

# Houston Health Department

## Funded Categories

**Category 1:** PrEP (Preexposure Prophylaxis)

**Category 2:** Data to Care

## Background

Based on data reported in the 2015 HIV Surveillance Report, Houston ranked eleventh nationally of all U.S. metropolitan areas in rate of HIV diagnoses.<sup>1</sup> In 2013, the rate among black men living with HIV is 3.2 times that of white males in Houston.<sup>2</sup> Local survey data also indicates the transgender community bears a disproportionate burden of HIV; however, no adequate surveillance estimate exists at this time. The Houston care continuum depicts a clear picture of the critical need to reduce health disparities and provides an opportunity to introduce something different and innovative.

Despite a robust HIV prevention and care response in the Houston metropolitan area, innovative interventions are imperative to realize expanded access to care and achieve reductions in new HIV infections. Even though there is a growing body of research indicating pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and treatment as prevention (TasP) are highly effective HIV prevention strategies, these strategies are not yet widely adopted in Houston. There is a need to dramatically scale-up PrEP and TasP to curb the local HIV epidemic, particularly among men who have sex with men (MSM), MSM of color, and transgender persons.

## Overview of Houston's Project PrIDE Plan

The Houston Health Department's (HHD) PrIDE demonstration project will use two primary strategies and associated activities to increase access to PrEP among MSM, transgender persons, and persons of color including increasing knowledge and awareness of PrEP using social media and building the capacity of providers to prescribe PrEP. Additionally, their Data to Care program will focus on policy development and expanding linkage to care.

## Programmatic Activities

HHD plans to achieve their goals by implementing the following activities:

### CATEGORY 1: PrEP Support Activities

- **Social Marketing Campaign:** HHD will develop and launch a Houston-specific multimedia social marketing campaign; create and distribute Houston-specific print and online educational materials to increase knowledge and awareness of PrEP among MSM and transgender populations
- **Education and Awareness Activities:** HHD will host/co-host PrEP educational activities at events frequented by MSM and transgender persons and develop an online PrEP provider directory
- **Capacity Building (provider-focused):** HHD will create a Houston-specific PrEP Provider Toolkit of best practices for implementing PrEP with Texas-specific insurance, Medicaid/care coverage strategies;

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *HIV Surveillance Report, 2015*; vol. 27. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/reports/surveillance/>. Published November 2016.

<sup>2</sup> AIDSvu ([www.aidsvu.org](http://www.aidsvu.org)). Emory University, Rollins School of Public Health. Date accessed: November 30, 2016



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- Provide in-service training and technical assistance for PrEP education and referral to HHD staff; develop scripts, policies, protocols, and Memoranda Of Understanding for PrEP referral process; establish a referral system for providers seeking support and technical assistance for PrEP implementation in their practice

## CATEGORY 2: Data to Care

- Capacity Building (provider-focused): Develop scripts, policies, protocols, contracts, and Point of Entry Agreements for Data to Care activities, linkage referrals, and data sharing; modify forms and databases to ensure collection of accurate surveillance data for transgender women; and conduct case conferences with hepatitis linkage staff and generate lists of HIV diagnosed not in HIV care
- Education and Awareness Activities: Develop and launch a Houston-specific multimedia social marketing campaign, including but not limited to outdoor, radio, cinema, online, and print advertising; Create and distribute Houston-specific print and online educational materials, including brochures and palm cards

## **PROGRAM POINT(S) OF CONTACT**

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