

MODULE 3

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

STUDY GUIDE

HIV/AIDS: 101

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PARTNER SERVICES

Partner Services (PS) is the process by which sexual and/or needle-sharing partners of HIV-positive clients are identified, located, and informed of their possible exposure to HIV.

PS is a very effective HIV prevention strategy. There are three methods of follow-up of partners used by the Florida Department of Health: 1) client referral, 2) county health department referral, and 3) contract referral.

CLIENT REFERRAL

The HIV-infected individual chooses to inform their partners themselves. This individual also refers those partners to HIV counseling and testing.

COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT REFERRAL

The HIV-infected individual consents to having the county health department STD program take responsibility for contacting the partners and referring them to HIV counseling and testing, as well as other services.

Note: the identity of the HIV-positive person is highly protected.

CONTRACT REFERRAL

The county health department STD program informs the partners only if the client does not notify the partner within a negotiated time period.

Due to the sensitive nature involved in the identification and location of partners, only an HIV counselor who is trained in these techniques should perform PS.

According to section 384.26 of Florida law, only the Department of Health may conduct PS. The county health department STD program is responsible for all PS activities, regardless of where the client was originally tested. Other county health department staff may elicit information regarding partners, but only STD Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) may perform notification of partners. Each test site should establish and maintain a good relationship with their local county health department STD program to aid with services to clients who test HIV positive.