

# HIV/AIDS among Native Americans in Washington

## Statistics

---

- Through 2004, 201 AIDS cases and 64 HIV cases have been reported for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) (2).
- Through June 2004, 26 AIDS cases and 6 HIV cases have been reported for Native Hawaiians (3).
- As of December 31, 2004, 167 AI/ANs were reported living with HIV/AIDS (2).
- Through 2004, 95 AI/ANs with AIDS have died, and 3 AI/ANs with HIV have died since HIV reporting was implemented in Washington in 1999 (2).

## Primary Mode of Transmission

- Among the AI/AN HIV/AIDS cases reported through 2004, male-to-male sexual contact represented the largest transmission category for males (53%), and injection drug use was the leading risk factor for females (56%) (2).

## Risk Factors

---

**There are multiple risk factors that contribute to high rates of HIV. Of these, two health risk factors, substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases, and one general risk factor, poverty, is highlighted, since all three are universally prominent in most AI and AN and communities.**

- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) increase an individual's risk for HIV infection. In 2004, Native Hawaiians had the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> highest rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea infections, respectively; AI/ANs had the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea infections, respectively (4).
- Substance abuse increases the likelihood of engaging in risk behaviors. Washington was among the states with the highest number of AI/AN admissions to substance abuse treatment centers in 2002 (5). In 2002, 4,039 AI/ANs were admitted to substance abuse treatment centers, and in 1998, AI/ANs had the highest estimated rate of need for substance abuse treatment, compared to other racial/ethnic groups (5,6).
- Poverty increases an individual's vulnerability to HIV infection. Approximately 24% of AI/ANs in Washington live below the poverty level, compared to 11% of the state's general population (7). Consequently, access to healthcare, HIV testing and prevention services, and education is limited.

## Surveillance

---

- Washington state implemented name-to-code HIV reporting in September 1999. Names are initially collected, and after any necessary information has been collected, the names are subsequently converted to a code. Because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) only deems HIV reporting by name acceptable, Washington state's HIV data is not included in the CDC's national HIV/AIDS surveillance reports (8).
- HIV data in Washington does not accurately reflect the current burden of HIV disease, because HIV reporting has only been in place for a relatively short amount of time.

## Ryan White CARE Act

---

- Although AI/ANs make up 2% of the HIV/AIDS cases in Washington state, 0% of the state's AIDS Drug Assistance Program clients were Native in 2004 (9). However, in 2001, Natives represented 4% of clients receiving other Title II services in the state (10).
- Washington's current HIV reporting method threatens future Ryan White CARE Act funds that the state receives from the federal government. The funding will become dependent not only on AIDS case data, but also on HIV case data submitted to the CDC. The federal government is expected to incorporate HIV case data into the funding formulae no later than fiscal year 2007 (11).

## Additional Resources

---

- Washington State Department of Health. HIV/AIDS Prevention and Education Services: [http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/HIV\\_AIDS/Prev\\_Edu/default.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/HIV_AIDS/Prev_Edu/default.htm).
- Washington State Department of Health. Sexually Transmitted Disease Program: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/STD/>.
- National Native American AIDS Prevention Center: [www.nnaapc.org](http://www.nnaapc.org); 303-542-2036.

## References

---

1. Kaiser State Health Facts. 50 state Comparisons: Distribution of new AIDS cases by race/ethnicity, 2006. Available at: <http://www.statehealthfacts.kff.org>. Accessed March 16, 2007.
2. Washington State Department of Health. American Indians/Alaska Natives HIV/AIDS 2004 dataset. HIV/AIDS Prevention and Education Services. HIV and AIDS Statistics. Received July 2005.
3. Washington State Department of Health. American Indians/Alaska Natives HIV/AIDS June 2004 dataset. HIV/AIDS Prevention and Education Services. HIV and AIDS Statistics. Received July 2004.
4. Washington State Department of Health. 2004 Sexually transmitted disease morbidity report. Infectious Disease and Reproductive Health. STD/TB Services and Assessment Unit.
5. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Substance abuse treatment admissions among American Indians and Alaska Natives: 2002. Office of Applied Studies, The DASIS Report, 2005.
6. Washington State Department of Health. Profile of substance use and need for treatment services in Washington state. Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse. Revised 2002.
7. US Census Bureau. Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000. Available at: [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?\\_bm=y&-context=qt&-reg=DEC\\_2000\\_SFAIAN\\_DP3:001|01A&-qr\\_name=DEC\\_2000\\_SFAIAN\\_DP3&-ds\\_name=DEC\\_2000\\_SFAIAN&-CONTEXT=qt&-tree\\_id=406&-geo\\_id=04000US53&-search\\_results=01000US&-format=&-lang=en](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/QTTable?_bm=y&-context=qt&-reg=DEC_2000_SFAIAN_DP3:001|01A&-qr_name=DEC_2000_SFAIAN_DP3&-ds_name=DEC_2000_SFAIAN&-CONTEXT=qt&-tree_id=406&-geo_id=04000US53&-search_results=01000US&-format=&-lang=en). Accessed October 28, 2005.
8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, 2003 (Vol. 15). Atlanta: US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2004.
9. NASTAD & Kaiser Family Foundation. National ADAP Monitoring Project: Annual Report, 2005. Available at: <http://www.kff.org/hiv/aids/upload/National-ADAP-Monitoring-Project-Annual-Report-2005.pdf>. Accessed October 20, 2005.
10. Health Resources and Services Administration. Demographic Characteristics of Clients Receiving Services Funded by Ryan White Care Act Title II Programs 2001 Report. HIV/AIDS Bureau. Available at: [http://hab.hrsa.gov/data/hab2001/new\\_reports.cfm](http://hab.hrsa.gov/data/hab2001/new_reports.cfm). Accessed October 28, 2005.
11. United States Department of Health and Human Services. Fact Sheet: Ryan White Care Act Reauthorization Principles, 2005. Available at: <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2005pres/ryanwhite.html>. Accessed on October 28, 2005.