

Proposed "Fee for Service" for STI Testing

The Gila County Division of Health and Emergency Services is required by Arizona State Statute to test, treat and monitor all cases of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) in Gila County. This service is vital to ensure the health of our residents. People infected with STI's often show no signs or symptoms; therefore, prompt testing and treatment are essential.

Before March of 2005 these services were out sourced to local healthcare providers. Residents needed to seek testing at their primary care physician or Planned Parenthood in Globe. Those individuals without insurance who came to the health department were referred to our medical consultant or the hospital in Payson at a cost of \$159.00 per person for testing and treatment.

In March of 2005 The Gila County Office of Health began providing STI Testing for the following reasons:

- To reduce the expenses incurred by the County for STI testing by the Office of Health directly providing this service.
- To provide easier accessibility for STD testing for Gila County residents.
- To ensure that a higher percentage of cases are identified and treated.
- To reduce STI's through education and providing risk reduction information.

STI lab work was processed by the Arizona Department of Health Services Lab. The cost of the testing for the county was for shipping only.

The Health Department has seen a steady increase in the STI testing it provides. The reason for this increase was the closure of Planned Parenthood in 2009, referrals from physicians, and community awareness about the services we provide.

Due to cutbacks, in 2009 the Arizona Department of Health Services no longer provided STI testing for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia (G/C). The cost of testing for these two diseases cost the county \$11.50 per test through the Center for Disease Detection (CDD). The Health Department has absorbed this cost. An increase in the number of syphilis cases reported in Gila County indicates the syphilis testing is needed in addition to gonorrhea and Chlamydia testing. As of November 2011, the state no longer tests for syphilis. CDD will test for syphilis for \$6.00 per test. HIV tests cost approximately \$6.00 per test. The Prevention Grant provides approximately 44 tests per year. The County would need to provide any additional testing at a cost of approximately \$6.00 a test. To help absorb these expenses, the Health Department would like to charge \$10.00 to individuals for STI Testing. This fee would not apply to any individuals who have been notified of being a direct contact with a person having an STI. No individual will be turned away due to their inability to pay.