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March 10, 2008

Medical Providers

Subject: **HIV/AIDS Surveillance: New Names-based Reporting for HIV Cases**

I am requesting your cooperation with our HIV/AIDS Surveillance staff in their review of client charts and to report HIV disease promptly. Adequate surveillance and disease reporting requires the coordination and participation of the provider community. In addition, all Federal and State funding allocations for the care and treatment as well as educational outreach for HIV/AIDS is based upon cases reported through the Health Officer to the State of California and ultimately to the Centers for Disease Control. Failure to accurately report all HIV/AIDS cases would lead to funding reductions.

HIV infection reporting requirements in California changed as of April 17, 2006. Under Health and Safety Code Section 121022, health care providers are required to report cases of HIV infection by name to the local health officer. The health officer, in turn, is required to report this information to CDHS.

An informational letter for providers from the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) dated September 14, 2006 and new reporting forms have been developed and are available on the CDHS website (www.dhs.ca.gov/AIDS). In addition, the Office of AIDS and the Santa Barbara Legal Counsel are cautioning health care providers about reporting case information if they have previously informed their patients that their names would not be reported. This was the process under the prior code-based HIV reporting system that is no longer in effect as of April 17, 2006. **Recent changes to the adopted reporting regulations now allow local Surveillance Coordinators to report HIV cases if they have received confirmed laboratory HIV test results such as Western Blot, immunofluorescence antibody test or HIV diagnostic tests such as viral load, T-cell counts and/or therapeutic monitoring testing.** For your review and potential use, we have included a copy of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet regarding HIV names-based reporting and these can also be found posted on the County's website at www.sbcphd.org. If you have not done so already, it is recommended you notify your patients of the HIV names-based reporting requirements.

*Our office is bound by federal and state laws regarding confidentiality.
Confidentiality is strictly maintained and is our highest priority.*

Should you require additional information or guidance, please contact the HIV/AIDS Services Program staff at (805) 681-5120. Thank you for your assistance in this critical endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elliot Schulman".

Elliot Schulman, M.D., M.P.H.
Director and Health Officer
County of Santa Barbara

Encl: