

## Testimony in Support of HB 2750

February 8, 2024

Chair Landwehr and the House Committee on Health and Human Services,

As the Chief Health Officer at Health Partnership Clinic and a practicing pediatrician, I am writing to express Health Partnership Clinic's support for HB 2750 which allows expedited partner therapy for sexually transmitted diseases. This bill allows health care providers to treat the sexual partner of a patient they have diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease (STD) without performing an examination.

This legislation is important to protect the health of Kansans, including the youngest and most vulnerable among us, newborns. Untreated sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can lead to fertility problems, premature labor, and infections in newborns that cause lasting complications. Sexually transmitted infections are on the rise in Kansas and have nearly doubled in the past decade (KDHE). This bill is an important tool to reduce this trend.

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) is safe and effective. Studies show that patients whose partners receive EPT were less likely to be reinfected with an STD. This type of legislation is not new as 46 states already have legislation allowing the treatment of sexual partners of patients who have been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease with no serious adverse events reports (CDC).

Health Partnership Clinic provides medical, dental, and behavioral health services for patients regardless of ability to pay. This includes testing and treatment of STIs. Our patients face many barriers to care, including financial and transportation barriers. Most of our patients work at jobs where they lose income if they need to take off work to come to an appointment. They may not be able to take off work for an appointment to get treated after their partner notifies them that they tested positive for an STI. As a pediatrician working in Johnson County, Kansas, I have seen more babies born to mothers who were positive for syphilis in the past 2 years than I have in my entire 20+ year career, leading to prolonged hospital stays and multiple blood draws needed before their first birthday.

Respectfully submitted,



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