

Section 2: Special-Needs Populations

The CARE Act requires that needs assessments and comprehensive plans used by planning councils in setting priorities and allocating funds identify and address the unmet service needs of special populations.

In planning for special populations, unmet needs may refer to the service needs of persons not currently in the system of HIV/AIDS care. It may also refer to persons in the system of HIV/AIDS care whose needs are being only partially met. Determining unmet needs among special or targeted populations, which should be carried out during needs assessment, is important in determining how to direct resources to PLWH who may be disenfranchised from HIV/AIDS care services.

As of the FY 2002 application cycle, HRSA's HIV/AIDS Bureau identified the following populations as requiring special attention during the planning and resource allocations processes conducted in Title I EMAs and Title II states:

- youth 13–24 years of age
- injection drug users
- substance users other than injection drug users
- men of color who have sex with men
- white, or Anglo, men who have sex with men
- women of childbearing age (13 years of age and older)

In addition, CARE Act applicants are encouraged to identify other populations that have been significantly or disproportionately affected by the epidemic. Evidence indicating that a population has been significantly affected should be provided by the data included for underserved populations. These data should come from epidemiologic profiles and needs assessments and may also include other national and local data.