f) Education to be provided to clients during Express visit
- g) Documentation of the Express visit
- h) Process for follow-up of abnormal results
- i) Process for how clients will be informed of results

The Standing Orders for Express STI Clinic must include all required elements per the NCBON

- a) Condition or situation in which the standing order will be used
- b) Assessment criteria

- c) Subjective findings
- d) Objective findings
- e) Plan of Care to include medical treatment, nursing actions, and follow-up requirements
- f) Criteria requiring consult from a physician or Advanced Practice Provider
- g) Date written or last reviewed
- h) Signature of provider

Eligibility Process for Express STI Clinic

Clients should be screened for eligibility for Express STI services. The eligibility process will depend on several factors: if services are appointment or walk-in; Express STI clinic staffing; if eligibility tool is a written tool completed by client; if eligibility tool is completed verbally during interview of client by staff, etc. Each agency must determine how to implement the eligibility process. However, there are basic elements that should be assessed:

- 1) Are you currently experiencing any discharge from your vagina / penis, or rectum?
- 2) Are you experiencing any burning upon urination?
- 3) Do you currently have any bumps, sores, lesions, or rash?
- 4) Are you experiencing any pain in your abdomen, genital area or rectum?
- 5) Have you been told you need treatment as a contact for an STI by a partner, DIS, or healthcare provider?

If client answers yes to any of these questions, the client must be routed through the regular clinic for a full exam

Documentation of Express STI Clinic Visit

Each agency may determine how best to document the Express STI visit. The eligibility tool may be included as part of the standard Express STI visit documentation. Use the NCDHHS 2808 Express Form to ensure the required elements of the visit are addressed and documented. The following elements must be included in the documentation:

- 1) Patient allergy and medication history
- 2) Reason for Visit: *reason for visit should be "STD Screen (Asymptomatic)"*
- 3) Prior STD/STI & Date of Diagnosis
- 4) Prior HIV Testing and Hepatitis B and C Status
- 5) Sexual Risk Assessment
- 6) For women (if applicable)
- 7) Lab orders
- 8) Counseling, education, and follow-up instructions

Screening tests and labs in Express STI Clinic

Recommended screening for clients in Express STI clinics includes:

- Gonorrhea and Chlamydia NAAT for each site of exposure (vagina, male urethra, rectum, oropharynx)

- HIV and Syphilis blood work for all clients
- Hepatitis B and C blood work for clients who meet criteria

NAAT specimens for gonorrhea and chlamydia screening should be self-collected by the client. The best practice for genital collection is to use vaginal NAAT for females and urine NAAT for males. The Express STI clinic staff member should provide instructions to clients on self-collection of these specimens. Self-collection instructions should be included in the lab standing orders for the NAATs (see template lab standing order in the STI Manual).

Education and follow-up for Express STI Clinic Clients

All Express STI Clinic clients should receive client-centered education and counseling regarding STIs, risk reduction, and contraception (as applicable). Offer condoms to all clients. Review the tests provided with the client, discuss the timetable for results, and review the process for the client to receive results. Educate clients on expected follow-up if any test result is abnormal.