

## STI Awareness Week

### Neighborhood News – April 2026

Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Awareness Week, observed April 12-18, is an opportunity to raise awareness about STI prevention, testing, and treatment, and to encourage open communication about sexual health.

Chlamydia is the most frequently reported bacterial sexually transmitted infection in the United States and primarily affects adolescent and young adult females. If left untreated, chlamydia can lead to serious and irreversible complications, including pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), infertility, and an increased risk of HIV infection. Screening is essential, as approximately **75% of chlamydia infections in women and 95% in men are asymptomatic**, which often leads to delayed diagnosis and treatment.

In the Measurement Year (MY) 2024, the Healthcare Effectiveness Data Information Set (HEDIS®) rate for chlamydia screening in women at Neighborhood was **66.35%**, a slight increase from **65.51% in MY2023**.

#### How can you help?

- 1. Universal Screening:** Consider routine screening for all patients ages 16 years and older.
  - **Communication Tip:** Let patients know that chlamydia screening is automatically included annually for all patients ages 15-24, regardless of sexual history. Reinforcing that screening is a standard part of preventive care helps normalize testing and reduce stigma.
- 2. Sexual History:** Be sure to take a comprehensive sexual history of your adolescent patients.

#### Reminders

- A chlamydia culture taken during a Papanicolaou (Pap) smear or a urine test both meet chlamydia screening guidelines.
- Urine screening for chlamydia during adolescent well-care or other medical appointments also meets screening guidelines.

#### Resources

For additional guidance, providers can refer to [the Rhode Island Department of Health \(RIDOH\) Youth and Young Adult Sexual Health App: Right to Know](#).

Additional RIDOH resources include: [“What to Know About Health” fact sheets](#), available to print and share with patients in **English, Spanish, Portuguese, Cape Verdean Creole, Haitian Creole, and Khmer**.

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