



**County  
Health Officials  
of New York**  
Leading the way to healthier communities

# SUPPORTS

**A.2469/S5611 (Paulin/Krueger)**

**AN ACT to allow diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmissible diseases, including appropriate vaccinations, of minors under the age of eighteen without parental consent**

The New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO) supports the above-referenced legislative proposal which would extend treatment of sexually transmissible diseases (STD) to minors under eighteen years of age from minors under twenty-one. This legislation would also provide for administration of vaccinations.

Sexually transmissible diseases and infections remain a public health problem for adolescents in New York State. Almost half of all new sexually transmissible infections (STIs) occur among individuals aged 15-21. Gonorrhea, for example, is the second most common STD in the state, and rates of infection are highest among teens ages 15-19. Further, high infection rates are not only limited to one area of the state, and infect teens in areas such as New York City and across Upstate New York. In Upstate New York for example, rates are approximately 138 cases per 100,000 among males ages 15-19, and approximately 320 cases per 100,000 among females ages 15-19. This greatly exceeds the national Healthy People 2010 goal of 19 cases per 100,000 in each region of New York State (*Healthy People 2020 goal not available for New York State at this time*).

Further, many cases of sexually transmissible diseases go undiagnosed, and the burden of disease may be higher. These cases may be undiagnosed because individuals lack awareness about reproductive health, lack access to care, or because minors have concerns that information about sexual activity, testing, diagnosis and treatment will be shared with their parents.

Left untreated, STDs can cause long-term health consequences, especially in females; the CDC estimates that annually at least 24,000 women across the United States become infertile because of undiagnosed or untreated STDs. Sexually transmissible diseases which go untreated can also cause other reproductive health issues and cancer. In addition, individuals who are unaware of their status may transmit the disease to others.

NYSACHO supports this act, as it would reduce barriers to preventive care for sexual health, testing and treatment of diseases for minors, reduce the spread of these infections and prevent short and long-term health consequences for adolescents.

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