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சுகாதார அமைச்சு  
Ministry of Health

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எனது இல ) FHB/MCU/COVID/2021  
My No. )  
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உமது இல ) FHB/MCU/EMTCT/2021  
Your No. : )  
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திகதி ) 12/10/2021  
Date )

All Provincial Directors of Health Services  
All Regional Directors of Health Services  
All Heads of Institutions  
All Provincial/Regional Consultant Community Physicians  
All Medical Officers Maternal and Child Health  
All Medical Officers of Health

#### Introduction of a second HIV screening test for pregnant women

The Technical Advisory Committee on Maternal Health and Family Planning recommended at its meeting conducted on 17.09.2021 to introduce a second HIV/ VDRL screening at early third trimester for pregnant women belonging to high risk populations, to further strengthen the elimination of mother to child transmission of HIV/ Syphilis (EMTCT).

Accordingly, all pregnant women belonging to the categories mentioned below, should be referred to the closest STD clinic for a second screening with HIV and VDRL tests at 28-32 weeks POA;


1. Pregnant women belonging to key populations, which include Female Sex Workers (women who offer sexual services for money and favours), drug users and prisoners
2. Pregnant women with symptoms of STI or sexual health problems
3. Street women who are pregnant, women who do not have a guardian or are mentally retarded
4. Pregnant women having multiple partners
5. Sero-discordant pregnant women - HIV negative pregnant women having HIV positive partners who are managed by STD clinics.

In the event of a pregnant woman refusing to go to the STD clinic, rapid HIV test and rapid syphilis test (if available), should be arranged at the closest specialist hospital with these facilities.

It is of utmost importance to ensure that confidentiality is maintained in providing the above services and dignity of pregnant women preserved.

The current practice of conducting STI screening by serology tests for HIV and syphilis to all pregnant women at the first booking visit shall be continued, without change.

Please bring the contents of this communication to the notice of all relevant officers under your supervision for necessary action.

  
**Dr. Asela Gunawardena**  
**Director General of Health Services**

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**Cc:**  
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Deputy Director Generals (PHS I and II/MS)  
Director, MCH  
Director, NSACP  
Director, MS  
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