HIV/AIDS among African Americans in New Jersey

As of December 31, 2014

♦ New Jersey ranked seventh among United States 50 states in the number of African American living with HIV/AIDS and New Jersey ranked second highest among the United States in the rate of living with HIV/AIDS per 100,000 in 2010.
♦ One in 61 African Americans in New Jersey is living with HIV/AIDS as opposed to 1 in 638 among Non-Hispanic Whites.
♦ Essex County, with the highest proportion of African American residents (39.7% from July 2013 Bridged-Race Estimates), has the highest rate of persons living with HIV/AIDS in New Jersey.
♦ The number of HIV/AIDS cases diagnosed in New Jersey annually decreased among African Americans from 1995 through 1999, but increased slightly in the year 2000. Then Black HIV/AIDS cases have decreased again between 2005 and 2011, but increased in the year of 2012. African American residents have accounted for about half of all HIV/AIDS cases diagnosed during each of these seven years.
♦ Despite declines in deaths due to HIV/AIDS; death due to HIV/AIDS ranked fifth among African American males and third among females aged 25-54 in the state of New Jersey in 2011.

African Americans in New Jersey account for:

♦ 13.34% of the state’s total population on July 2013 Bridged-Race Estimates
♦ 48.17% of all people ever diagnosed HIV/AIDS in 2012
♦ 51.35% of the people living with HIV/AIDS in the state through 2014

Among those living with HIV/AIDS, African Americans account for:

♦ 61.5% of HIV/AIDS cases among women
♦ 46.4% of cases among men
♦ 56% of cases among injection drug users
♦ 36% of men who have sex with men, but 39% of cases diagnosed in 2012
♦ 74% of children living with HIV/AIDS.

Hard hit areas in New Jersey

♦ About 67% of the state’s African Americans 2014 living with HIV/AIDS reside in the following eleven cities: Newark, Jersey City, East Orange, Irvington, Paterson, Trenton, Elizabeth, Atlantic City, Camden, Orange and Plainfield.
♦ 62% of adults/adolescents and 87% of children under 13 living with HIV/AIDS in the Newark metropolitan area (Essex, Morris, Sussex, Union, and Warren counties) are African American.
♦ 75% of adults/adolescents in the city of Newark, 91% adult/adolescents in East Orange and 92% adult/adolescents in Irvington living with HIV/AIDS are African American.
HIV/AIDS Challenges in African American Communities

Despite considerable efforts by the Division of HIV, STD and TB Services to target HIV infection through prevention and treatment; HIV is still a major threat in African American communities. Despite declines in infection and death due to HIV/AIDS, African Americans represent the majority of those infected, many do not know that they are infected and many of those at risk do not get tested for HIV. HIV disease is the 5th leading cause of death for African Americans males aged 25-54 years old in 2011 and the still remain third leading cause of death for African American females 25-54 years old in 2011. Furthermore, African Americans are more likely to test late; and when determined to be infected, either do not access care in a timely manner or intermittently participate in treatment. The public sector alone cannot successfully combat HIV and AIDS in the African American community. Community-based efforts help to overcome the current barriers to HIV prevention and treatment, it requires that local leaders acknowledge the severity of the continuing epidemic among African Americans and help reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS. Additionally, HIV prevention strategies known to be effective must be available and accessible for all populations at risk.

Prevention Efforts Must Focus on High-Risk Behaviors

Adult/Adolescent Men. Among African American men with HIV/AIDS, injection drug use has accounted for the largest proportion (35%) of the cumulative infections. The second most common exposure for African American men is having sex with other men (MSM), reported by 32%, while 4.6% report both injection drug use and sex with other men. Additionally, about 19.6% were related to heterosexual exposure.

Adult/Adolescent Women. Among African American women, injection drug use has accounted for 36.3% of the HIV infections, and 55.6% were related to heterosexual exposure.

Data source: Except for cities, rates were based on July 2013 bridge–race estimates. Risk of exposure data is based on modified risk exposure categories as described in the NJ HIV/AIDS report as of December 31, 2014.

For more information

- Call or write: New Jersey Department of Health Division of HIV, STD and TB Services PO Box 363 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0363 (609) 984-5874
- E-mail: aids@doh.state.nj.us
- Call the HIV/STD Hotline: 1-800-624-2377
- Visit our website: www.state.nj.us/health

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