

Summary of Considerations for Management of HIV and Hepatitis C Outbreaks Among People Who Inject Drugs

(A CHECKLIST FOR STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS)

Outbreak preparedness and detection

- Assess capacity to detect an increase in HIV and HCV diagnoses above what is normally expected and to evaluate evidence of recent transmission of HIV or HCV among case-patients.
- Develop criteria to determine if an HIV or HCV outbreak is occurring and the threshold at which the outbreak response plan is to be initiated.
- Establish jurisdictional capacity (such as local providers, hospitals, clinics, health departments) to provide HIV or HCV care and treatment in the event of an outbreak.
- Develop protocols to refer affected persons to medical care.
- Develop protocols to refer affected persons to mental health and substance use treatment.

Outbreak investigation

- Create a case definition for confirmed, probable, and possible cases.
- Establish and execute a contact tracing plan.
- Increase capacity for HIV or HCV testing in the affected jurisdiction, particularly at venues frequented by PWID (such as health care settings, substance use treatment programs, correctional facilities).
- Ensure testing methods and algorithms can detect and confirm both chronic and acute infections with HIV or HCV, and can generate data to assess genetic relatedness of infections.

Outbreak response

- Use Incident Command System principals to manage the outbreak response.
- Engage public safety, especially law enforcement, early.
- Engage community-based organizations that can provide relevant services to augment the response.
- Provide or refer to medical care and treatment (e.g., antiretroviral and antiviral therapy) and other support services including but not limited to medical case management, mental health treatment, and assistance procuring health care coverage.
- Provide or refer to organizations that provide access to sterile injection equipment to prevent new infections, where state and local law allows.
- Provide medication-assisted treatment, counseling, and support to treat substance use disorder and to prevent drug injection.
- Minimize the number of steps, visits, locations, and overall effort required to access care, such as collocating multiple services at a central location (sometimes called a “one-stop shop”).