

WNY R-AHEC Providing Healthcare in a Pandemic Webinar Series

Treatment of COVID-19 and other Infectious Diseases of Public Health Importance: Part II

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December 8, 2020



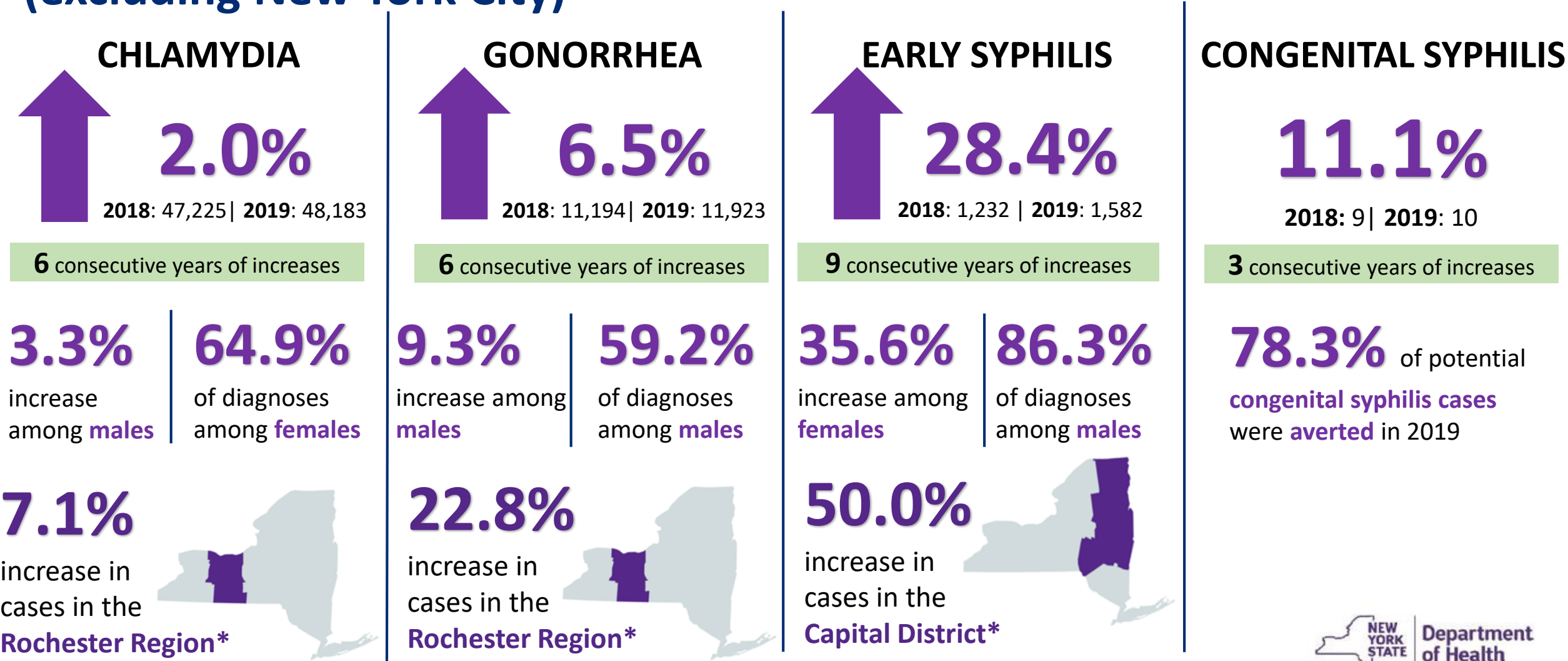
Disclosures

- None

Objectives

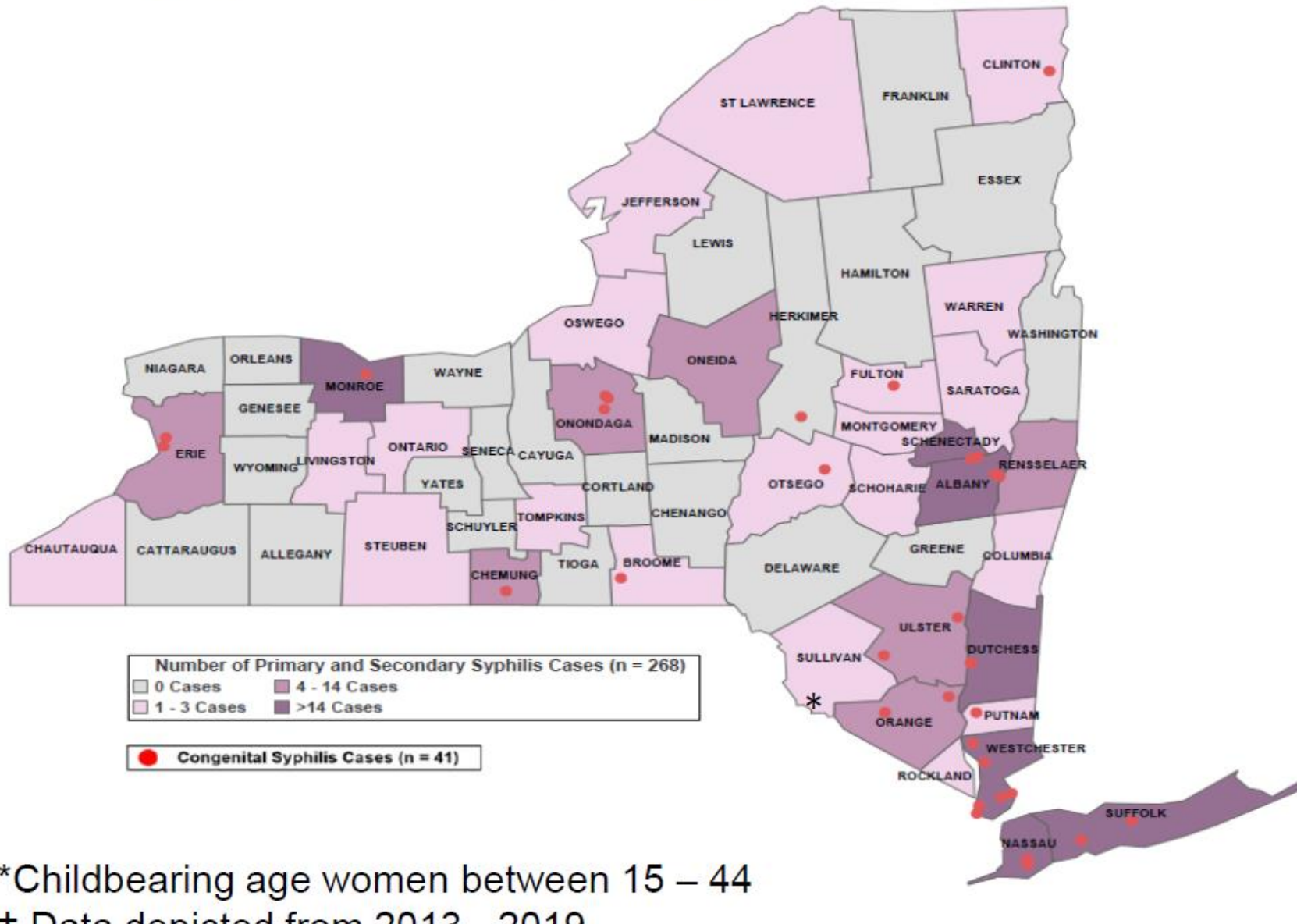
- Review local epidemiologic trends for reportable communicable diseases with recent NYS Health Alerts
- Review alternative strategies for offering sexual health, HIV, and HCV services during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Discuss current CDC and NYS AIDS Institute guidance for prevention and treatment of HIV and STIs during the pandemic

2019 STI Surveillance Changes Highlighted for New York State (excluding New York City)



*Regional data displays region with the largest percent increase

Although preventable, Congenital Syphilis continues to occur annually‡

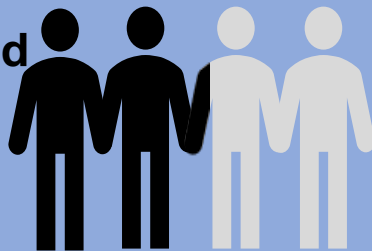


Department
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AIDS
Institute

54%

of STIs are diagnosed
among people
younger than 26
years of age



93% of primary & secondary syphilis
diagnoses are among **males**;

84% of these male diagnoses are
among **Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)**



Pregnant persons can transmit STIs
to their infant during pregnancy,
leading to severe health outcomes



Black non-Hispanic, Hispanic and
Native American individuals are
disproportionality impacted by STIs

Certain Populations are Disproportionality Affected by STIs

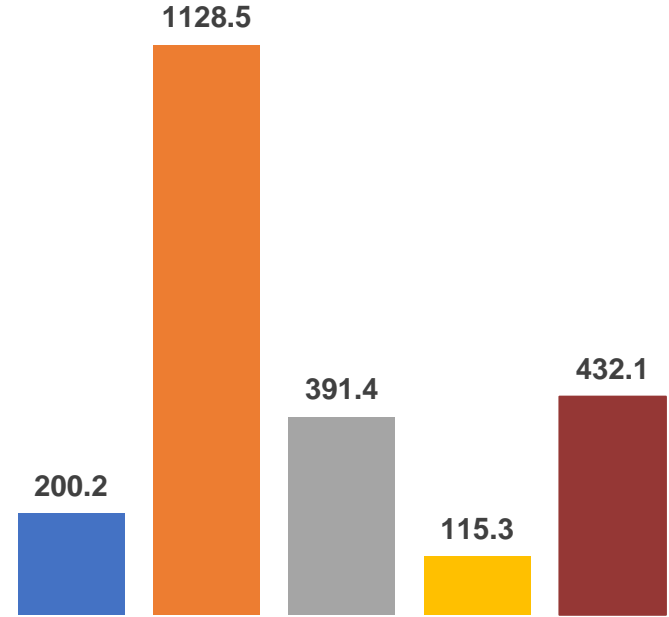
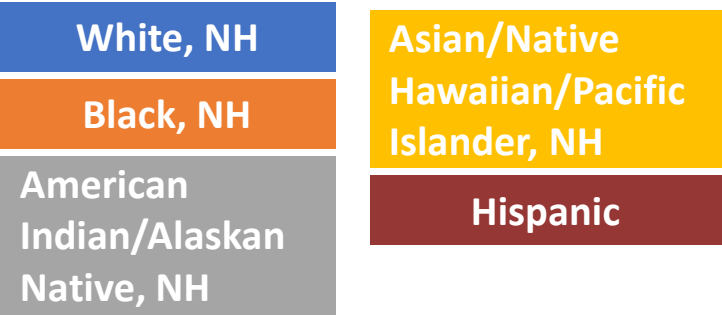


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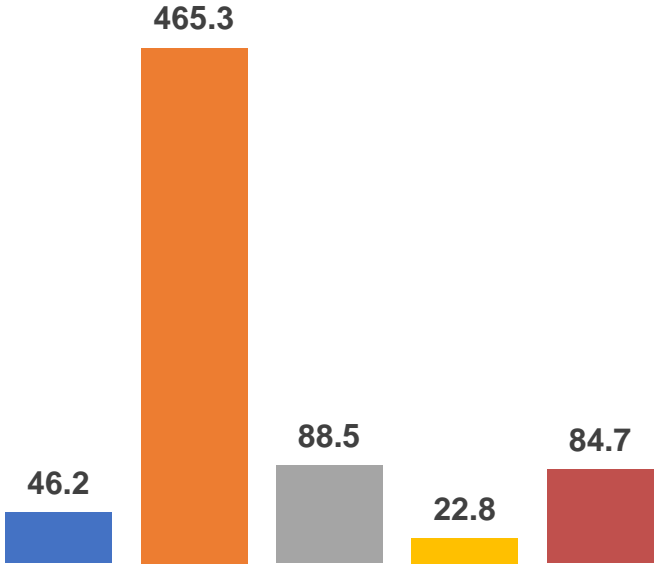
Created by: Office of Sexual Health and Epidemiology

Office of Sexual Health and Epidemiology

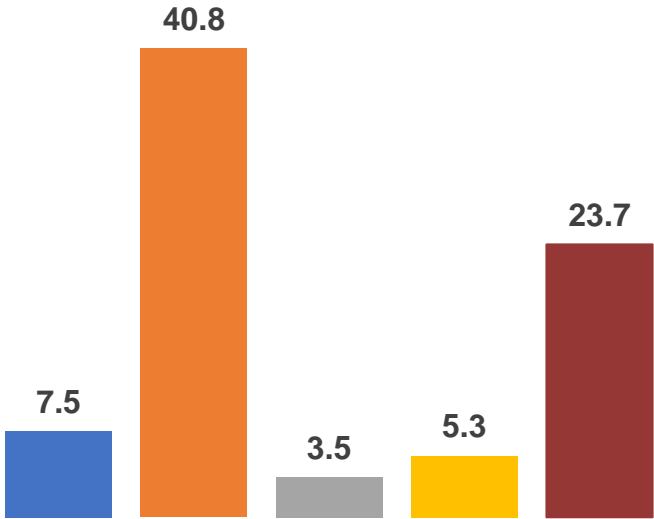
Black, non-Hispanic (NH), Hispanic and Native American Persons are Disproportionately Impacted by STIs**



Chlamydia Rates*



Gonorrhea Rates*



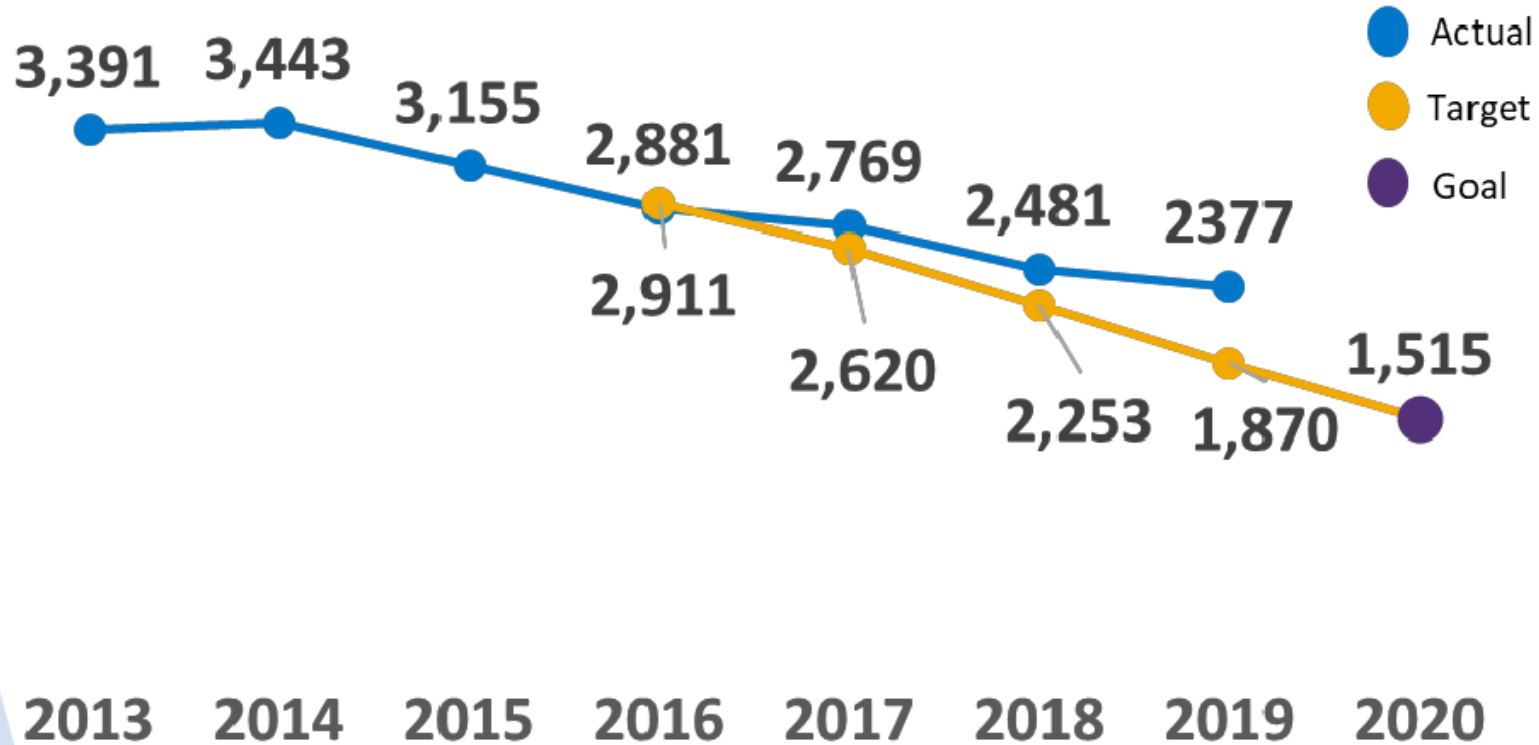
Early Syphilis Rates*

*Rates are age adjusted and per 100,000 by race/ethnicity
**Data are specific to New York State excluding New York City – 2019.
Data as of January 15, 2020 and will change prior to surveillance close out in Spring 2020

New HIV Diagnoses

By the end of 2020, reduce the number of new HIV diagnoses by 55%.

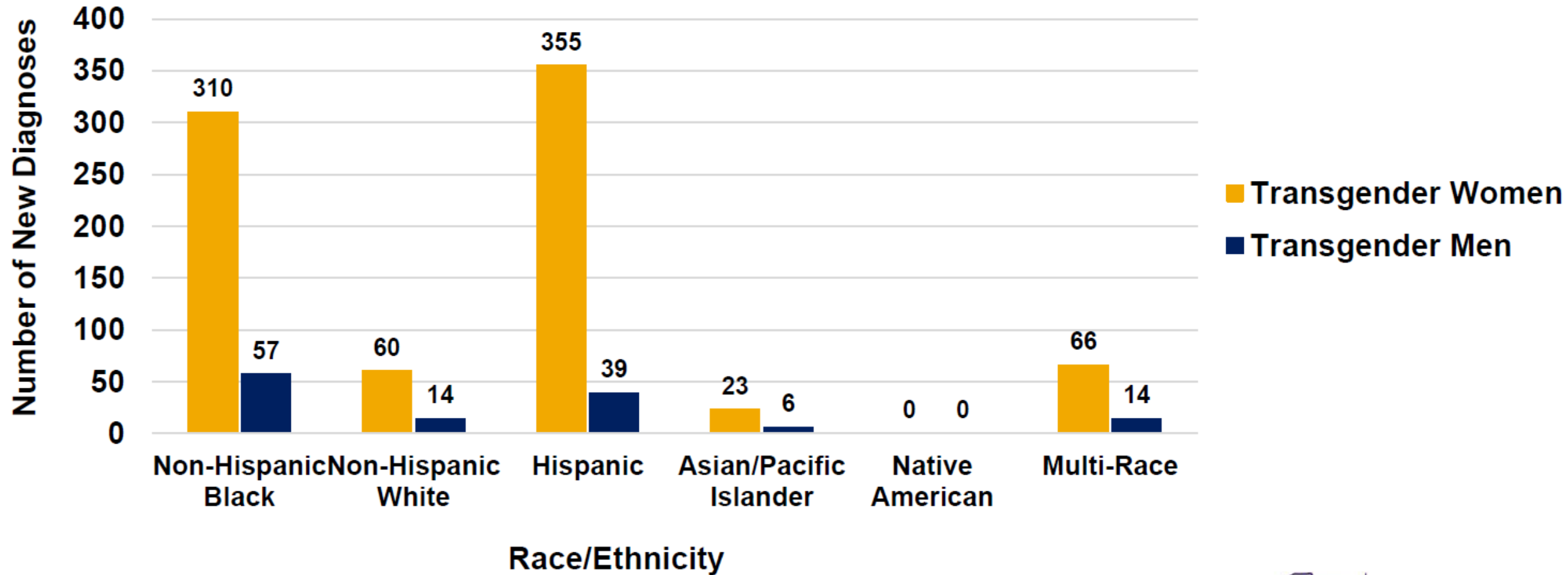
Measure: Number of people reported with newly diagnosed HIV.



Data Sources: NYS HIV Surveillance System. 2013 – 2015 data as of January 2017 to set target values. 2016 actual data as of September 2017. 2017 actual data as of June 2018. 2018 actual data as of June 2019. 2019 actual data as of June 2020

ETE Metric Dashboard: <http://etedashboardny.org/metrics/>

Transgender Persons,¹ Newly Diagnosed with HIV by Race/Ethnicity, NYS, 2010-2019*



AI/DEEP/BHAE



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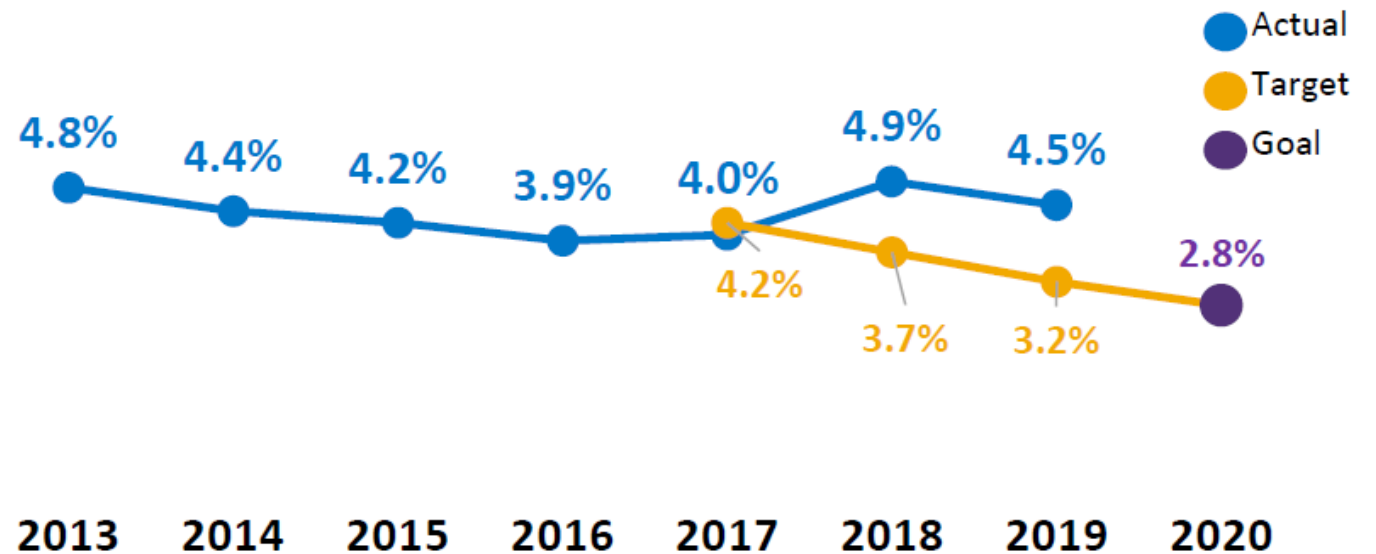
¹Data prior to 2010 are incomplete

*Data as of June 2020

Newly Diagnosed HIV Among Persons With a History of Injection Drug Use

By the end of 2020, reduce the percentage of newly diagnosed persons with a history of injection drug use to 2.8%.

Definition: The number of persons newly diagnosed with HIV who have a history of injection drug use. Includes persons newly diagnosed with an IDU and MSM/IDU risk history.



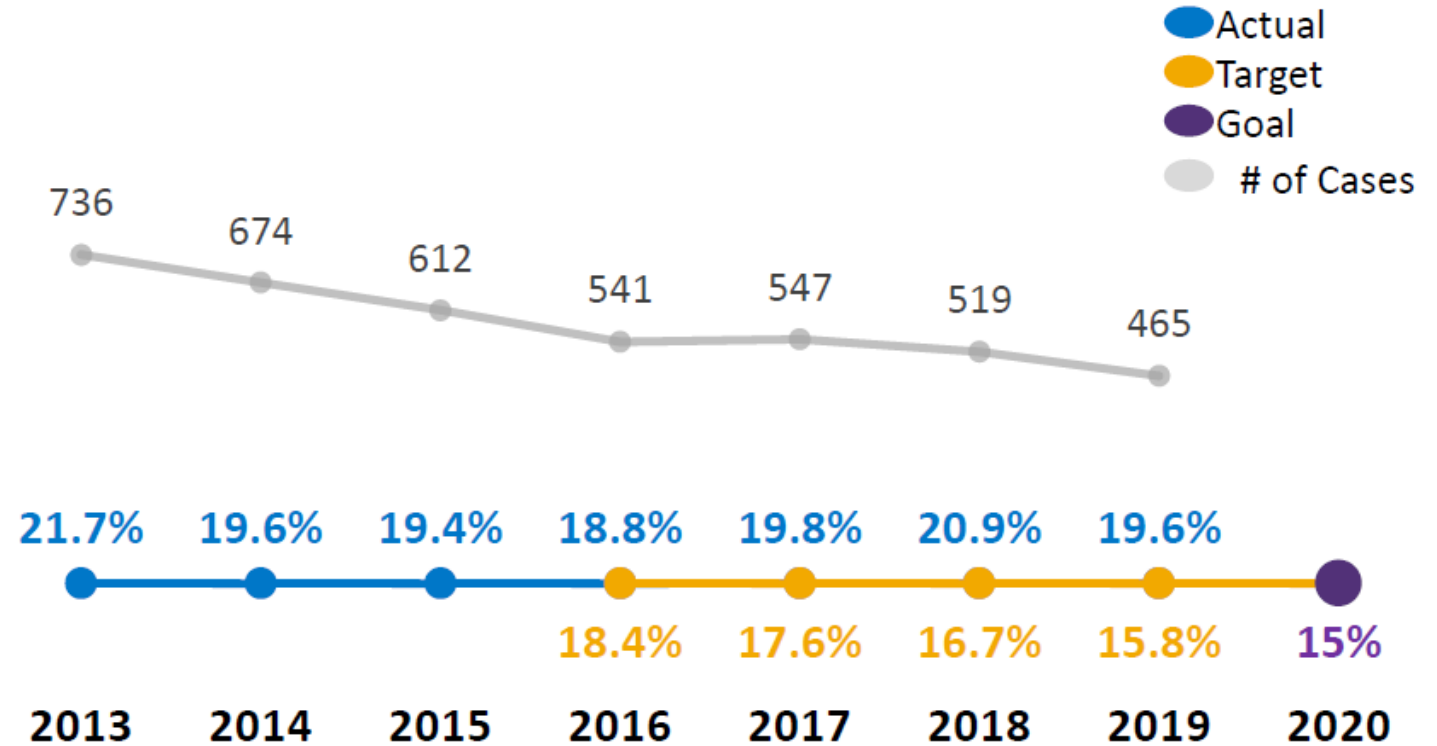
Data Sources: NYS HIV Surveillance System. 2013 – 2015 data as of January 2017 to set target values. 2016 actual data as of September 2017. 2017 actual data as of June 2018. 2018 actual data as of June 2019. 2019 data as of June 2020

ETE Metric Dashboard: <http://etedashboardny.org/metrics>

Concurrent AIDS Diagnosis

By the end of 2020, reduce the proportion of persons with a diagnosis of AIDS within 30 days of HIV diagnosis to 15%.

Measure: CD4 <200 (Stage 3 HIV) within 30 days of diagnosis.



Data Sources: NYS HIV Surveillance System. 2013 – 2015 data as of January 2017 to set target values. 2016 data as of September 2017. 2017 data as of June 2018. 2018 data as of June 2019. 2019 data as of June 2020

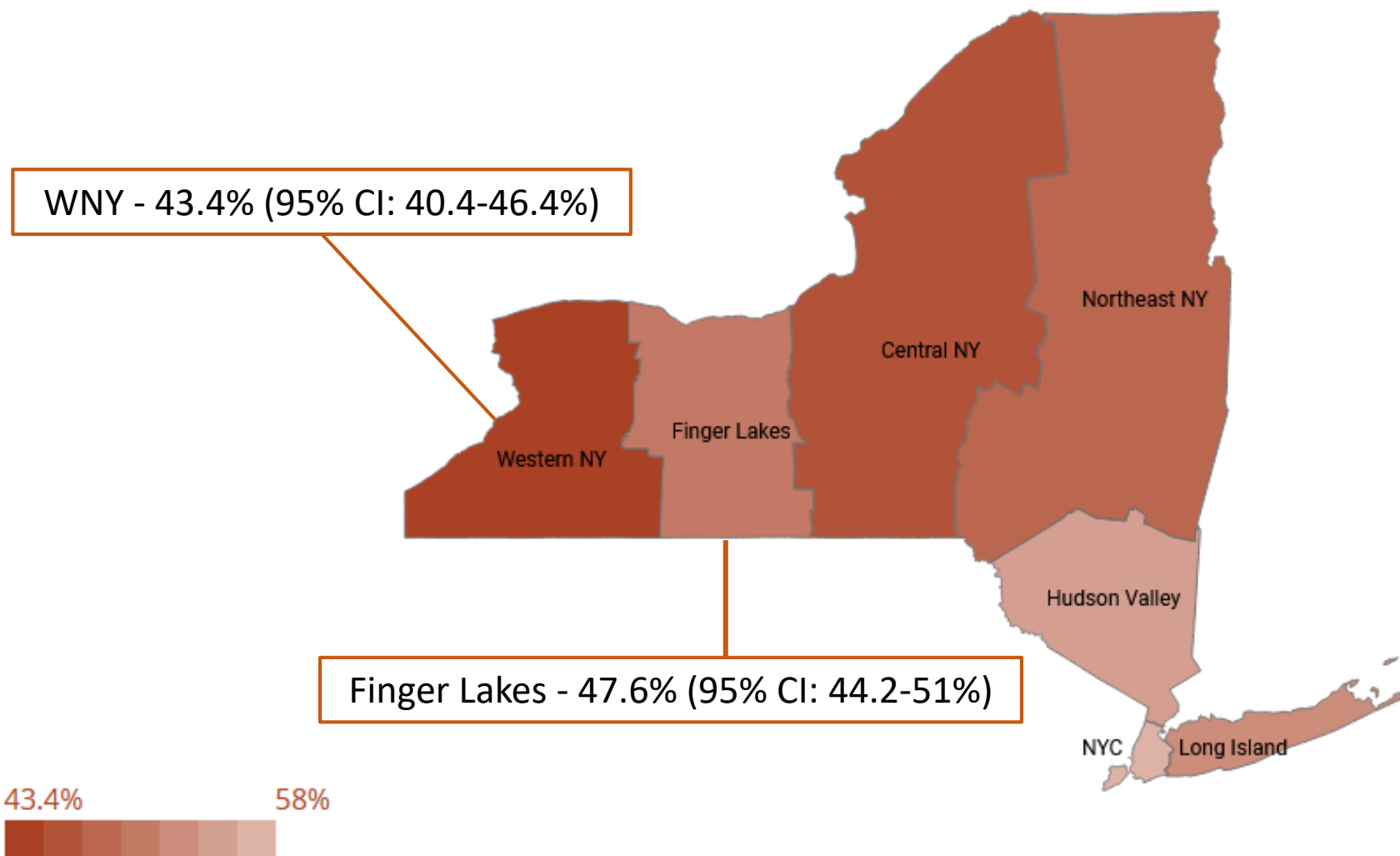
ETE Metric Dashboard: <http://etedashboardny.org/metrics>

Line Chart

Bar Chart

Region Map

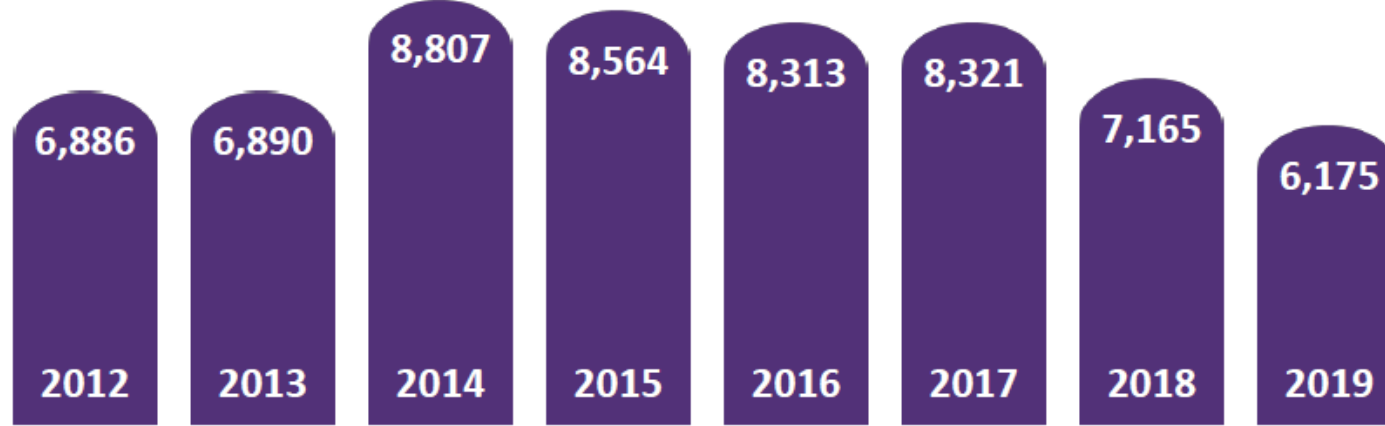
Percentage who have ever been tested for HIV
by Ryan White Region
Total, 2018



% Ever been tested for HIV
Unadjusted (crude) estimate

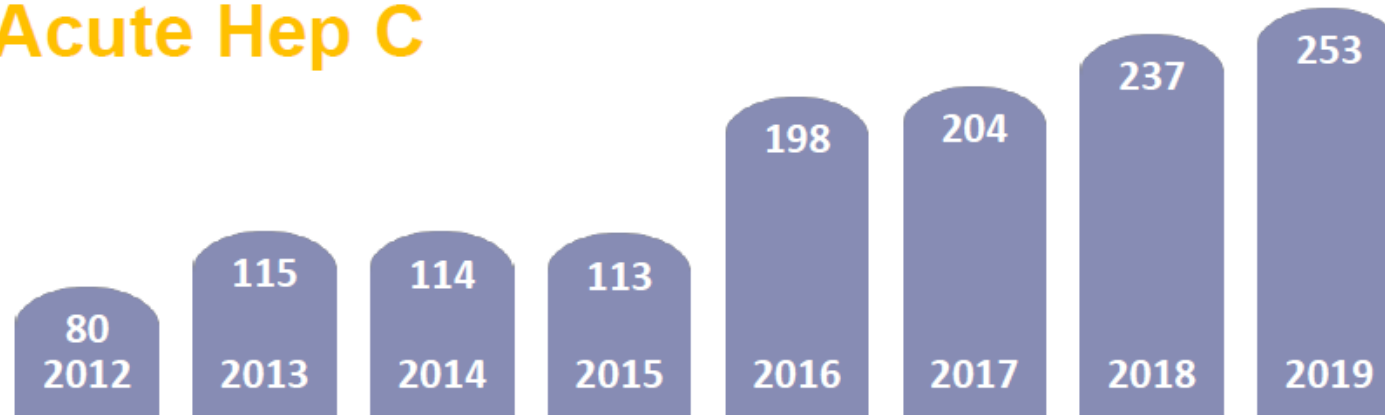
Newly Reported Hepatitis C Diagnoses by Year: New York (Excluding NYC), 2012-2019

All New Diagnoses



- 14% **decrease** in all newly reported hepatitis C diagnoses since 2018

Acute Hep C



- Acute hepatitis C diagnoses **increased** 7% since 2018

Source: NYS DOH Communicable Disease Electronic Surveillance System, 2020
Data current as of 10/25/2020. Data are preliminary and subject to change.

Recent Health Alerts



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Governor

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Commissioner

LISA J. PINO, M.A., J.D.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

To: Sexual Health Clinics, Hospitals, Emergency Rooms, Community Health Centers, College Health Centers, Local Health Departments, Community Based Organizations, Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Infectious Disease, OB/GYN, Planned Parenthood, Primary Care Providers, County Jails, Public Safety Community, and Urgent Care Centers

From: New York State (NYS) Department of Health (DOH), AIDS Institute

Date: October 15, 2020

HEALTH ADVISORY: INCREASED NUMBER OF HIV DIAGNOSES IN MONROE COUNTY

- The number of new diagnoses of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection among residents of Monroe County is elevated in 2020.
- Preliminary data indicate the number of new HIV diagnoses in 2020 is expected to exceed the number of new diagnoses in recent past years (2016-2019: N=55/year; 2020: N=55 as of September 2020).
- The number of new diagnoses among persons with a history of injection drug use (IDU) has been elevated since 2019. There have been 10 diagnoses among persons with a history of IDU so far in 2020; there were 10 in all of 2019 and the average for 2013-2018 was less than 5 per year.



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To: Sexual Health providers, Local Health Departments, Family Planning providers, Hospitals, Emergency Rooms, Community Health Centers, College Health Centers, Local Health Departments, Community Based Organizations, Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Infectious Disease, OB/GYN, and Primary Care Providers

From: New York State Department of Health, AIDS Institute

Date: July 14, 2020

HEALTH ADVISORY: GONORRHEA INCREASING IN MONROE COUNTY AND COUNTIES WITHIN THE CAPITAL DISTRICT REGION¹

- In Monroe County, reported gonorrhea diagnoses increased by 23% from 2018 to 2019. Preliminary data show a 75% increase during January-March 2020 compared to the same time period in 2019.
- In the Capital District Region, reported gonorrhea diagnoses increased by 20% from 2018 to 2019. Preliminary data show a 68% increase during January-March 2020 compared to the same time period in 2019.
- Recent increases in the Capital District Region and Monroe County have occurred among all racial and ethnic groups, with people who identify as non-Hispanic Black experiencing the highest incidence rates.
- Sexual health services such as testing at the anatomic site(s) of sexual exposure, offering three-site testing, providing expedited partner therapy for gonorrhea, and promoting linkage to partner services and HIV PrEP, where indicated, are encouraged.

Healthcare during a Pandemic

- In-person care is limited to varying degrees depending on:
 - Local COVID-19 prevalence and associated restrictions
 - Severity/potential morbidity of illness
 - Availability of staff, PPE, facilities
- Alternatives to in-person care:
 - Defer some services
 - Telemedicine models or hybrid operations
 - In-home testing, or at least home-collection of tests
 - Lab only visits

Reality

- COVID-19 Pandemic
- Social distancing and closures in place
- Constant flow of new information; uncertainty
- Anxiety among staff and patients
- Shortages of PPE, approved disinfectants, and test kits for STIs requiring swabs

Goals

- Safety for patients and staff
- Continue to provide essential health services
- Minimize need for patients to leave home
- Minimize patient contact with the healthcare system, particularly if they are well

Challenges for Diagnosis and Treatment

- STI screening and treatment
 - Exam
 - Testing - wet prep, Gram stain, NAATs, blood
 - No-cost meds and DOT
 - Immunizations
- HIV/HCV treatment
 - Testing – viral load, safety labs
 - Immunizations
- PrEP initiation and maintenance
 - Testing – HIV and STIs, creatinine
 - Immunizations

Opportunities

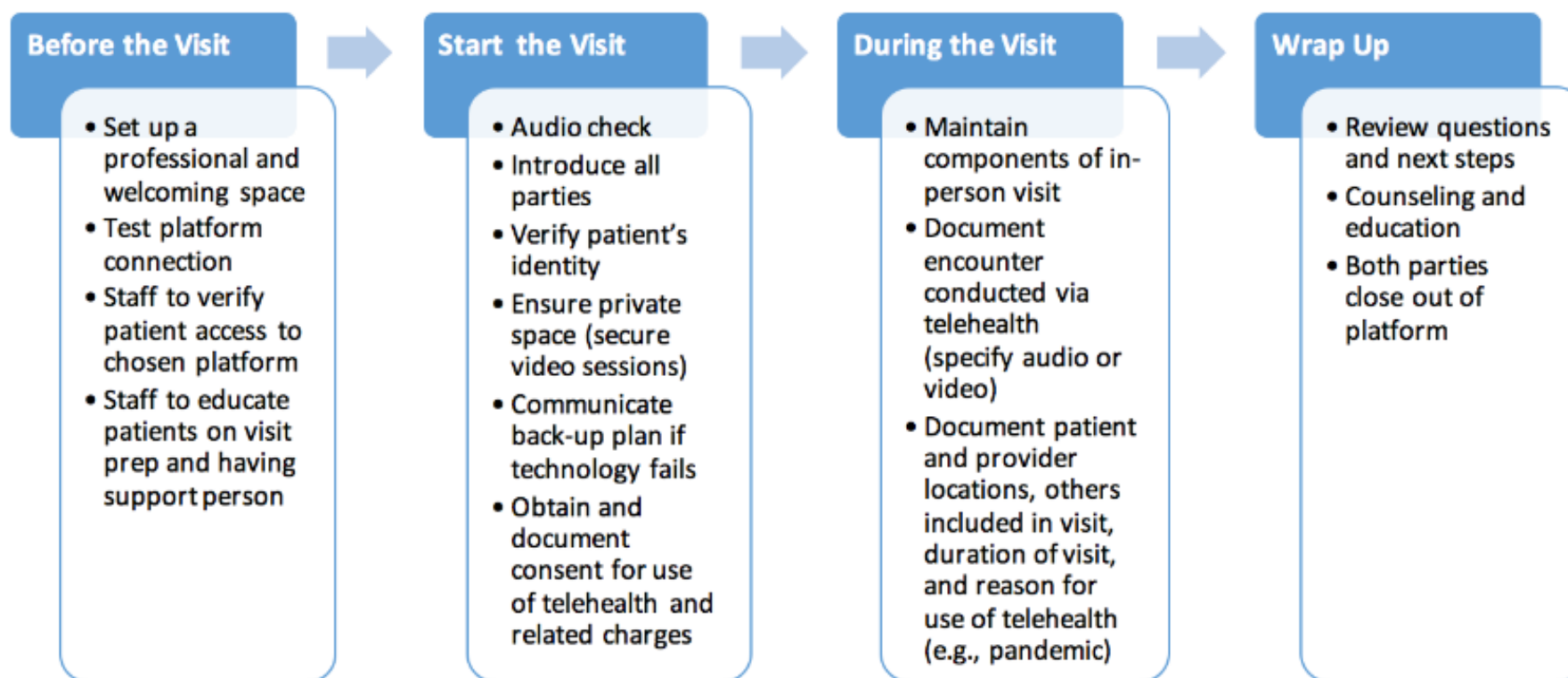
- Syndromic management of STIs with alternative oral regimens
- Expedited partner therapy (EPT) for STIs
- Telemedicine for HIV and HCV care, and TelePrEP/PEP
- Extended interval PrEP visits
- Doxycycline for bacterial STI prophylaxis in high risk MSM on PrEP
- In-home HIV rapid self-testing
- Reaching new populations
- Pharmacy home-delivery
- In-home collection of lab-processed tests (Trillium @Home, MyLabBox, etc.)

The Process

- Create a phone triage algorithm
 - COVID-19 symptom/exposure screen and chief complaint
 - Conduct phone screening prior to arrival or entry if possible
 - Designate priority visit criteria
 - Develop a plan for those who will have preventive services deferred
- Advertise change in the clinic entry/intake process
 - Requires a culture change in some clinic settings – “Call First” policy
 - Those with positive COVID-19 screen (e.g. travel, exposure, symptoms) should be managed by phone whenever possible
- Develop follow up plans for those being treated or followed with alternatives to usual standard of care
- Consider variety of telemedicine visit types

THE CLINICAL ENCOUNTER

Below is an overview of an example telemedicine workflow:



Adapted from the Northwest Regional Telehealth Resource Center's "Quick Start Guide to Telehealth During the current public health emergency"

Telemedicine Summary

BENEFITS

- Allows for maintenance of social distancing practices
- May help patients cope with social isolation
- Improves patient access to care
- Ideal for visits that do not require exam, e.g. adherence, counseling

LIMITATIONS

- Communication may be less effective than in-person
- Requires patient to have access to phone/internet and safe/private space
- Lack of physical exam
- Most diagnostic or screening tests cannot be done at home
- Treatment limited to oral medications

Essential Services

- STI symptoms
- Treatment
 - PHR/DIS Referral
- PrEP/PEP
- Sexual assault
- Pregnancy
- Confirmed/unconfirmed contact
(to syphilis, trich, GC, CT, HIV, or
STI syndromes)
- HIV testing**

Deferred Services:

- Routine screening
- Vaccines only

Process (cont.)

- Designate staff for teleworking when clinical space is limited
- Daily COVID-19 screening program for on-site staff
- Look for local partners who may offer complementary services
- Continuous review of local data and policies, as well as process improvement
- Transparency and communication with staff
- For clinics with on-site medications, med pick up at door rather than entry to clinical space vs. electronic prescription to local pharmacy

Information that can be obtained by phone

- CC/HPI, medical history, meds, allergies, risk assessment
 - Insurance/registration details
 - Consent to treat
 - Partners/contacts
 - Behavioral counseling
-
- For patients without phone availability, conduct abbreviated in-person assessment with the essential elements to provide the necessary care

Ensure a Safe Clinical Space for Patients and Staff

- Reduction in waiting room occupancy
 - Patients with positive COVID-19 screening questionnaire that need to be seen should be taken directly to exam room with minimal to no contact to other patients/staff if possible
- Enhanced cleaning protocols with EPA or NYS approved disinfectants for SARS-CoV-2
- Masks and hand hygiene for patients receiving on-site care
- Appropriate PPE for staff including
 - All encounters: Eye protection, mask, and gloves
 - Positive item on COVID-19 screen: Add gown and appropriate donning/doffing
- Separate staff workspaces as much as possible, and minimize shared workstations

In the exam room

- Maintain social distancing
- Minimize face-to-face time when possible, conduct non-exam portion of assessment by phone when able
 - Limit in-person time to exam and phlebotomy when possible
 - Have patients self-obtain swabs when possible, particularly oropharyngeal
- Defer oral exams unless patient requires syphilis staging or has oropharyngeal symptoms
- Reserve pharyngeal STI testing for MSM and those with symptoms, can defer if would not change management
 - Supply shortages may necessitate further restrictions

STI Care during COVID-19

- For asymptomatic self-reported or confirmed contacts to:
 - CT, NGU, or trich – Erx*
 - GC, Cervicitis, PID – Erx*
 - Syphilis – in-person testing/treatment visit for Benzathine penicillin
 - possible transition to doxycycline for non pregnant patients
- For those with typical symptoms of STI syndrome (urethritis, cervicitis, vaginitis)
 - Aim to treat empirically with Erx* (see CDC April 2020 DCL)
- If abdominal pain, symptoms of proctitis, symptoms of syphilis, unclear presentation → **In-person visit advised**
- PEP/PrEP with necessary on/off-site lab testing (including 4th gen HIV test)

*Meds can be picked up onsite at door if uninsured or unable to fill Rx

CDC Dear Colleague Letter (4/6/20)

Table 1. Therapeutic options to consider for symptomatic patients and their partners when in person clinical evaluation is not feasible:

Syndrome	Preferred Treatment: In clinic, or other location where injection ^a can be given ^a	Alternative Treatments: When only oral medications are available ^a	Follow-up
Male urethritis syndrome	Ceftriaxone 250mg intramuscular (IM) in a single dose PLUS Azithromycin 1g orally in a single dose (If azithromycin is not available and patient is not pregnant, then doxycycline 100 mg orally twice a day for 7 days is recommended). If cephalosporin allergy is reported, gentamicin 240 mg IM in a single dose PLUS azithromycin 2 g orally in single dose is recommended.	Cefixime 800 mg orally in a single dose PLUS Azithromycin 1g orally in a single dose (If azithromycin is not available and the patient is not pregnant, doxycycline 100 mg orally twice a day for 7 days is recommended). OR Cefpodoxime 400 mg orally q12 hours x 2 doses PLUS Azithromycin 1g orally in a single dose (If azithromycin is not available and the patient is not pregnant, doxycycline 100 mg orally twice a day for 7 days is recommended). If oral cephalosporin is not available or cephalosporin allergy is reported, azithromycin 2g orally in a single dose.	For alternative oral regimens, patients should be counseled that if their symptoms do not improve or resolve within 5-7 days, they should follow-up with the clinic or a medical provider. Patients should be counseled to be tested for STIs once clinical care is resumed in the jurisdiction. Health departments should make an effort to remind clients who have been referred for oral treatment to return for comprehensive testing and screening and link them to services at that time.
Genital ulcer disease (GUD) Suspected primary or secondary syphilis ^{††}	Benzathine penicillin G, 2.4 million units IM in a single dose.	Males and non-pregnant females: Doxycycline 100 mg orally twice a day for 14 days. Pregnant: Benzathine penicillin G, 2.4 million units IM in a single dose.	All patients receiving regimens other than Benzathine penicillin for syphilis treatment should have repeat serologic testing performed 3 months post-treatment.
Vaginal discharge syndrome in women without lower abdominal pain, dyspareunia or other signs concerning for pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)	Treatment guided by examination and laboratory results.	Discharge suggestive of bacterial vaginosis or trichomoniasis (frothy, odor): Metronidazole 500 mg orally twice a day for 7 days. Discharge cottage cheese-like with genital itching: Therapy directed at candida.	
Proctitis syndrome [#]	Ceftriaxone 250mg IM in a single dose PLUS doxycycline 100 mg orally twice a day for 7 days. If doxycycline not available or the patient is pregnant, azithromycin 1g orally in single dose recommended.	Cefixime 800 mg orally in a single dose PLUS doxycycline 100 mg orally bid for 7 days (if doxycycline not available or the patient is pregnant, azithromycin 1g orally in single dose recommended). OR Cefpodoxime 400 mg orally q12 hours x 2 doses PLUS doxycycline 100 mg orally bid for 7 days (if doxycycline not available or the patient is pregnant, azithromycin 1g orally in single dose recommended).	

^aWhen possible, clinics should make arrangements with local pharmacies or other clinics that are still open and can give injections

^aAlternative regimens should be considered when recommended treatments from the 2015 CDC STD Treatment Guidelines are not available

^{††}All pregnant women with syphilis must receive Benzathine penicillin G. If clinical signs of neurosyphilis present (e.g. cranial nerve dysfunction, auditory or ophthalmic abnormalities, meningitis, stroke, acute or chronic altered mental status, loss of vibration sense), further evaluation is warranted

[#]Consider adding therapy for herpes simplex virus if pain present

- Harm reduction approach
- “Flexible and pragmatic”
- Syndromic management if necessary
- Recommend f/u testing in 3 months

Syndromic Treatments (Oral)

Recommended follow up:

- For alternative oral regimens, patients should be counseled that if their symptoms do not improve or resolve within 5-7 days, they should follow-up with the clinic or a medical provider.
- Patients should be counseled to be tested for STIs once clinical care is resumed in the jurisdiction.
- Health departments should make an effort to remind clients who have been referred for oral treatment to return for comprehensive testing and screening and link them to services at that time.

HIV and HCV Prevention and Care

- A bit more challenging, blood testing periodically required
 - Types of test by phlebotomy vs. fingerstick sampling vs. oral swab
- Pre-screening by phone to determine need for in-person care
- Consider telemedicine visits with separate visit to lab, delayed labs by short duration for reassessment of COVID-19 risk, or home draw/home specimen collection if available
- Extended intervals between visits and labs for clinically stable individuals

HIV

- Continue to offer HIV screening during primary care and urgent care visits, even when done by telemedicine or if labs will be delayed
- HIV 1st visit for new diagnoses ideally in-person
 - PCPs and other providers making the diagnosis can provide rapid initiation of ART
- For maintenance ART, Rx 90 day supply*, use pharmacies with home delivery when available
- Screen for depression, anxiety, substance use, housing and food insecurity, and interpersonal violence
- Evaluate for changes in employment or insurance that may impact ability to obtain ART

Figure 1. Protocol for Rapid Antiretroviral Therapy Initiation

Identify Rapid ART Candidates	Counseling and Education	Assess and Refer	Baseline Lab Testing	Initiate ART	Payment Assistance?	Follow-Up	Adjust ART
<p>Candidates have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new reactive POC HIV test result, new HIV diagnosis, acute HIV, or known HIV, <i>and</i> • No or limited prior ARV use, <i>and</i> • No medical conditions or OIs that require deferral of ART initiation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV diagnosis • Disclosure • Adherence • Side effects and management of • Management of lifelong medications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health literacy • Identify and address medical and psychosocial barriers to treatment and adherence • As indicated, refer for substance use treatment, behavioral health services, housing assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm HIV diagnosis • Viral load • Resistance testing • CD4 count • HAV, HBV, HCV testing • Metabolic panel • STIs • Urinalysis • Pregnancy test for individuals of childbearing potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a preferred regimen based on patient characteristics and preference • Initiate ART immediately—preferably on the same day—or within 96 hours • Administer the first dose on site if possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess need for payment assistance • Refer patients with no insurance to NYS UCP • Provide resources for payment assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the patient within 24 to 48 hours by phone (or other preferred method) • Assess medication tolerance and adherence • If feasible, schedule in-person visit with medical care provider within 7 days • Reinforce adherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change or adjust the initial ART regimen based on results of initial lab and resistance testing

New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute: www.hivguidelines.org

nPEP and PrEP

- PEP – In-person exam and baseline test asap
 - PEP Hotline – (844) PEP4NOW
 - Can E-Rx meds
 - Follow up after baseline can be done with telemedicine clinician visit plus labs
- PrEP – Telemed or in-person visit but will need labs
 - E-Rx for 90 days, look for pharmacies that provide home delivery
 - Use 4th gen Ab/Ag HIV testing whenever possible
- nPEP and PrEP are essential elements of HIV prevention, there are referral centers, helplines, and national telemedicine platforms if these services are limited in your area
- Ensure counseling with all visits

HCV

- Continue to offer screening at primary and urgent care visits, even if by telemedicine or labs will be delayed
 - HCV Ab w/reflex to RNA
- Consider use of blood testing to assess for fibrosis (limit in-person enc.)
- For asymptomatic patients, discuss risks vs. benefits for treatment now or deferred
 - Transmission risks include: ongoing IDU with shared needles, unprotected sex
- Treatment with oral direct-acting antiviral regimens amenable to telemedicine care with lab monitoring (can incorporate with MAT)
- Set up meds for home delivery

Non-Traditional Free Testing Options

- Linkage to care based on results or interest in PrEP services
- NYS Home Test Giveaway:
<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/consumers/testing/>



- Trillium test@home: <https://www.trilliumhealth.org/services/trillium-at-home>

N

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Tests for:

- Chlamydia
- HIV (I & II)
- Gonorrhea
- Trichomoniasis

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8 panel home STD test - just as thorough as going to the clinic.

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- Herpes Simplex Type II
- HIV (I & II)
- Hepatitis C
- Syphilis
- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhea
- Trichomoniasis

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\$ 369

14 panel STD test - the most comprehensive test ever.

Tests for:

- Gonorrhea (genital, throat, rectal)
- Chlamydia (genital, throat, rectal)
- Mycoplasma genitalium
- HIV (I & II)
- Hepatitis C
- Herpes type-II
- Syphilis
- Trichomoniasis
- HPV

ADD TO CART

LEARN MORE

1. <https://www.mylabbox.com/at-home-std-kits/all/>
2. <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/a-look-at-online-platforms-for-contraceptive-and-sti-services-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

UpScript



Virtuwell



Additional NYS Clinician Resources

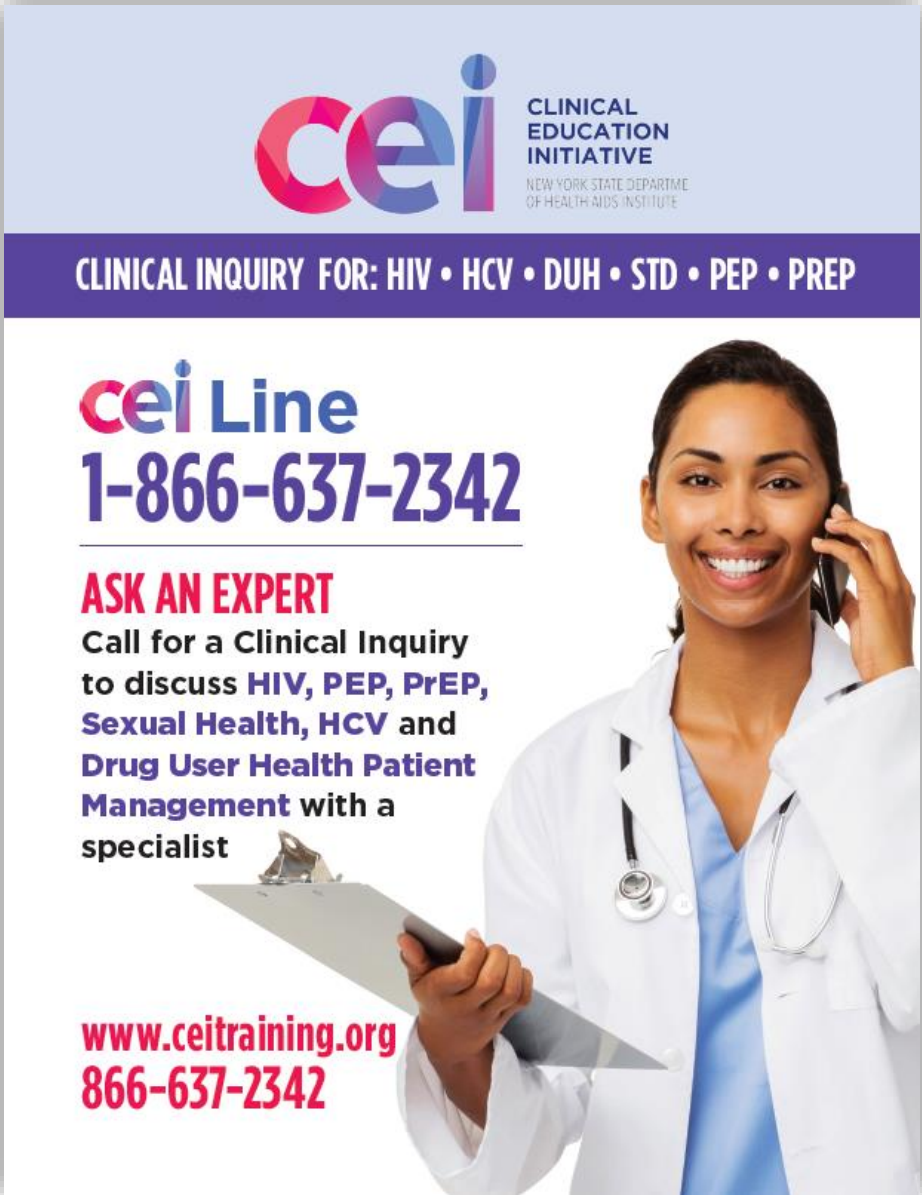
- NYS Clinical Education Initiative
 - Strategies for Provision of Telemedicine Services for HIV, STIs, HCV, and Drug User Health in NYS during the COVID-19 Pandemic:
https://ceitraining.org/documents/covid-19/Telemedicine_Document_6.8.pdf
- NYS AIDS Institute Clinical Guidelines Program
 - Strategies for STI Screening and Treatment during COVID-19:
<https://www.hivguidelines.org/sti-care/sti-covid-19-guidance/>
 - Rapid Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) Initiation during COVID-19:
<https://www.hivguidelines.org/antiretroviral-therapy/rapid-art-covid-19/>

Telemedicine Resources

- American College of Physicians:
 - [Telehealth Coding and Billing during COVID-19](#)
- US Department of Health and Human Services:
 - [Discretion for Telehealth Remote Communications During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- NYS DOH:
 - [Medicaid Telehealth Services during the Coronavirus Emergency](#)
 - [Comprehensive Guidance Regarding Use of Telehealth During COVID-19](#)
- CDC:
 - [May 2020 DCL with Guidance on HIV testing and PrEP during the pandemic](#)
 - [April 2020 DCL with Oral Alternative Regimens for STI Syndromic Mgmt. \(and EPT\)](#)
 - [HIV Self-Testing](#)

QUESTIONS?

NYS Sexual Health
Center of Excellence
853 West Main St. Rochester, New York
585.274.3044



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Drug User Health Patient
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specialist

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