



## Demonstration Projects for Implementation of Rapid HIV Testing in Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Alternative Venues and Populations: Linkage to HIV Care



### Overview

The demonstration projects for Implementation of Rapid HIV Testing in Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Alternative Venues and Populations address strategies 1 and 2 of the Advancing HIV Prevention initiative. Strategy 1 is to make voluntary HIV testing a routine part of medical care. Strategy 2 is to implement new models for diagnosing HIV infections outside medical settings.

These projects will demonstrate new models for diagnosing HIV infection through greater access to rapid HIV testing along with prevention and care services for persons diagnosed with HIV. The projects will look at the feasibility, impact, and best methods of integrating routine rapid HIV testing programs in a variety of non-traditional testing venues targeting high-risk and hard-to-reach populations. The individuals targeted by these demonstration projects are among those less often reached by health promotion initiatives and more often disproportionately impacted by the HIV epidemic. In addition, these projects will help determine whether offering rapid HIV testing reduces potential loss to follow-up by increasing the percentage of people who actually receive their test result and are linked to care (because initial results are available within 20 to 40 minutes, rather than days or weeks). Further, these projects will help examine whether offering HIV testing to every client, rather than just those deemed high risk, can address the stigma associated with getting tested.

These demonstration projects will take place in a range of settings including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); community-based organizations (CBOs) serving migrants, transgender persons, and American Indians; and primary care settings serving high HIV prevalence communities. The sites offering testing as part of this set of demonstration projects will use a range of non-traditional approaches and settings. For example, at HBCUs, testing will be offered not only at the campus health center but also at nearby off-campus locations and campus health promotions and social and academic events.

Persons delivering testing and counseling for this demonstration project will range from trained CBO personnel providing testing in the field to clinical staff at primary care clinics. CBOs will provide full counseling, testing, and referral services. The project sites will develop plans for linking newly diagnosed HIV-positive persons to appropriate medical and social services and for contacting clients who are lost to follow-up.

The project sites will provide CDC with information that will help develop models to better understand how to reduce the barriers that make it difficult for communities to access HIV testing and services.

## Goals

The goals of this program are to

- build new models for providing HIV testing and linkage to care.
- integrate routine rapid HIV testing programs into a variety of non-traditional testing venues.
- demonstrate the value of rapid testing for accessing hard-to-reach populations and ensuring they receive their test results and are linked to care and treatment.

## Collaborator Sites

### Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

**Albany, Georgia, Albany State University** will collaborate with Fort Valley State University to conduct routine testing for students at both schools and for people in the community. This collaborator site will partner with CBOs including a local faith-based organization to offer off-campus testing. The student health centers at the 2 universities will be used for most of the testing. Collaborating groups will use other non-clinical campus sites to host events throughout the year. There will be focus groups to better understand barriers confronting testing of students in these small southern communities.

**Washington, District of Columbia, Howard University** will conduct routine testing of undergraduate and graduate students ages 18 to 49. They will use student peer leaders for recruitment and marketing of the testing promotion. Daily testing will take place at the student health center on the main campus and bi-weekly testing will occur on more remote campuses. Recruitment for testing will also occur at a variety of non-clinical campus locations and during some major campus social events. Initially, focus groups will be used to assess barriers to students getting tested and to help determine marketing strategies.

**Jackson, Mississippi, Jackson State University** will perform routine testing of students and people in the community using CBOs and student peer leaders from campus. Rapid testing will take place in a campus counseling center. Testing will also occur at a university-sponsored community health program office about 5 miles from campus. Additional outreach activities will include a major kick-off event to publicize and normalize the idea of routine testing. Initially, focus groups will be conducted to determine and plan outreach events and ensure acceptability of suggested testing venues.

**Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Jefferson Comprehensive Care System, Inc.** is a non-profit CBO serving a 10-county area in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. It will manage testing at 4 HBCUs including: Arkansas Baptist College, Philander Smith College, Shorter College, and University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Routine testing will be offered to students from all 4 campuses at health clinics on 2 of the campuses. The more rural campuses do not have ongoing clinical services. Student peer leaders as well as faculty liaisons will collaborate across campuses to recruit and inform students about the project. Educational and outreach activities at the 4 schools will incorporate the testing project into student orientation activities, academic courses, and inter-campus social activities. This will include a major kick-off event to publicize and help normalize the idea of routine testing. Focus groups will be used to identify and assess barriers to testing.

### Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers

**Lawrenceville, Georgia, AID Gwinnett** will partner with the North Georgia AIDS Alliance to implement a rapid HIV testing and education program focused on migrant workers in northern Georgia, including Hall, Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale Counties. These organizations will conduct outreach and rapid HIV testing in

non-traditional venues serving migrant worker populations (e.g., churches, beauty salons, markets, and poultry plants) and create a network of community agencies and clinical settings routinely offering rapid HIV testing. They will also pursue an extensive media outreach component including radio and print announcements to encourage testing.

**Hartford, Connecticut, Hispanic Health Council** will provide outreach and testing in a range of settings to reach the migrant communities of the Connecticut River Valley. These will include use of a mobile testing minivan at gathering places of migrant farm workers after typical daytime working hours. Locations will include businesses, markets, restaurants, bars, and sporting events. Hispanic Health Council will also integrate HIV testing into other services they offer to the Hispanic community, including counseling and referral services at their offices.

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin, United Migrant Opportunity Services** will serve the Hispanic and African-born migrant and immigrant communities of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and South Dakota. Their trained community *promotoras* (i.e., lay health workers) will provide outreach and their testing coordinators will provide testing. They will further integrate HIV testing into the direct migrant services they currently provide, including child care, assistance with housing, vocational training, and other social services.

### **Transgender Communities**

**San Francisco, California, AIDS Healthcare Foundation** and partner Ark of Refuge will provide rapid HIV testing to a primarily African American, transgender population through a transgender-focused program that includes a clinic treating pre- and postoperative transgender persons at risk for or infected with HIV. They will offer rapid HIV testing to transgender clients who access any service through this program, including HIV prevention education and mentoring, weekend food bank, worship services, and transitional housing. Potential clients will be offered immediate HIV counseling and testing services on a walk-in, no-appointment basis. Clients who test positive for HIV will immediately receive counseling and referral into care.

**New York, New York, Housing Works, Inc. (HW)**, the nation's largest minority-run HIV/AIDS service organization, serves primarily minority populations disproportionately affected by HIV, including transgender persons of color. HW will provide counseling and testing for 260 transgender people in New York City. They will recruit counseling and testing participants through a social network approach and by using a mobile van to target areas frequented by members of the transgender community. They will compare the 2 approaches to recruitment and collect data on the transgender population's HIV exposure factors, knowledge of HIV/AIDS status, and barriers to HIV/AIDS testing.

**Miami, Florida, South Beach AIDS Project (SoBAP)** will provide routine off-site testing, field-based outreach, and Internet outreach to the pre- and postoperative transgender community of about 1,000 persons in Broward and Dade Counties. Data show that this population, a sizeable portion of which is involved in the sex-work industry, is at significantly higher risk for HIV infection. SoBAP has built relationships with gatekeepers in the transgender communities and learned valuable lessons about perceived barriers and benefits to health-seeking behaviors. SoBAP will stage off-site late night outreach and offer routine off-site counseling, testing, and linkage to services. They plan to saturate the transgender communities in Broward and Dade Counties with multi-tiered advertising and promotion for their program.

### **Native American Communities**

**Salt Lake City, Utah, Intermountain Harm Reduction Project**, a CBO, will partner with the Indian Walk-In Center to offer routine testing to Native Americans from 5 tribal entities and 11 reservations in the Salt Lake

metropolitan area. Testing will be offered in conjunction with all Indian Walk-In Center programs as well as at the main Intermountain Harm Reduction Project facility, a training center, the reservations, and other remote locations, as necessary. Much of the work will be operated by local tribal organizations and tribe members.

**Phoenix, Arizona, Native American Community Health Center**, a CBO working with Native Americans in Phoenix since 1978, will conduct routine HIV testing through local outreach in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Testing locations will be non-traditional and will include community venues, health fairs, and pow wows. Additional testing will take place at local tribal health facilities and with participants of in-house wellness programs. This collaborator site will target Native Americans living in Maricopa County including a transgender Native American population. Testing will also target transient Native Americans who migrate to Phoenix from reservations.

**Sault Ste. Marie, MI, Saulte Ste. Marie Tribe/Chippewa Indians Sault Tribe Health Center** will conduct routine HIV testing for clients ages 17 to 49. The majority of testing will occur on reservation land at the main tribal health center and 4 satellite health centers. Testing will also be offered at a local urgent care center that serves many Native Americans. Outreach testing will be offered to specific clients at residential treatment facilities as well.

### **Clinical Settings Serving High-Prevalence Communities**

**Chicago, Illinois, Access Community Health Network**, a network of 42 health centers, will incorporate routine rapid HIV testing into services for clients who visit 1 of 2 Access health centers: Kling Internal Medicine on the west side of Chicago or Ashland Family Health Center on the south side of Chicago. Each of these sites serves about 3,000 clients annually in federally designated underserved areas of Chicago with predominantly low-income and minority populations (more than 85% African American or Hispanic).

**Oakland, California, Alameda County Medical Center (ACMC)** is the primary county hospital in the eastern San Francisco Bay Area and currently has about 600 new AIDS cases per year. The ACMC will collaborate with the Highland Hospital Emergency Department and its HIV Testing Program to establish routine, on-going rapid HIV testing through the emergency department (ED), with HIV testing integrated into other routinely delivered services such as taking patients' vital signs. At full implementation, it is projected that all ED staff will be involved with rapid HIV testing and that ACMC will be testing an estimated 5,000 patients per year.

### **Project Milestones**

- Funding announcement: June 2004
- Selection of project sites: September 1, 2004
- Initial site visits by CDC team: October 2004 through February 2005

## **Data Collection**

Data collection methods are currently being developed in coordination with the sites. At present, the sites are working with CDC to determine the feasibility of linking project-specific data collection to the existing data infrastructure at sites.

Data collection at each site will include quantitative data, such as the number of people tested, the number of HIV infections diagnosed, the number of people linked into care, and qualitative data from focus groups and surveys. These data will help identify best practices such as the most effective ways to motivate people to get tested and the characteristics of counselors who are effective in convincing community members to get tested.