



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Halting Deadly Meningitis Outbreak

BRAD HOYLMAN August 20, 2013

In mid-August, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) officials **expressed cautious optimism** that a dangerous outbreak of meningitis among gay and bisexual men had been contained. Between August 2010 and February 2013, DOHMH reported 22 cases, including seven which were fatal, but no new cases have been reported in the past seven months.

I am proud to have worked with DOHMH, City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, State Assembly Members Danny O'Donnell and Deborah Glick and other LGBT colleagues to help combat the meningitis outbreak. In addition to authoring a **new law** to make the meningitis vaccine available to adults through pharmacies beginning October 29, I spearheaded a successful effort to recruit Adam4Adam.com, one of the largest online hookup sites, to send a warning to its NYC area users regarding the meningitis outbreak; successfully worked with the NYS Department of Financial Services to direct private insurers to provide notification about vaccine coverage; and organized an informational meeting with Brooklyn State Legislators and DOHMH.

DOHMH believes that enough of the at-risk population has been vaccinated to provide protection for now but it is important for all gay and bisexual men who hook up online to get vaccinated. If they cannot obtain the vaccine from their health care providers, Health

Department clinics can administer the vaccine. Locations are listed on the Site Locator on DOHMH's website at [nyc.gov/doh](https://nyc.gov/doh).