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# SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

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## Initiating policy changes for the management of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) by determining provider and patient barriers and facilitators to Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) in Mississippi

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**Background & Aim:** Three research questions guided the assessment of Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) use in the management of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs): What prevents providers and patients from participating in EPT? What would facilitate EPT use? Will research findings encourage supporting of legislation promoting EPT implementation? Chlamydia infections in Leflore County more than triple the national average, Gonorrhea infections are six times the national average. EPT is legally permissible in Mississippi, yet no legislation exists outlining EPT guidelines nor does the state offer legal protection to providers implementing EPT.

**Method:** Surveys were utilized to gather data. Sample consisted of 51 physicians/nurse practitioners and 100 patients. Statistical analyses conducted consisted of descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages and means. No funding was obtained for the project.

**Result:** 63% (n=14) are more likely to offer EPT if professional licensure boards had position statements/guidelines regarding EPT. 68% (n=15) reported legal liability as a barrier. 95% (n=21) reported legal protection would increase implementation. Patients if offered, 60.9% (n=53) reported willingness to issue EPT to sex partners; 71.3% (n=62) reported believing their partner would accept EPT.

**Conclusion:** Patients are willing to participate in EPT and they believe their partners would accept. Providers also express willingness to offer EPT but need guidelines and position statements from licensure boards and professional organizations to do so.

### Biography

Elizabeth Julyn Overstreet has completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Mississippi Medical Center, located in Jackson, MS, USA. She has completed her Master of Science in Nursing from Mississippi University for Women in Columbus, USA and also completed her Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) at Delta State University in Cleveland, USA. She serves as an Assistant Professor of Nursing at DSU, where she has been involved in both undergraduate and graduate programs of study.

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