

Eliminating Syphilis

Wake County (Raleigh), North Carolina

Why is Syphilis Elimination in the U.S. within our reach now?

- Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Infectious syphilis is at the lowest rate ever reported: 2.6 cases/100,000 population (6,993 total cases).
- Syphilis is now very concentrated; half of all new cases in 1998 were reported from only 28 counties, which represent less than 1% of all U.S. counties.
- Other industrialized countries have already eliminated syphilis.

Why is it Important to Eliminate Syphilis in Wake County?

- **In 1998 Wake County ranked 26th in the nation** in new cases of infectious syphilis (49 cases) and had a rate greater than 3 times the national rate.

- **To reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in health**

S 72% of cases are among African Americans (79% of cases nationally).

S The infectious syphilis rate in Wake County for African Americans is nearly 12 times greater than the rate for white Americans.

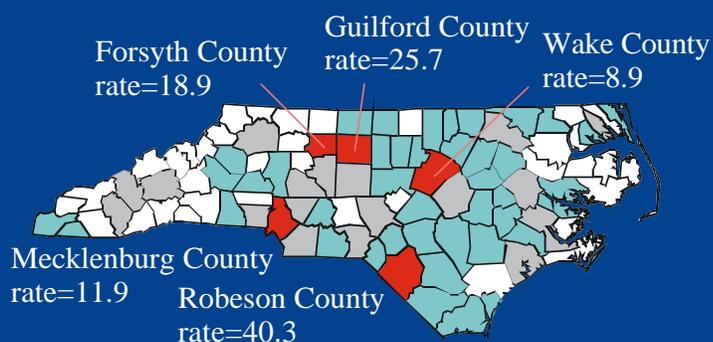
- **To decrease spread of HIV infection**

S Syphilis increases HIV transmission at least 2-to-5 fold.

- **To improve infant health**

S Syphilis can be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy causing stillbirths or congenital infection, some of which may result in persistent health problems.

Infectious Syphilis — North Carolina, 1998



- 0 cases reported
- Rate ≤ 4/100,000*
- Rate > 4/100,000*
- One of 28 counties reporting half of new cases in the U.S.

* Healthy People 2000 objective is 4/100,000

1998 U.S. rate: 2.6 cases/100,000 population

Wake County Responds

- Weekly screening for syphilis is taking place in affected communities through a joint project by the Wake County Human Services and the AIDS Service Agency of North Carolina (ASA), a non-profit community based organization.

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