READY, SET, PREP!
A new national program called Ready, Set, PrEP is making HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) available at no cost. The program, which was unveiled last week by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

- Provides PrEP medication only for people who do not have health insurance.
- Provides medication only to individuals with a documented HIV negative test result and a prescription.
- Allows medication pick-up at a participating pharmacies or through the mail.
- Provides access to both Truvada and Descovy.
- Is open to all U.S. residents regardless of immigration status.
- Is not available to individuals already receiving PrEP through another pharmaceutical assistance program.

For more information about Ready, Set, PrEP go to GetYourPrEP.com or call (855) 447-8410.

Medical professionals can go to https://files.hiv.gov/s3fs-public/RSP-HCPFactsheet.pdf

DDP-supported PrEP sites are strongly encouraged to use this program for new clients who are uninsured. If you have questions or concerns please contact Eric Mayes, PrEP Coordinator for DDP, at (804) 864-7335 or eric.mayes@vdh.virginia.gov.

DDP TO START BILLING FOR PREP SERVICES
Billing for clinical and laboratory services related to the provision of PrEP will begin January 6, 2020. The move represents a major shift in program operations, which until now, has provided all services and medication at no cost regardless of income or insurance status.

Services and medication will remain available at no cost for the uninsured. All other clients will be required to use their insurance. A menu of options has been developed for individuals who may be underinsured.

The funds generated through billing will help offset the cost to both local health departments (LHD) and the Office of Epidemiology (OEpi). LHDs have been absorbing the cost of clinical time and OEpi has been absorbing the cost of labs and medication. The introduction of billing will help make the program sustainable, which means PrEP will continue to be available to those who need it most. If you have questions, please contact Eric Mayes at (804) 864-7335 or eric.mayes@vdh.virginia.gov.

SPS STAFF ATTEND 2019 ENGAGE CONFERENCE
STD Prevention and Surveillance (SPS) staff recently attended the 2019 STD Engage Conference, the annual meeting of the National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSD). The conference was held November 19 through November 22 in
Alexandria, Virginia. STD Engage is the only national meeting that brings together state and local STD prevention and sexual health professionals, and their community-based partners and allies.

Topics at this year’s event included at-home STD testing, 340B guidelines, and addressing the intersection between STDs, PrEP, and substance use. Staff also attended an Honoring our Allies reception on Capitol Hill to meet with senate staff members who have been vital in the fight against STDs and HIV. SPS staff presented posters on topics ranging from congenital syphilis surveillance to STD testing at community-based organizations.

**TRANSGENDER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OF VIRGINIA**

The Transgender Assistance Program of Virginia (TAP VA) is an all-volunteer, trans-led 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to ending homelessness within transgender communities in Virginia. The organization offers safe emergency and temporary transitional housing to homeless transgender and gender non-binary (GNB) adults in Virginia, and assists in identifying and connecting to additional resources to remove barriers to self-sufficiency.

TAP VA also provides education on the difficulties faced by transgender and GNB people resulting from stigma and discrimination, drawing special attention to the intersections of homelessness, discriminatory laws and policies, socioeconomic status, and racism impacting trans communities in Virginia.

Although they are based in the Hampton Roads area, TAP VA is able to provide many of its services to trans and GNB people across the state. For more information, check out TAP VA’s website at [https://tapvirginia.org/](https://tapvirginia.org/), email transactivistva@gmail.com, or call (757) 563-4784.

**UNDOING RACISM TRAINING**

There will be additional Undoing Racism courses available for DDP staff and contractors. Please stay tuned for additional information and announcements with dates and times in the near future.

The interactive course is designed to educate, challenge and empower people to intentionally take steps to “undo” the racist structures that hinder effective social change and delivery of effective, quality programs. The course is based on the premise that racism has been systematically constructed, but when people understand where it comes from, how it functions, and why it is perpetuated, they can begin to work together to dismantle the very structure that keeps racism going.

Please direct all questions to Marquietta Alston at marquietta.alston@vdh.virginia.gov or (804) 864-8006.

**PERSONNEL**

Welcome

SPS and the local health districts have been very busy hiring many new Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) across the state! Please welcome the following new DIS:

Jennifer Walton-Roanoke; Hortance Houngbeke-Rappahannock; James Matthews-Prince William; Kat Adams-
Henrico; **Emily Cadden**-Richmond City; **Eileen Romero**-Floating; **Shannon Adams**-Virginia Beach; **Shalesha Majors** and **Maeghan Hall-Crater**; and **Maxey Maclin**-Chesterfield. We are excited to have you all on board, and look forward to working with you!

**Alex Trumble** joined the SPS team on November 10 as the new Regional STD Program Coordinator for the Western region. Alex earned his Masters of Public Health from Virginia Tech, and has experience as an intern and volunteer at the Montgomery County Health District, as well as experience working with food safety. Alex will be working in Richmond for the first few months as he is completing orientation and training. Once that is complete, he will be based at the Montgomery County Health Department.

**Transitions**

Congratulations to **Adyam Redae**. She started her new position as the HIV Prevention Service Navigation Coordinator on December 9. Ms. Redae has a Masters of Arts in Community Mental Health Counseling from Hampton University and a Bachelors of Arts in Political Science: Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness from Virginia Commonwealth University. Adyam joined DDP in March of 2015 and has been a key contributor to the Mind, Body, Soul conference and the gay men’s advisory committee. She is also a trainer for Mental Health First Aid and REVIVE!. We are excited to celebrate Adyam’s success as she continues her public health career.