



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Fact Sheet

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

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Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) VA IS THE LARGEST SINGLE PROVIDER OF HIV CARE IN THE UNITED STATES.

Background

In 2019, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released an ambitious plan to end new HIV infections in the U.S. by 2030. HHS plans to target resources to the 48 highest burden counties, Washington, D.C., San Juan, Puerto Rico, and seven states with a substantial rural HIV burden, where more than 50% of new HIV cases in the US occur. This new plan focuses on diagnosing all people with HIV as early as possible after infection, treating HIV rapidly and effectively to achieve sustained viral suppression, protecting people at risk for HIV by increasing the use of Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Syringe Service Programs (SSPs) to prevent HIV transmission, and responding rapidly to HIV outbreaks. [View HHS fact sheet.](#)

VHA's HIV Prevention and Care Affinity Group Program

VHA's HIV, Hepatitis, and Related Conditions Programs (HHRC) in the Office of Specialty Care Services has developed the HIV Prevention and Care Affinity Group Program in their efforts towards the Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative. HHRC will provide support to facilities and affinity groups working in the following focus areas:

- a. HIV testing
- b. HIV care (e.g. viral suppression)
- c. Increasing PrEP uptake
- d. Developing Syringe Service Programs
- e. Improving sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening and co-testing for HIV and bacterial STIs

HIV testing to diagnose all people with HIV as early as possible after infection

- VA's recommendation is to offer all Veterans an HIV test at least once, with more frequent testing for those with risk factors.
- In 2019, 3.4 million Veterans were eligible for HIV screening, which included all Veterans in VA care who had not received an HIV testing and did not have a diagnosis of HIV.

- VA continues to work on increasing HIV testing with 43.5% of all Veterans in VA care tested for HIV as of December 31, 2019.

Treat HIV rapidly and effectively to achieve sustained viral suppression

- VA is the single largest provider of HIV care in the U.S., with just over 31,000 Veterans with HIV in care in 2019, 86% of whom are receiving antiviral treatment and 75% of whom are virally suppressed.
- Of approximately 25,000 people with a viral load test in 2019, 92% were virally suppressed.

Preventing HIV by using proven prevention interventions, including PrEP and syringe service programs, and increasing appropriate screening for STIs

PrEP

- PrEP is available to all Veterans in VA care at risk for HIV to prevent transmission.
- In 2019, over 3,688 Veterans in VA care received PrEP.
- As HIV incidence rates for African-American and Hispanic cohorts have shown to be disproportionate to their population in the US, the percent of the population receiving PrEP that is African-American and Hispanic meets or exceeds their representation in the VA for the majority of VISNs.

Sexually Transmitted Infections

- VA is working to increase screening of women under 25 for *chlamydia* and gonorrhea.
- VA is also working to increase testing of co-existing STIs including *chlamydia*, gonorrhea, syphilis and HIV.

Syringe Service Programs (SSPs)

- VA is working to increase the number of SSPs in high-risk counties and states through collaborations with community partners.

For more information, visit www.hiv.va.gov