

## MINORITY AIDS INITIATIVE

### WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

- Communities of color have been disproportionately affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
- Of the estimated 40,000 new HIV infections each year, nearly 70% occur among minorities.
- In 2002, minorities represented over 63% of persons living with AIDS.
- In 2002, African Americans accounted for 54% of all new diagnoses of HIV/AIDS.
- In 2002, an estimated 171,000 men who have sex with men (MSM) were living with AIDS, and 46% of those were MSM of color.

To be successful, HIV prevention must address the diverse communities affected by the HIV epidemic. Prevention efforts must focus on groups at greatest risk, particularly African-American and Hispanic/Latino youth. Programs must be relevant to the lives of the target population—appropriate to age, culture, community standards, and language. They must be designed with input from the affected community and delivered by organizations and people with credibility in that community.

### WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

Since 1999, CDC has received funding through the Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) to enhance efforts to prevent the acquisition or transmission of HIV infections in racial and ethnic communities. With MAI, CDC supports community-based programs to prevent HIV, capacity building programs to assist community-based organizations (CBOs), and targeted education efforts to raise awareness of the importance of HIV testing. CDC also conducts supplemental surveillance to define the magnitude of the epidemic in racial and ethnic communities and research to develop and refine prevention programs.

#### *Example of Program in Action*

The Minority HIV/AIDS Research Initiative is a capacity-building initiative that funds investigators to conduct studies on gaps in HIV/AIDS research in African-American and Hispanic/Latino populations. In 2003, nine research projects were funding in the following states: California, Florida, Georgia, New York, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Washington, D.C. Two research projects were funded in Jackson, Mississippi. Examples of research include access to HIV testing and treatment in the nonurban South; HIV knowledge and HIV testing activities among low-income heterosexual young adult African Americans; acceptance of HIV clinical trials by African Americans; HIV testing in primary care settings; and equal access to HIV vaccine trials by African Americans, Latinos, and whites.

### WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

CDC continues to build the capacity of local communities to prevent HIV. In particular, CDC will continue to provide financial support and technical assistance to CBOs through programs addressing populations at high risk for HIV infection. CDC is also evaluating the MAI program to assess the impact of this effort and guide future HIV prevention efforts.