Effects of STDs in the Community

 [Author Name]

[Institutional Affiliation(s)]

Effects of STDs in the Community

STDs is an umbrella term that covers various sexually transmitted diseases. It is also known as sexually transmitted infections (STIs). STDs are passed from person to another when they indulge in sexual activities. Regardless of the sexual orientation and ways of sexual activity STDs can easily be through intimate physical contact. Some of the infections have mild symptoms and therefore it is possible that a person has some kind of STD but is not aware of it. As mentioned earlier that STD covers a variety of sexually transmitted infection but the most common infections among all are Bacterial vaginosis, chlamydia, hepatitis, and genital herpes. Although if detected early STDs can be treated effectively as there is a cure of almost every STD yet some of the sexually transmitted diseases have no cure. For instance, HIV/AIDS is also a sexually transmitted disease that has no cure. Even though there are several other ways that people came into contact with HIV yet getting a virus through intimate physical contact is very common. STDs can even cause infertility among many women (Coyle & Harrist, 2016). This is because chlamydia which is also an STD can cause infection in the fallopian tube infection. Additionally, PID can also cause infection in the genital tract that in turn may cause permanent damage to not only fallopian tubes but uterus as well. Thus, permanent damage uterus can cause infertility.

According to the statistics, one out of every two sexually active people will come in contact with STD by the age of 25. A survey conducted by CDC also highlighted that one out of every eight people has herpes while approximately 80% of the population has HPV at some point in their life which is very alarming ("STD Data and Statistics", 2019). STDs are common because most people are not aware of this. Moreover, many people remain undiagnosed with the diseases as in most cases symptoms are not visible. Another main reason due to which STDs are common is because of the stigma associated with the diseases. This social stigma serves as a major barrier to STD testing. Many people do not consider testing for STD because of the fear about negative societal attitude and shame that is associated with STDs. Despite, knowing that most of the males and females are sexually active yet still the stigma associated with having STD is very strong. Specifically, males and females who are in their teens and wanted to experience sexual intercourse are more prone to having STDs. Additionally, teens are the ones who are left undiagnosed because of social stigma (Banspach & Thorpe, 2016). Even if they are diagnosed with STD the negative attitude of society negatively impacts them. People rather than supporting a person having STD and spreading awareness are constantly judging an infected person. This also affects the mental health of a person.

The stereotypical thinking of people regarding STDs is not only limited to teens but many adults also face the same issue. In recent years, where more people are experimenting with their sexuality the spread of STDs is increasing day by day. The gay and lesbians couples are the ones who are involved in oral sex are also prone to have STDs. Not only gay and lesbian many heterosexual people who re indulged in oral sex may also get STDs especially getting chlamydia in the throat. Although, this infection can be treated the issue of not being diagnosed hinders the chances of getting a cure for this disease. Many people are reported to have severe depression and other mental issues after being diagnosed with STDs. Due to this reason, there is a need for several interventions by the health care department so that people can be diagnosed timely as well as can be aware of the serious consequences of STDs.

A public health care professional is responsible for spreading awareness among people in a community regarding several diseases so that they can take prevent diseases. The public health care professional role is not only limited to disease prevention but also aware public regarding the precautionary measures that they can take to help to prevent the risk of getting a disease. In the context of STDs public health professional plays a very critical role as they not only have to spread awareness regarding STDs but also have to deal with the stigma associated with STDs. The main objective of public health officers is to reduce the prevalence of STDs by interrupting the transmission of STDs while also reducing the duration of the infections as prolonged infection may result in severe complications. Public health care officials must be familiar with the demographics and STDs epidemiology. This can be done by pointing out the disease hotspots and vulnerable populations that are more to have STDs. The primary prevention strategies can be explained to the general public by providing health education more specifically sex education. Sex education involves raising consciousness regarding safe sex, the use of condom and abstinence from sex if diagnosed with STDs. Additionally, public health officers must promote the importance of getting regularly tested for STDs if an individual is sexually active. The disgrace associated with STDs is still prevailing in our society due to which people diagnosed with STDs are not able to discuss the issue with their partners. As STDs are transmitted to sexual contact there are high chances that people having STDs can infect their partners as well (Hogben & O’Connor, 2016). Thus, making them more prone to getting STDs. Also, several teens due to fear of getting embarrassed do not discuss the problem with the parents which can lead to severe consequences. The lack of awareness is the reason that people hide the disease.

A public health care official must develop a plan for STDs prevention and care by promoting safe sex behavior among members of a community. Also, integrating STD control not only into primary health care but in reproductive healthcare facilities as well because many pregnant women have STDs that they are not aware of. Having STDs while being pregnant can negatively influence child wellbeing (Stoner, 2016). So every healthcare facility must incorporate the STDs control program in their health services to prevent STDs. While discussing the prevention of STDs it has been observed that male and female sex workers are more prone to have STDs but are often neglected (Hooi & Meijer, 2018).

Thus, it is necessary to promote awareness regarding the use of condoms and avoiding oral sex to avoid getting STDs. It is a general misconception that STDs cannot be treated due to which many people became upset after getting infected. However, there are effective treatments that can help cure the disease. The only issue is that medicines are very expensive and the general public cannot bear the expenses. Additionally, regular testing for STDs is not available freely due to which many people remain undiagnosed. It is the responsibility of public health officials to collaborate with local health care facilities to arrange free camps so that people can be tested for STDs. Furthermore, public health officers and schools must join together to provide sex education to teens regarding the risk factors associated with the STDs so that they can avoid getting infected. Also, community nurses can play a vital role in advocating for the potential causes and risk factors that are associated with STDs. This is because in every healthcare facility the first interaction people have is with nurses providing them the opportunity to spread awareness regarding STDs (Leichliter & Gift, 2017). Also, physicians must tell their patients about the risk associated with unsafe sex and how it can lead to severe consequences. Recently, with the help of digital media lots of awareness regarding AIDS is spread among people however the public is still not aware of the several other infections. Thus, to enhance the effectiveness of public health practices in the context of STDs prevention it is necessary to aware of the public regarding the causes and prevention of STDs while also promotion safe sex to avoid getting infected.

SAINT LEO University is one of the oldest catholic university in Florida (University, 2019). Despite being a Catholic university this university aims to respect all people regardless of their religious preferences. The university core values can facilitate a lot in the prevention of STDs. Christianity disregard the concept of having sex with multiple partners and highly focuses on maintaining a healthy relationship with just one partner. One of the major reasons that people get STDs is due to indulging in sexual activities with multiple partners. Thus, putting a limit on having sexual intercourse with multiple will reduce the chance of people being infected. Additionally, as university believes in equality, healthcare professionals must spread awareness among people regarding STDs regardless of their social status as many people neglect sex workers due to which they are more prone to having STDs.

 Furthermore, the university believes in respecting all people. This core value of the university can also be applied in the context of STDs prevention as well. As people who have STDS are disrespected by their peers which can worsen their condition and can lead them to have several mental illnesses. Thus, respecting all people rather than judging them based on diseases will facilitate in creating a collaborative environment where every member of society despite judging people, help people in coping up with the disease and also makes it their responsibility to educate other people especially teens regarding the negative impacts of STDs. This will facilitate in building a healthy and collaborative society.

**References**

Banspach, S., Zaza, S., Dittus, P., Michael, S., Brindis, C. D., & Thorpe, P. (2016). CDC grand rounds: adolescence-preparing for lifelong health and wellness.

Coyle, K., Basen-Engquist, K., Kirby, D., Parcel, G., Banspach, S., Collins, J., ... & Harrist, R. (2016). Safer choices: reducing teen pregnancy, HIV, and STDs. *Public health reports*.

Hogben, M., Collins, D., Hoots, B., & O’Connor, K. (2016). Partner services in STD prevention programs: a review. *Sexually transmitted diseases*, *43*(0 0 1), S53.

Hooi, D. J., Quint, W. G., Lissenberg-Witte, B. I., Kenter, G., Pinedo, H. M., de Koning, M. N., & Meijer, C. J. (2018). Human papillomavirus (HPV) types prevalence in cervical samples of female sex-workers on Curaçao. *Preventive medicine reports*, *11*, 120-124.

Leichliter, J. S., Heyer, K., Peterman, T. A., Habel, M. A., Brookmeyer, K. A., Arnold, S. P., ... & Gift, T. L. (2017). US Public Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinical Services in an Era of Declining Public Health Funding: 2013-14. Sexually transmitted diseases, 44(8), 505-509.

STD Data and Statistics. (2019). Retrieved 7 October 2019, from <https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats/default.htm>

Stoner, B. (2016). Public Policy and Sexual Behavior. *Prevention, Policy, and Public Health*, *2*, 3.

University, S. (2019). History, Values, & Catholic Roots | Florida Catholic University | Saint Leo University. Retrieved 7 October 2019, from <https://www.saintleo.edu/history-values-catholic-roots>