

PUBLIC HEALTH CONNECTION

A quarterly newsletter from the Clinton County Health Department

EVALI UPDATES

E-cigarette and Vaping product use-Associated Lung Injury (EVALI) is a recent topic of concern. Local cases are reportable to the Upstate NY Poison Control Center, however, CCHD is aware of at least two cases in Clinton County. The CDC identified vitamin E acetate as a chemical of concern among people with EVALI. THC is present in most of the samples tested by FDA to date, and most patients report a history of using THC-containing products. The latest national and state findings suggest THC-containing e-cigarette, or vaping, products, primarily from informal sources like friends, family, or in-person or online dealers, are linked to most of the cases and play a major role in the outbreak. While it appears that vitamin E acetate is associated with EVALI, there are many different substances and product sources that are being investigated, and there may be more than one cause. The best way for people to ensure they are not at risk while the investigation continues is to refrain from the use of all e-cigarette, or vaping, products.

Providers are advised to ask patients specifically about vaping, not just smoking, and advise quitting. Encourage adults using e-cigarettes or vaping products as an alternative to cigarettes to consider utilizing FDA-approved cessation medications instead of returning to cigarette use. Offer a referral for cessation counseling to all patients who use these products, including youth. All cases of suspected EVALI should be reported to the Upstate NY Poison Control Center at **1-800-222-1222**.

For more information, visit <https://on.ny.gov/360l0k7>.

Additional resources are available at www.scholastic.com/youthvapingrisks and www.lung.org/stop-smoking/vape-talk/.

EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY (EPT)

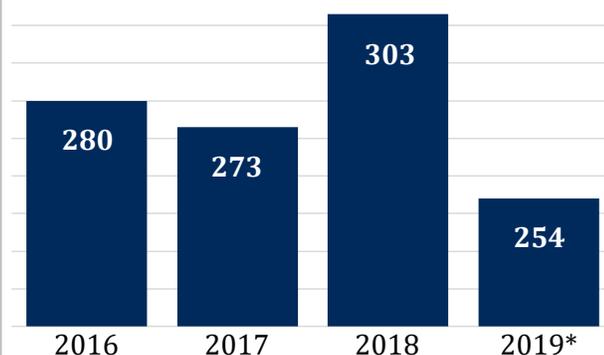
Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) allows health care providers to provide a patient with either antibiotics or a written prescription, intended to treat the patient's sex partner(s), without the partner having to be seen directly by the provider. This practice is an effective and recommended strategy to decrease rates of sexually transmitted infection in a population. In NYS, EPT is only allowable to treat chlamydia. EPT *cannot* be used with sex partners of patients co-infected with gonorrhea, syphilis, and/or HIV.

When writing a prescription for azithromycin via EPT:

- (1) Write "EPT" in the body of the prescription form above the name of the medication and dosage.
- (2) If available, write the sexual partner's name, address, and date of birth in the designated areas of the prescription.
- (3) If the sexual partner's name, address, and/ or date of birth are not available, the written designation of "EPT" shall be sufficient for pharmacists to fill the prescription.
- (4) Separate prescriptions must be provided for each eligible sex partner. Prescribing multiple doses on one prescription, intended for more than one person is illegal.

In Clinton County, the number of diagnosed chlamydia cases has decreased in 2019 as compared to 2018; however, chlamydia continues to be the most frequently diagnosed communicable disease in Clinton County.

Chlamydia cases by number, Clinton County



**As of December 16, 2019; incomplete year.*

Effective use of EPT is an evidence based practice supported by CCHD to decrease the spread of infection in our population. For more information, visit <https://on.ny.gov/38SXNiL>.

ANTIBIOTIC PRESCRIBING RECOMMENDATIONS

Antibiotic resistance is one of the most urgent threats to the public's health. Appropriate use of antibiotics is key, especially during winter months when seasonal viruses are more prevalent. The CDC has detailed recommendations for appropriate antibiotic prescribing for adults seeking care in an outpatient setting, available at <https://bit.ly/390KMDM>.

THE 2019-21 COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN IS NOW AVAILABLE!

CCHD and CVPH, along with the help and insight of many community partners, have completed the 2019-2021 Community Health [Needs] Assessment, culminating in the development of a new Community Health Improvement Plan (or Implementation Strategy).

After the year-long process, Clinton County health partners have selected *Prevent Chronic Diseases* and *Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders* as areas most imperative for Clinton County to address as a community over the next three years to improve health. It was also determined that the ability to afford health services and practice healthy behaviors continues to greatly influence health equity of Clinton County residents.

The selected priority areas reflect continued commitment to the priorities selected in the 2016 assessment process. The new health improvement plan contains five work plans detailing activities aimed at addressing the priority areas over the next three years. The plans feature the work of a variety of partners. View the complete documents at <https://bit.ly/2soBlrL>.

NEW PATIENT RESOURCE: BUPRENORPHINE BRIDGE CLINIC

The Buprenorphine Bridge Clinic at the Alliance for Positive Health had a “soft” opening in early November 2019. This program aims to help individuals struggling with opioid dependency. The goal of this program is to get patients stable on Buprenorphine and into other participating providers for long-term maintenance, allowing patients to stop using opioids and street-acquired Suboxone. A limited number of patients can be seen at this time, but Harm Reduction Specialist Carrie Coryer is working to bridge the gap with medical providers who can prescribe Buprenorphine.

Mary Prybylowski, PA, is prescribing in the clinic and Lia Broderick, RN, is assisting her with all medical needs. Office hours are Monday and Wednesday from 5-8pm, by appointment only. If you know someone who could benefit from this service, please call Carrie at **563-2437 ext. 3426**.

Alliance for Positive Health is dedicated to treating patients with respect and allowing the patient to be open and honest while helping them to become stronger and healthier for themselves and our community.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS (CSHCN) PROGRAM

Children with Special Health Care Needs, a NYS-funded Public Health Program offered by CCHD, is designed to improve the system of care for children with special health care needs and their families. A registered nurse provides short-term case management to help families acquire community resources and referrals based on their individual needs. The nurse also offers support, guidance, education and teaching about the child’s illness or disability. Any child from birth to age 21 years living in Clinton County who has, or is suspected of having, a physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional problem is eligible.

Concerns prompting referrals in Clinton County in 2019 have most commonly involved neonatal abstinence syndrome, prematurity, failure to thrive or birth anomalies. Program staff have helped families to establish health insurance; provided growth and developmental assessments; completed weight checks after hospital discharge; coordinated referrals to the Early Intervention Program and other needed community programs; and, offered education related to a child’s medical diagnoses.

To make a referral to this or other family or child programs at CCHD, call Health Care Services at **518-565-4848** or visit www.clintonhealth.org/specialneeds.

PATIENT RESOURCE: ASTHMA MANAGEMENT

The winter months may be difficult for some patients with asthma to navigate, as cold, dry air and circulating upper respiratory infections can trigger or worsen asthma attacks. Patients struggling with asthma care and management may benefit from a visit with CCHD’s **Healthy Neighborhoods Program (HNP)**.

HNP is a grant-funded program designed to help improve the personal health, safety and environmental living conditions of residents in Clinton County. Program staff provide in-home assessments and offer interventions to reduce residential health and safety hazards, including those to minimize asthma triggers. Interventions include education, program referrals and safety products. The program is free for all Clinton County residents.

Referrals can be made via fax (**518-565-4843**) or phone (**518-565-4870**) from provider offices or schools, or patients can be encouraged to set up an appointment directly by visiting <https://bit.ly/2CWXRju> or calling **518-565-4870**. For more information, visit www.clintonhealth.org/healthyneighborhoods.