Editorial Note: Increasing Reports of Disseminated Gonococcal Infection in California

On November 5, 2020, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) reported an increase in the number of incoming reports of disseminated gonococcal infection (DGI) in the state. CDPH is working with local health departments to investigate these cases, where some patients have reported experiencing homelessness and/or using illicit drugs, particularly methamphetamine[1]. Preliminary data indicate that, in San Diego County in 2020, reported cases of DGI have increased by 50-71% compared to previous years, although the number of reported cases remains relatively low (12 reported cases to date in 2020 vs. 8 and 7 reported cases per year in 2018 and 2019 respectively).

The CDPH report follows a similar report of increasing reports of DGI at the national level to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that was released in December 2019 and highlighted in Volume 11, Issue 9 of this report and a local health alert. In addition to the recommendations outlined in these documents, because of the potential for increasing complications of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) due to decreases in STI screening, testing and treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic, providers are encouraged to reinstate routine screening recommendations for STIs in women less than 25 years of age, pregnant women, and men who have sex with men and individuals living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). When facility-based or in-person services are limited, the interim guidance provided by CDC should be used as a guide.