According to estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2016, there are 20 million new sexually transmitted infections every year in the United States\(^1\). Almost half of these sexually transmitted infections occur in young people (those 15-24 years old)\(^1\). Many people that have a STD do not know they are infected because there are often no symptoms\(^2\). There are significant costs associated with STDs, including direct medical costs, which are estimated to be over $16 billion a year\(^1\). But the costs of STDs are not only financial. When left untreated, STDs can lead to long term complications including pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, and cancer\(^1\). Diagnosing and treating patients infected with STDs are crucial to controlling the spread of these communicable diseases. A core function of state public health laboratories is disease prevention, control, and surveillance\(^3\). To fulfill this mission, the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Public Health Laboratories (BPHL) performs a variety of screening tests for STDs.

**Highlights/specialties**

The Bureau of Public Health Laboratories conducts screening tests for the following STDs:

- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhea
- Hepatitis A, B, and C
- Herpes
- HIV
- Syphilis

Positive STD results are reported electronically to the STD Program Office for contact investigation and follow up.

Results for most tests\(^4\) are sent electronically to the provider and STD program office the same day the samples are received in the laboratory.

In Fiscal Year 2017/2018 the BPHL performed over 390,000 tests for STDs.

Most of the STD tests offered at the BPHL can be performed on non-genital samples, which means that many more people can be screened because samples can be collected in non-clinical settings, such as outreach clinics or community based health centers.