



RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor

VICTOR B. HOCOG
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH of the NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

0. 5 OCT 2018

The Honorable Rafael S. Demapan
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twentieth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

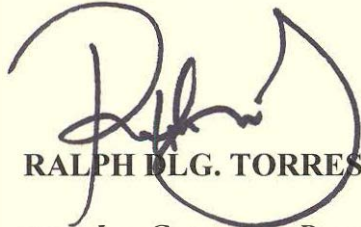
The Honorable Arnold I. Palacios
Senate President, The Senate
Twentieth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker and Mr. President:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **House Bill No. 20-124, HD1** entitled, "To authorize and establish expedited partner therapy for certain sexually transmitted infections.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twentieth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 20-69**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,



RALPH DLG. TORRES

cc: Lt. Governor; Press Secretary; Attorney General's Office; Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation; Special Assistant for Administration; Special Assistant for Programs and Legislative Review



House of Representatives

20th NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 500586
SAIPAN, MP 96950

September 7, 2018

The Honorable Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands
Capitol Hill
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Torres:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for your action **H. B. No. 20-124, HD1**, entitled: "To authorize and establish expedited partner therapy for certain sexually transmitted infections.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twentieth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely yours,



Linda B. Muña
House Clerk

Attachment



*Twentieth Legislature
of the
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

SEPTEMBER 20, 2017

REPRESENTATIVE JOSE I. ITIBUS of Saipan, Precinct 3 (*for himself*, Representatives Francisco C. Aguon, Edwin P. Aldan, Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao, Donald C. Barcinas, Ivan A. Blanco, Francisco S. Dela Cruz, Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero, Angel A. Demapan, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Alice S. Igitol, Janet U. Maratita, Edwin K. Propst, John Paul P. Sablan, Vinnie F. Sablan, and Edmund S. Villagomez,) in an open and public meeting with an opportunity for the public to comment, introduced the following Bill:

H. B. NO. 20-124, HD1

AN ACT

TO AUTHORIZE AND ESTABLISH EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY FOR CERTAIN SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS.

The Bill was referred to the House Committee on Health, which submitted Standing Committee Report No. 20-98; adopted 1/31/18.

THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON FIRST AND FINAL READING, JANUARY 31, 2018;
with amendments in the form of H. B. No. 20-124, HD1 and transmitted to the
THE SENATE.

The Bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare.
THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE SENATE ON FIRST AND FINAL READING, AUGUST 30, 2018;
without amendments and was returned to
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THE BILL WAS FINALLY PASSED ON JANUARY 31, 2018.



Linda B. Muña, House Clerk



*Twentieth Legislature
of the
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SECOND DAY, THIRD REGULAR SESSION

JANUARY 31, 2018

H. B. No. 20-124, HD1

AN ACT

TO AUTHORIZE AND ESTABLISH EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY FOR CERTAIN SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS.

Be it enacted by the Twentieth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature:

1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that the leading sexually
 2 transmitted diseases (STD) in the CNMI are gonorrhea and chlamydia with over 1,200
 3 diagnosed cases in the CNMI since 2013. The Legislature finds that according to the Centers
 4 for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of STD Prevention, “effective clinical
 5 management of patients with treatable sexually transmitted diseases requires treatment of the
 6 patient’s current adult sex partners to prevent reinfection and curtail further transmission.”
 7 The Legislature finds that a popular treatment method to ensure that patients’ sex partners are
 8 treated is Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT). CDC defines EPT as “the clinical practice of
 9 treating the sex partners of patients diagnosed with chlamydia or gonorrhea by providing
 10 prescriptions or medications to the patient to take to his/her partner without the health care
 11 provider first examining the partner.” Furthermore, the CDC has concluded that “EPT is a
 12 useful option to facilitate partner management, particularly for treatment of adult male
 13 partners of women with chlamydial infection or gonorrhea.”

HOUSE BILL 20-124, HD1

1 The Legislature finds that in 2006, the CDC published a review and guidance,
2 *Expedited Partner Therapy in the Management of Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, which cites
3 four randomized controlled trials (RCTs) that were designed to compare EPT with standard
4 partner management approaches in men and women with gonorrhea, chlamydial infection, or
5 trichomoniasis. In all three trials of gonorrhea or chlamydial infection, EPT was associated
6 with at least equivalent, and typically increased, confidence by both male and female index
7 cases that their partners had received treatment, including direct observation that their
8 partners took medication.

9 This same review indicated that preliminary analyses suggest that EPT is a cost-
10 saving and cost-effective partner management strategy. It concluded overall, that clinical and
11 behavioral outcomes of the available studies indicate that EPT is a useful option to facilitate
12 partner management among heterosexual men and women with chlamydial infection or
13 gonorrhea. The Legislature finds that the available evidence indicates that allowing health
14 care providers to treat both patients and their partners through EPT has many long-term
15 public health benefits. The Legislature finds that although EPT is an effective treatment, and
16 that there are no laws in the Commonwealth which specifically prohibit the practice, the lack
17 of explicit allowance for this practice in the law may prevent providers and pharmacies from
18 choosing EPT as a treatment option. Therefore, the Legislature finds that it is necessary to
19 create a statute which permits Expedited Partner Therapy in clinical practice.

20 **Section 2. Enactment.** Title 3, Division 2, Chapter 1, of the Commonwealth Code is
21 hereby amended to add a new Article 10 to be appropriately designated and to read as
22 follows:

23 **“Article 10. Expedited Partner Therapy.**

24 **Section 101. Definitions.** For the purposes of this section:

25 (1) “Dispense” or “dispensing” means the furnishing of drugs pursuant to a
26 prescription in a suitable container, appropriately labeled for subsequent
27 administration to, or use by, a patient or other individual entitled

HOUSE BILL 20-124, HD1

1 (2) "Health care provider" means a person who is licensed, certified or
2 otherwise authorized by the laws of this Commonwealth to administer health care in
3 the ordinary course of business or practice of a profession.

4 (3) "Expedited partner therapy" means the prescribing or dispensing of
5 antibiotic drugs to a practitioner's diagnosed patient's sexual partner or partners
6 without examination of that diagnosed patient's partner or partners

7 (4) "Prescribe" means the written or electronic instruction given to dispense a
8 medication to a patient.

9 (5) "Pharmacist" means a person licensed to practice pharmacy in the
10 Commonwealth.

11 **Section 102. Expedited Partner Therapy as a Treatment Option.**

12 (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a health care provider who is
13 licensed to diagnose and prescribe drugs for a sexually transmitted gonorrhea,
14 chlamydia, or trichomoniasis infection, and who diagnoses a sexually transmitted
15 gonorrhea, chlamydia, or trichomoniasis infection in an adult patient, may provide
16 expedited partner therapy to said patient's sexual partner or partners, and shall not be
17 subject to civil or professional liability, except for in cases of willful or wanton
18 misconduct, provided that said partner(s) have no known antibiotic allergies, and that
19 the medication/prescription includes clear instructions, and appropriate warnings.
20 Health care providers providing expedited partner therapy shall also provide
21 education to the patient on the treatment strategy, and shall still recommend that the
22 patient's adult partner(s) see a health care provider in person for STD and HIV
23 testing.

24 (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a pharmacist may dispense
25 antibiotic medication prescribed as expedited partner therapy treatment for a patient's
26 adult sexual partner(s), and shall not be subject to civil or professional liability,
27 except for in cases of willful or wanton misconduct, provided that the
28 medication/prescription includes clear instructions, and appropriate warnings.

HOUSE BILL 20-124, HD1

1 Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to mean that health care providers
2 or pharmacists are mandated to use expedited partner therapy as the sole treatment
3 method for chlamydia, gonorrhea, or trichomoniasis.

4 **Section 103. Promulgation of Rules and Regulations.**

5 The Health Care Professions Licensing Board shall have the authority under
6 this act to promulgate rules and regulations that are necessary for the implementation
7 of this act.”


8 **Section 4. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any such
9 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent
10 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or
11 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

12 **Section 5. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be
13 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes
14 repealed or under any rule, regulation or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers
15 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law.
16 The enactment of this Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying,
17 any liability civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence at the date this Act becomes
18 effective.

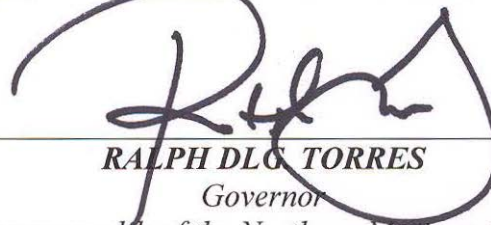
HOUSE BILL 20-124, HD1

1 **Section 6. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
2 Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

Attested to by: 
Linda B. Muña, House Clerk

Certified by: 
SPEAKER RAFAEL S. DEMAPAN
House of Representatives
20th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature

Approved this 5th day of October, 2018


RALPH DLO TORRES
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands