

Summer Quarterly Report: July 2006

HIV/AIDS and the Corrections System

It is estimated that up to 25% of people living with HIV in the U.S. pass through a correctional facility each year and that the majority will have acquired HIV outside the correctional facility.¹ However, incarcerated populations are at risk for HIV infection both while in prison and after release into the general population.² According to the Department of Justice, Bureau of Statistics, while the number of HIV-positive inmates decreased less than 1% between 2002-2003, the overall prison population increased 1.6%, and by the end of 2003:

- The number of known HIV positive, State and Federal inmates had steadily declined since 1999 (Table 1);
- 1.9% of State and Federal inmates in custody were known to be infected with HIV;
- 2.8% of female State prison inmates were known to be HIV-positive compared to 1.9% of males; and
- Of those inmates known to be HIV-positive, 5,944 were confirmed cases of AIDS.³

Table 1. HIV-Infected Inmates in State and Federal Prisons, U.S., 1998-2003

Year	Number	% of Custody Population
1998	25,680	2.2
1999	25,807	2.1
2000	25,333	2.0
2001	24,147	1.9
2002	23,864	1.9
2003	23,659	1.9

Source: Maruschak L, Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, September 2005.³

Each year since 1991, the rate of confirmed AIDS cases has been higher among incarcerated populations than the general public. In 2003, the rate of AIDS in State and Federal prisons (0.51%) was more than 3

times higher than in the total U.S. population (0.15%).³

Study: Georgia Department of Corrections

It is often the case that people entering the criminal justice system have a history of high-risk sexual behavior, substance abuse, or both. As a result, there are high rates of HIV and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among incarcerated populations.⁴ However, many correctional facilities do not provide routine HIV testing upon entry and many inmates are unaware of their HIV status.

In an effort to better understand HIV transmission patterns and risk behaviors and make prevention recommendations, the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) invited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to assist with a unique study.² Beginning in 1988, the GDC began mandatory HIV testing for inmates upon arrival and additional voluntary HIV testing if requested or if clinically necessary. In October 2005, GDC housed 44,990 male inmates, of whom 856 (1.9%) were known to be HIV-positive: 780 (91%) were infected before incarceration and 86% were African American.

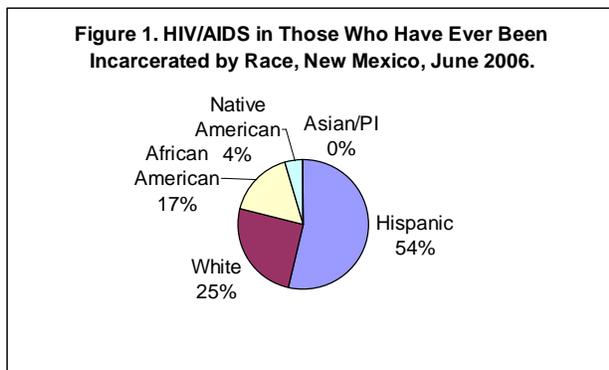
During July 1988-February 2005, the study found that a total of 88 male inmates had tested positive (seroconverted) for HIV while incarcerated after previously having tested negative at least once upon entry into prison. Of those 88 males, 37 (42%) had more than one negative HIV test while incarcerated before their HIV diagnosis. The study found the following characteristics associated with HIV seroconversion in prison: male-male sex, tattooing in prison, older age, having served 5 or more years of the current sentence, African American race, and having a body mass index of 25.4kg/m² or less on entry to

prison. Because male-male sex and tattooing were found to be risk factors associated with HIV transmission, the study highlights the need for HIV prevention specifically targeting these risk behaviors.

HIV/AIDS and the Incarcerated in New Mexico

New Mexico is home to 10 State correctional facilities; 5 publicly run and 5 privately run. According to the New Mexico Corrections Department (NMCD), the incarcerated population has continued to grow steadily since 1993. In 2004, 6,242 (542 per 100,000 population*) people were incarcerated in State correctional facilities, of whom 5,666 were males and 576 were females.⁵

A total of 169 people with HIV/AIDS in New Mexico are known to have ever been incarcerated. This is defined as ever having been incarcerated anytime during their life, in New Mexico or another state, any type of facility (state or federal prison, jail, detention center). Of those who have ever been incarcerated and have been diagnosed with HIV or AIDS, a little over 90% are males and almost half (47%) were ages 30-39 at the time of diagnosis (Table 2). Unlike the overall HIV-positive population, over half of all HIV-positive persons who have ever been incarcerated are Hispanic (Figure 1) compared to the general HIV-positive population where the majority are White (53%).



Source: NMDOH, HIV & Hepatitis Epidemiology Program, June 30, 2006.

Injection drug use (IDU) remains an important risk factor in HIV transmission, especially in people who have ever been incarcerated. As shown in Table 2, for men who have HIV/AIDS and have ever been incarcerated, the highest risk category is IDU (37%). This differs from the overall HIV positive male population where men who have sex with men (MSM) accounts for the majority (59%) followed by MSM/IDU (11%). For women with HIV/AIDS and who have ever been incarcerated, IDU account for 64% of risk compared to the general HIV-positive population where IDU among females is 33%.

Table 2. HIV/AIDS Among Persons That Have Ever Been Incarcerated, New Mexico, June 2006

	Living	Cumulative
Diagnosis	N (%)	N (%)
HIV	85 (54)	90 (53)
AIDS	72 (46)	79 (47)
Total	157	169
Sex		
Male	143 (91)	155 (92)
Female	14 (9)	14 (8)
Age at Diagnosis		
< 19	0 (0)	0 (0)
20-29	43 (27)	48 (28)
30-39	74 (47)	78 (46)
40-49	34 (22)	36 (21)
50+	6 (4)	7 (4)
Race/Ethnicity		
White	40 (25)	44 (26)
Hispanic	84 (54)	90 (53)
Native American	7 (4)	8 (5)
African American	26 (17)	27 (16)
Asian/PI	0 (0)	0 (0)
Exposure Risk- Males		
MSM/IDU	27 (19)	28 (18)
MSM	19 (13)	20 (13)
IDU	50 (35)	58 (37)
Heterosexual	8 (6)	8 (5)
Other	4 (3)	5 (3)
No Identified Risk	35 (24)	36 (23)
Exposure Risk – Females		
IDU	9 (64)	9 (64)
Heterosexual	2 (14)	2 (14)
Other	0 (0)	0 (0)
No Identified Risk	3 (21)	3 (21)

Source: NMDOH, HIV & Hepatitis Epidemiology Program, June 30, 2006.

Inmates in New Mexico State prisons are routinely offered voluntary testing for HIV upon entry and testing is voluntary during incarceration. There are 118 people known to have been diagnosed with HIV or AIDS while incarcerated in a New Mexico correctional facility (federal, state, jail, detention center). For this group, unlike the overall HIV-positive population, Hispanics (59%) make up more than double the number of people diagnosed with HIV while incarcerated and more than all other races combined (Table 3). Similarly, while the number of AIDS cases diagnosed in prison is small, all 40 AIDS cases diagnosed while incarcerated in New Mexico are men, and of those, the majority (55%) are Hispanic.

Table 3. Persons Diagnosed with HIV/AIDS While Incarcerated, New Mexico, June 2006

	HIV	AIDS
Sex	N (%)	N (%)
Male	72 (92)	40 (100)
Female	6 (8)	0 (0)
Race/Ethnicity		
White	15 (19)	10 (25)
Hispanic	46 (59)	22 (55)
Native American	3 (4)	2 (5)
African American	14 (18)	6 (15)
Asian/PI	0 (0)	0 (0)

Source: NMDOH, HIV & Hepatitis Epidemiology Program, June 30, 2006.

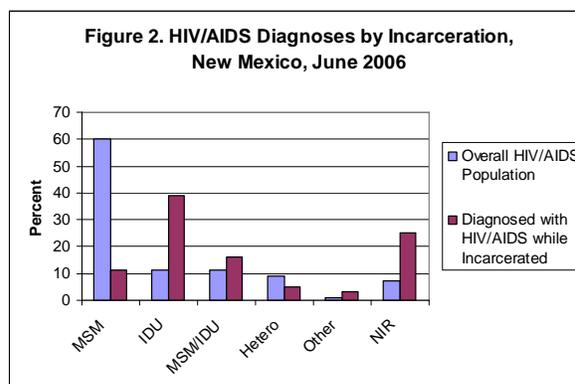
The disproportionate number of Hispanics with HIV/AIDS in the correctional system could be due to the disproportionate rate of incarceration for Hispanics. In 2004, according to the New Mexico Corrections Department, there were 3,724 (59%) Hispanics incarcerated in State facilities in New Mexico compared to 1,525 (24%) Whites, 630 (10%) African Americans, and 417 (7%) Native Americans.⁵

The greatest risk factor for both men and women who were diagnosed with HIV/AIDS while incarcerated New Mexico was IDU (Figures 2).

Data Limitations

The HIV & Hepatitis Epidemiology Program did not begin regularly collecting incarceration

history for HIV-positive persons in New Mexico until 2005, and to date, surveillance remains passive. Therefore, the prevalence of HIV in this population may be underestimated. Based on the limited data available, it is evident that the demographics of the incarcerated population differ compared to the overall HIV-positive population in New Mexico. Understanding these differences can better inform correctional facilities and health care providers to develop appropriate prevention and treatment activities for those incarcerated as well as those exiting the correctional system.



Source: NMDOH, HIV & Hepatitis Epidemiology Program, June 30, 2006.

References

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- Maruschak L. HIV in prisons, 2003. *Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice*. Sept 2005.
- CDC. Routine HIV testing of correctional facility inmates. *Advancing HIV Prevention*. 2003.
- New Mexico Corrections Department. <http://corrections.state.nm.us/statistics/intro.html>

Welcome!

Kate Rooney, MPH, has joined the HIV & Hepatitis Epidemiology Program as an epidemiologist. We look forward to learning from her community-based health perspectives.

HIV/AIDS IN NEW MEXICO FACT SHEET
Cases reported through June 30, 2006

In previous reports, the HIV & Hepatitis Epidemiology Program summarized only cases diagnosed in New Mexico. Living cases diagnosed in New Mexico are used by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to represent prevalent cases. However, data that include out-of-state diagnoses provide a better reflection of local prevalence patterns and are now also provided in the summary.

Type of case	Cases diagnosed in New Mexico					All cases in New Mexico				
	Living			Cumulative		Living			Cumulative	
	N	%	Rate*	N	%	N	%	Rate	N	%
HIV	852	41%	44.2	901	26%	1213	38%	62.9	1308	26%
AIDS	1233	59%	63.9	2533	74%	1958	62%	101.5	3709	74%
Sex										
Male	1817	87%	191.6	3073	89%	2774	87%	292.5	4494	90%
Female	268	13%	27.3	361	11%	397	13%	40.5	523	10%
Race/Ethnicity										
White	931	45%	111.0	1686	49%	1588	50%	189.3	2673	53%
Hispanic	898	43%	107.6	1360	40%	1142	36%	136.8	1712	34%
Native American	141	7%	73.6	201	6%	233	7%	121.6	325	6%
African American	105	5%	278.2	171	5%	192	6%	508.7	285	6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	10	0%	36.9	16	0%	16	1%	59.0	22	0%
Region at Diagnosis**										
Region 1 (Northwest)	257	12%	63.8	391	11%	306	10%	76.0	460	9%
Region 2 (Northeast)	424	20%	145.3	728	21%	516	16%	176.8	882	18%
Region 3 (Bernalillo Co.)	939	45%	156.4	1639	48%	1104	35%	183.9	1917	38%
Region 4 (Southeast)	121	6%	48.9	208	6%	158	5%	63.8	265	5%
Region 5 (Southwest)	344	16%	88.9	468	14%	395	12%	102.1	555	11%
Out of state	-	-	-	-	-	692	22%	-	938	19%
Age at Diagnosis										
< 13	9	< 1%	2.5	14	< 1%	15	< 1%	4.2	22	< 1%
13-19	48	2%	23.0	51	1%	58	2%	27.8	62	1%
20-29	487	23%	182.4	703	20%	749	24%	280.5	1059	21%
30-39	845	41%	350.1	1433	42%	1314	41%	543.8	2146	43%
40-49	522	25%	179.2	889	26%	763	24%	262.0	1240	25%
50+	172	8%	344	344	10%	237	7%	41.8	437	9%
Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	35	1%	-	51	1%
Exposure Risk										
MSM	1232	59%	-	2101	61%	1889	60%	-	3086	62%
IDU	219	11%	-	354	10%	347	11%	-	524	10%
MSM/IDU	199	10%	-	344	10%	334	11%	-	552	11%
Heterosexual	221	11%	-	279	8%	298	9%	-	372	7%
Other	24	1%	-	62	2%	36	1%	-	79	2%
No Identified Risk	175	8%	-	274	8%	215	7%	-	344	7%
Pediatric	15	1%	-	20	1%	52	2%	-	60	1%
TOTALS	2085	100%	108.0	3434	100%	3171	100%	164.3	5017	100%

*Rates per 100,000 based on Bureau of Business and Economic Research data for 2004; **Residence at time of HIV or AIDS diagnosis.

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