



Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Prevention and Health Promotion Administration Infectious Disease Bureau
The Infectious Disease Bureau National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Special Edition E-Newsletter - Volume 1 - Number 1

Infectious Disease Bureau

February 7, 2014 is National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD). The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DHMH) Infectious Disease Bureau (IDB) calls on African Americans across Maryland to engage in community mobilization initiatives that encourage members of Black communities to get educated, get tested, get involved, and get treated for HIV/AIDS. After 33 years of grappling with HIV/AIDS, scientific advances now enable African Americans and others with HIV/AIDS to live longer, healthier lives.

The IDB has embraced the mission to work to protect, promote and improve the health and well-being of Marylanders and their families through the provision of public health leadership and through community-based public health efforts in partnership with local health departments, providers, community based organizations, and public and private sector agencies.

The 2014 NBHAAD theme, ***"I Am My Brother's and Sister's Keeper. Fight HIV/AIDS!"*** is a call for advocates and supporters in African American communities to engage in activities that promote HIV prevention messages, encourage residents 13 years of age and older to get tested, and inspire individuals with HIV to get treated and remain on their treatment regimens. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), challenges that place many African Americans at higher risk for HIV infection include: hiding high-risk behaviors rather than seeking HIV counseling and testing, receiving a late diagnosis of HIV infection, the presence of other sexually transmitted infections, missed opportunities to get early medical care, socio-economic issues, stigma, fear, discrimination, homophobia, and negative perceptions about HIV testing.

This NBHAAD electronic newsletter will provide data relative to HIV and African Americans in Maryland. During 2011, there were 1,311 new adult/adolescent HIV diagnoses reported in Maryland. It is disconcerting that the proportion of new HIV diagnoses that are African American has continued to increase from 56.6% in 1985 to 74.8% in 2011. Because of this increasing trend, IDB is calling on all African Americans to accept the challenge to engage in prevention activities and reduce the number of new HIV cases within our communities by getting involved with HIV education, testing and treatment.

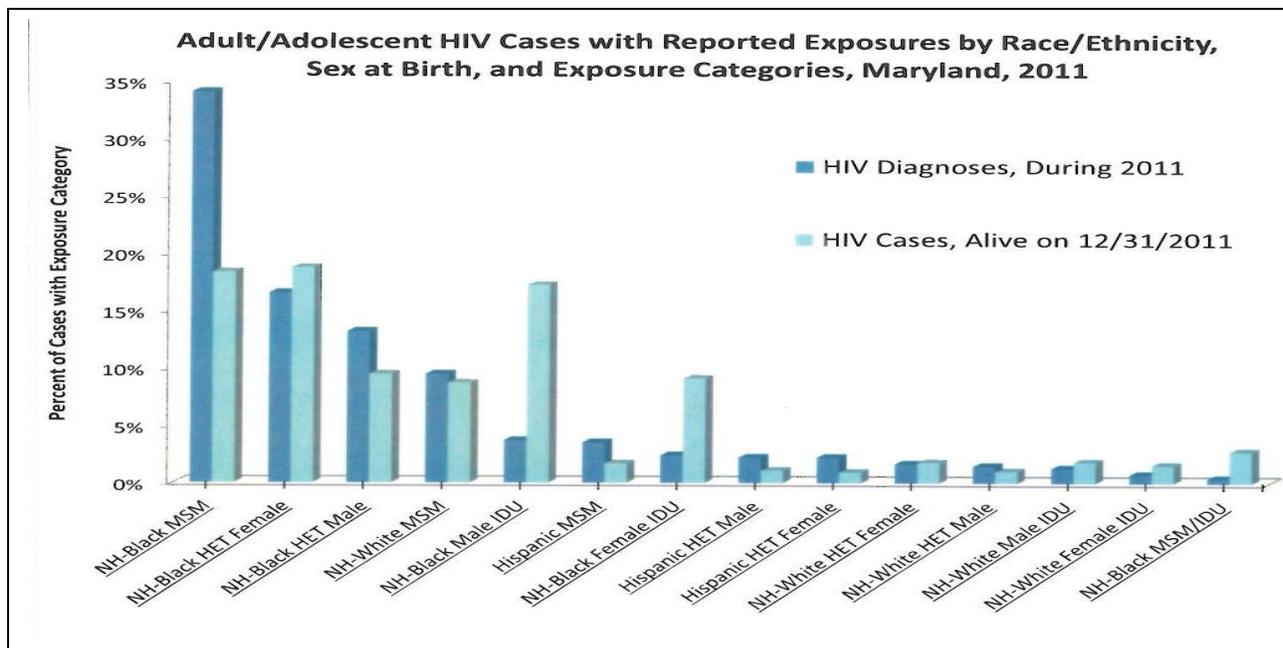
The Bureau is committed to reaching and serving the African American community through collaboration with many stakeholders including local health departments, medical providers, faith and community-based organizations, public and private sector agencies, and institutions of higher education to conduct a wide range of HIV prevention activities. Local support of IDB's social media projects, youth summits, HIV testing events, conferences, and evidence-based HIV prevention trainings are needed in order to change the way that HIV impacts the lives of African Americans in Maryland. To link to monthly activities go to: <http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov> .



HIV in Maryland: African American Fast Facts

Maryland's first diagnosed AIDS case in October 1981 was an African American homosexual man in Prince George's County. The second case was an African American injection drug using woman in Baltimore City. As illustrated in the chart below, in 2011, African American men who have sex with men (MSM) accounted for the greatest proportion of new HIV diagnoses (34.1%) followed by African American heterosexual (HET) females (16.6%) and African American heterosexual (HET) males (13.2%). This is markedly different from the proportion of living HIV cases where the largest group was African American HET females (18.8%), followed closely by African American MSM (18.4%), and African American male injection drug users (IDU) (17.3%).

By identifying the disproportionate rates in the demographic and exposure categories between new and existing HIV cases, resources may be better allocated for prevention, testing, and treatment services.



HIV in Maryland: A Comprehensive View

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 1.1 million people in the United States are living with HIV infection, and almost 1 in 6 (15.8%) are unaware of their infection.

In 2011, Maryland was fourth among U.S. states and territories in estimated adult/adolescent HIV diagnosis rates (36.4 per 100,000); 28,197 people were diagnosed and living with HIV or AIDS at the end of December 2011 as reported through December 31, 2012. The Baltimore-Towson metropolitan statistical area (MSA) had the sixth highest estimated adult/adolescent HIV diagnosis rate of any major metropolitan area, 33.8 per 100,000 population.



HIV TREATMENT WORKS

African Americans who have HIV in Maryland are encouraged to manage their HIV. Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) is medication used to manage the virus and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **treatment works!**

African Americans infected with HIV and placed on medication to reduce the replication of HIV can prevent the virus from spreading. No one should be afraid to get into care. Clinical evidence demonstrates that individuals on antiretroviral therapy who are adherent to their medications live longer, healthier lives. The Administration on Aging (AOA) estimates that half of all Americans living with HIV will be 50 years of age or older by the year 2015.

Multiple treatment strategies are being used to prevent infection and assist management of HIV. Pre-exposure HIV prophylaxis (PrEP) is an HIV prevention method in which people who do not have HIV take a daily pill to reduce their risk of becoming infected. PrEP is being used among uninfected men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender women, and couples where one partner is HIV infected and the other is not infected.



African Americans need to be knowledgeable about the history of HIV, the future of vaccine research and get involved in studies regarding HIV treatment and prevention. We must work at lowering the spread of HIV in our local communities.

Dr. Robert Gallo, co-founder and director of the Institute of Human Virology (IHV) at the University of Maryland, and co-discoverer of HIV as the cause of AIDS, was interviewed especially for this National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day E-Newsletter by CDC Associate, Montique Shepherd. In the interview Dr. Gallo stated, "Initiatives like our Institute's JACQUES Initiative and Evelyn Jordan Clinic give a realistic possibility to the idea of reducing the HIV epidemic, and slowing down the spread of the HIV virus across the state of Maryland." Dr. Gallo went on to say, "In order to reduce the spread of the HIV we must intensify what is already being done and consider and address other social issues related to the transmission of HIV. Intensive outreach efforts with the help of field workers, community awareness events, churches, social media, hospitals, clinics, schools, regular testing, and early treatment and care will play a major role in diminishing the HIV epidemic in Maryland."

Check out Dr. Robert Gallo discussing HIV vaccine research and other research projects at:

http://www.ihv.org/about/Robert_Gallo.html

NBHAAD is February 7th!

*"I Am My Brother's and Sister's Keeper.
Fight HIV/AIDS!"*



Derek E. Spencer, Executive Director of the JACQUES Initiative of the Institute of Human Virology (IHV), University of Maryland, and School of Medicine recently stated: "It's time we all participate in the fight against HIV and AIDS."

"We must transition from a 'them and those' to a 'we and us.' Until this happens there will be no ownership and without this sense of ownership and responsibility, there will be no change."

"We are encouraged to see leaders from multiple sectors of our community that include areas of entertainment, business, civic, social, education, faith, health, and media make their contribution in response to the HIV crisis ..."

"Our success over the next decade will be dependent upon our ability to engage the entire community in the fight against HIV and AIDS."

Check out: *Life Don't Have to End*, a compilation of poetry and stories from patients at JACQUES go to: www.lifedonthavetoend.com .



AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

open enrollment thru March 31, 2014

Many individuals with HIV are appreciative of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) also called Healthcare Reform or Obama Care.

The law insures that people with AIDS can no longer be turned away by insurance companies because of pre-existing conditions. Medicaid eligibility has been expanded and people will not be dropped from coverage when they get sick. The Ryan White program will continue to provide assistance to eligible clients. Enroll today!

www.marylandhealthconnection.gov

Call 1.855.642.8572 or 1.855.642.8573



MSM Youth Forum



MSM Faith-Based Forum



HIV Stops With Me Spokes Models



Baltimore City
HIV Testing Ball

AFRICAN AMERICANS PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HIV A MESSAGE FROM THE CDC

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) advises Marylanders to be smart about HIV. Here's what you can do to reduce your risk of infection: Get the facts — Arm yourself with basic information. Are you at risk? How is HIV spread? How can you protect yourself? Take control — use the facts to protect yourself and your loved ones. There are three essential ways to reduce your risk:

1. **Use a condom** every time you have anal, vaginal or oral sex. Correct and consistent use of condoms is highly effective in reducing HIV transmission.
2. **Don't engage in risk behaviors.** CDC lists the following actions as **risk behaviors** for HIV transmission: **failure to use condoms**, **being too intoxicated** by alcohol and drugs to make wise decisions, **having multiple sex partners**, **sharing IV drug needles** and **engaging in sex for drugs or money**.
3. **Get tested.** CDC recommends that **all persons aged 13 to 64 have routine HIV testing**. People who are tested and treated early live longer than those who do not receive treatment.

Adults and adolescents should put themselves to the test because knowing your HIV status is a critical step toward stopping HIV transmission. If you know you are infected, you can **take steps to protect** your partners. Also, if you are infected, the sooner you find out, the sooner you can receive life-extending treatment. Since other STDs can play a role in the acquisition of HIV, **knowing whether you are infected** with other STDs is critical in reducing your risk for infection.

4. **Start talking** — Talk to everyone you know about HIV — friends and family, coworkers and neighbors, at work and at places of worship. Have ongoing and open discussions with your partners about HIV testing and risk behaviors. **Talking openly** about HIV can reduce the stigma that keeps too many from **seeking the test**, prevention and treatment services, and support they need. HIV doesn't have to become part of your life.

INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

DHMH HIV/AIDS STATISTICS

<http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/CHSE/>

FIND A TESTING SITE

Call 1-800-CDC-INFO, visit www.hivtest.org, text your local ZIP code to KNOWIT

NATIONAL BLACK HIV AIDS AWARENESS DAY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/SitePages/Infectious_disease.aspx

HIV PREVENTION, TESTING, TREATMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES

http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/SitePages/infectious_disease.aspx

INFECTIOUS DISEASE BUREAU WEBSITE

http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/SitePages/Infectious_disease.aspx

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Contact the distribution Center at 410.799.1940 or the IDB at 1.800.358.9001

NBHAAD SITE

www.aids.gov

NBHAAD VIDEO

Factors Driving the HIV Epidemic among African Americans

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMgdWacrR08&feature=player_detailpage

MARYLAND HEALTH CONNECTION

www.marylandhealthconnection.gov

<http://greaterthan.org/campaign/obamacare/>

NBHAAD WORDFIND GAME

http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/SitePages/infectious_disease.aspx

This is an interactive special edition National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day E-Newsletter of the
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