



Promoting Sexual Health  
Through STD Prevention

**NCSDDC.ORG**

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June 13, 2022

Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Rd.  
Atlanta, GA, 30333

Dear Dr. Walensky,

I am writing to request the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) call upon the President to submit a budget amendment to provide a minimum of \$30,000,000 to strengthen Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) prevention and control for state and local health departments to address the recent monkeypox outbreak. These additional funds are critical to bolstering the public health workforce and ensuring a robust response to the virus, while continuing to address the current rise in STDs across the nation. I am also requesting that the CDC lift the ten percent cap on clinical services in the Strengthening STD Prevention and Control for Health Departments cooperative agreement to permit STD clinics to expand services to better serve the patient population and adequately treat monkeypox.

Members of the National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSDDC) are deeply concerned that the continued underfunding of STD clinics is limiting front-line health professionals' ability to educate, identify, contact trace, treat and, if needed, administer vaccines, to prevent the spread of infectious diseases—including the emerging threat of monkeypox. In addition to the \$30 million request, more funding is needed to educate physicians and health care professionals to properly diagnose monkeypox. As you stated on June 10, "some patients with monkeypox also had syphilis, herpes, gonorrhea, or chlamydia infections. Health care providers should not rule out monkeypox just because a patient has another diagnosis or another STI." NCSDDC is also requesting that funds be set aside for education outreach efforts to the general public with a special emphasis on high-risk populations—including men who have sex with men—to better arm them with information to protect themselves from the virus.

Members of NCSDDC are also concerned about CDC's limit of "no more than 10 percent" of STD grant awards for clinical prevention services. For many years, this cap has severely limited clinics' ability to provide preventive clinical services for uninsured and underinsured individuals who lack access to these services and adds an additional barrier to testing and identifying patients who have monkeypox symptoms and may also have STDs. Lifting the cap will ensure that more dollars can be used to strengthen the clinics' ability to influence health care practices and to collaborate with other key partners in the STD prevention landscape.

We thank you for your efforts to address monkeypox, the STD epidemic and improve the public health of this nation.

Sincerely,

David C. Harvey  
Executive Director