

Letter to the Editor

Letter to the Editor in response to “STD services delivery arrangements in Georgia county health departments”

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We were pleased to see an article focused on STD services in Georgia, and would like to provide some clarification. In Georgia’s hybrid system, the state and local governments share supervision and administrative responsibilities. Although each district organizes their STD services differently, the county health departments are usually responsible for testing, treating, and performing risk counseling and possible partner notification for their own patients. The district staff generally perform partner notification and treatment verification for non-public health patients, with a focus mainly on syphilis and pregnant females and youths with chlamydia and gonorrhea. District

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and state program staff may establish partnerships, such as testing and outreach programs with colleges, universities and community-based organizations. Finally, the state program staff provide standards for STD services. The authors’ conclusion that partnerships are lacking, that standards vary, and that treatment verification and partner notification are incomplete may stem from a misunderstanding of how STD services are organized in Georgia. The Georgia Department of Public Health would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with the authors.