



October 23, 2007

Dear Colleague,

On June 5-6, 2007, the Division of STD Prevention (DSTDP) convened the *Consultation to Address STD Disparities in African-American Communities*. The consultation brought together community leaders and other partners serving African-American communities to help identify prevention and control efforts likely to be acceptable and effective in affected communities. The purpose of this letter is to alert you to the recent web publication of the report of the meeting (<http://www.cdc.gov/std/general/STDHealthDisparitiesConsultationJune2007.pdf>).

The consultation was characterized by high-energy discussion, thought-provoking presentations, and active problem-solving. Several key themes emerged, including the need to engage grassroots community members and the utility of framing STD disparities messages within broader sexual health or health disparities issues. Consultants identified a range of possible strategies, including improving access to available services, focusing interventions on young men, and building coalitions. Four workgroups (Individual/Community, Provider, NGOs/Churches, and Policy) were formed at the meeting and continue to work together to translate these strategies into discrete action steps. In addition to the web publication of the meeting report, the well-received background papers prepared for the consultation will be published in a special issue of *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*.

I strongly urge you to read the meeting report, share it broadly among your colleagues and identify ways you can engage with your local partners, the partners from the consultation, and us at CDC to address the challenges of sexual health disparities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Douglas, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

John M. Douglas, Jr. MD  
Director, Division of STD Prevention