



GOVERNMENT OF GUAM

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
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### **National STD Awareness Month**

The Department of Public Health and Social Services is pleased to announce that April is National STD Awareness Month. This annual observance is an opportunity for individuals, medical providers, and community-based organizations to raise public awareness about the impact of sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and the importance of preventing, testing, and treating STDs.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 20 million new STD infections occur each year with nearly half of these infections occurring among young people aged 15-24 years. When compared with older adults, sexually active individuals aged 15-24 years are at higher risk of acquiring STDs for a combination of behavioral, biological and cultural reasons.

Individuals who are infected with STDs are at least two to five times more likely than uninfected individuals to acquire HIV infection if they are exposed to the virus through sexual contact. Of significance, Guam's rate of *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT) infection has increased during previous years, ranking Guam as having the 8<sup>th</sup> highest CT rate in the nation among the states and outlying areas in 2011. In 2012, Guam's rank rose further to the 5<sup>th</sup> highest in the nation with a CT rate of 646 per 100,000 population (and exceeded the U.S. total rate of 456.7).

Therefore, it is crucial that individuals, medical providers, and community-based organizations work together to raise STD awareness, reduce stigma, promote prevention and improve access to care. For more information about National STD Awareness Month or about testing for STDs, please contact Mr. Vince J. Aguon at 735-7166 or visit the Prutehi Hao website at [www.prutehihao.guam.gov](http://www.prutehihao.guam.gov).



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