

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. There are an estimated 1,189,700 people living in the United States with an estimated 36,740 new diagnoses annually.² If HIV goes untreated, it can lead to a diagnosis of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)—the most severe state of HIV and the diagnoses patients receive when they develop certain Opportunistic Infections (OIs) or their CD4 cell count drops below 200 cells per milliliter of blood.

Racial Disparities

In the United States, HIV disproportionately impacts Black and Hispanic/Latino Americans. While Black and Hispanic/Latino make up just 13.4% and 18.5% of the U.S. population, respectively, Black Americans account for 40.3% and Hispanic/Latino Americans account for 24.7% of the total population of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).¹

This disparity extends to the incidence, with 42% of new HIV diagnoses occurring in Black Americans and 27.8% in Hispanic/Latino Americans. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 26% of new HIV diagnoses were among Black gay and bisexual Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), 23% were among Hispanic/Latino gay and bisexual MSM, and 45% among gay and bisexual MSM under the age of 35.

Sex/Gender Disparities

Black women are also disproportionately impacted by HIV compared to women of other races/ethnicities. The rate of new HIV infections among Black women is 11 times that of White women and 4 times that of Hispanic/Latino women.

In 2019, transgender people accounted for 2% of new HIV diagnoses, most of which were identified in Black trans Americans.

Income Disparities

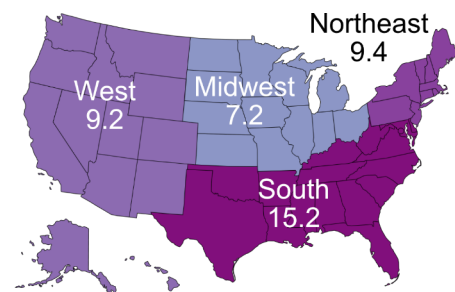
Of the estimated 1,200,000 PLWHA in the United States, 42% relied upon Medicaid for health insurance coverage in 2017.³ 46.8% of PLWHA received services from at least one part of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP), and 24.7% were enrolled in state AIDS Drug Assistance Programs.⁴

The high cost of HIV treatment has resulted in many patients having to ensure that their incomes don't exceed maximums in order to qualify and continue treatment

Regional Disparities

New HIV diagnoses are not evenly distributed across the U.S. The incidence of new HIV diagnoses disproportionately impacts Americans living in the South, with an incidence rate of 15.2 per 100,000 individuals compared to the national rate of 12.6.

Most new diagnoses in the U.S. in 2016 and 2017 occurred in just 48 counties, Washington, D.C., and San Juan, Puerto Rico.



Disparities in Modes of Transmission

While the majority (89.1%) of new HIV diagnoses are the result of sexual transmission, 6.8% are directly related to Injection Drug Use (IDU) with an additional 4% involving a combination of Male-to-Male Sexual Contact and IDU.

In 2019, of the 2,508 IDU-related HIV transmission, 43.1% were diagnosed in the American South and 21.3% in the Northeast. In the South, White persons accounted for 50% of IDU-related diagnoses, followed by Black persons who accounted for 32% and Hispanic/Latino persons who accounted for 15%. In the Northeast, Black persons accounted for 38% of IDU-related diagnoses, followed by White persons who accounted for 33%, and Hispanic/Latino who accounted for 25%.²

References

¹U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2021, June 02). *U.S. Statistics*. <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/data-and-trends/statistics>

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, October 15). *Diagnoses of HIV Infection in the United States and Dependent Areas 2019: Special Focus Profiles*. <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/reports/hiv-surveillance/vol-32/content/special-focus-profiles.html#Inject-Drugs>

³Kaiser Family Foundation. (2019, October 01). *Medicaid and HIV*. <https://www.kff.org/hiv/aids/fact-sheet/medicaid-and-hiv/#footnote-432737-12>

⁴Health Resources and Services Administration. (2021, December). *Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Annual Client-Level Data Report 2020*. <https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/ryanwhite/data/rwhap-annual-client-level-data-report-2020.pdf>