Integrating HIV testing into street outreach for unhoused Mainers

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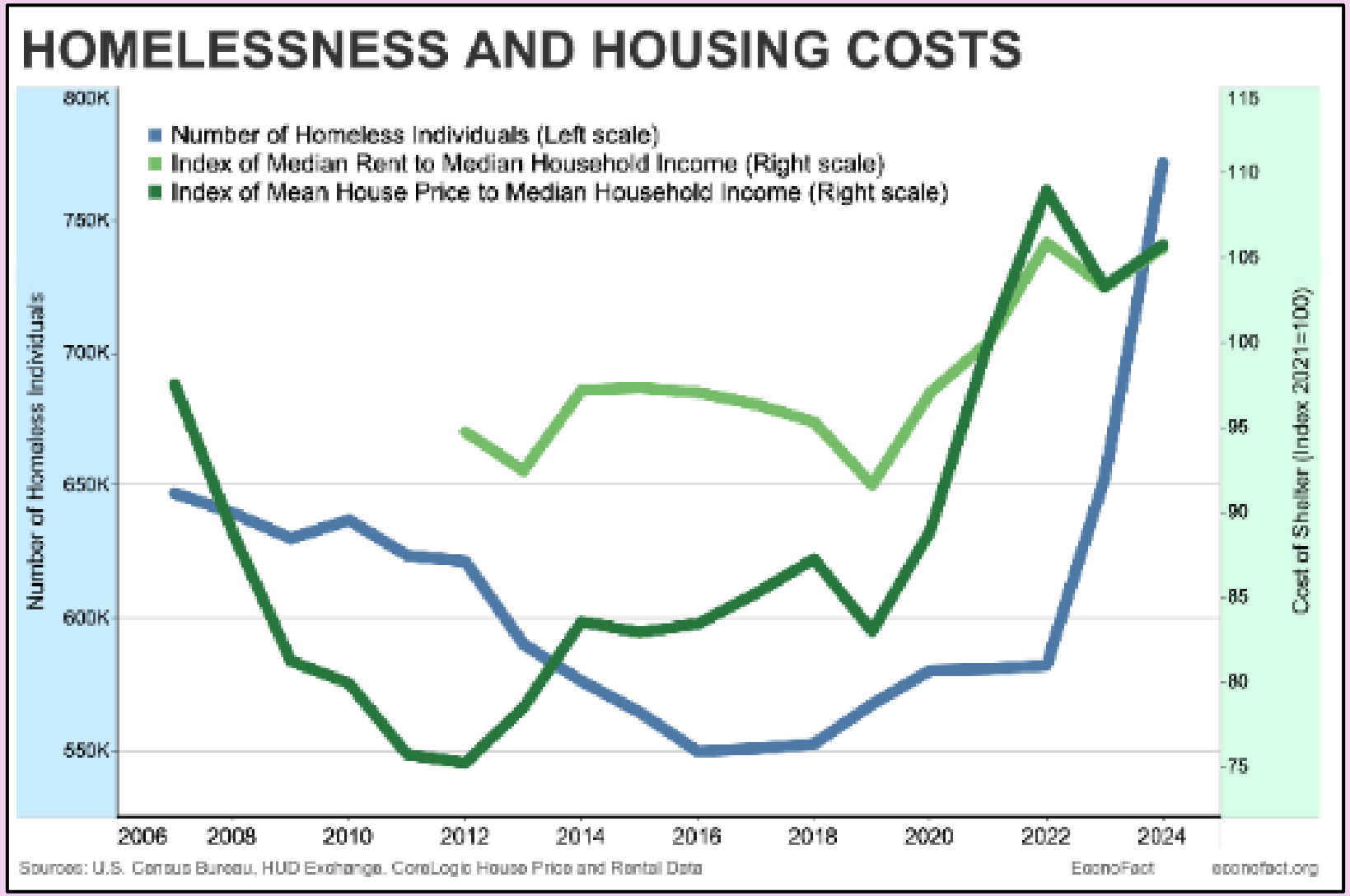
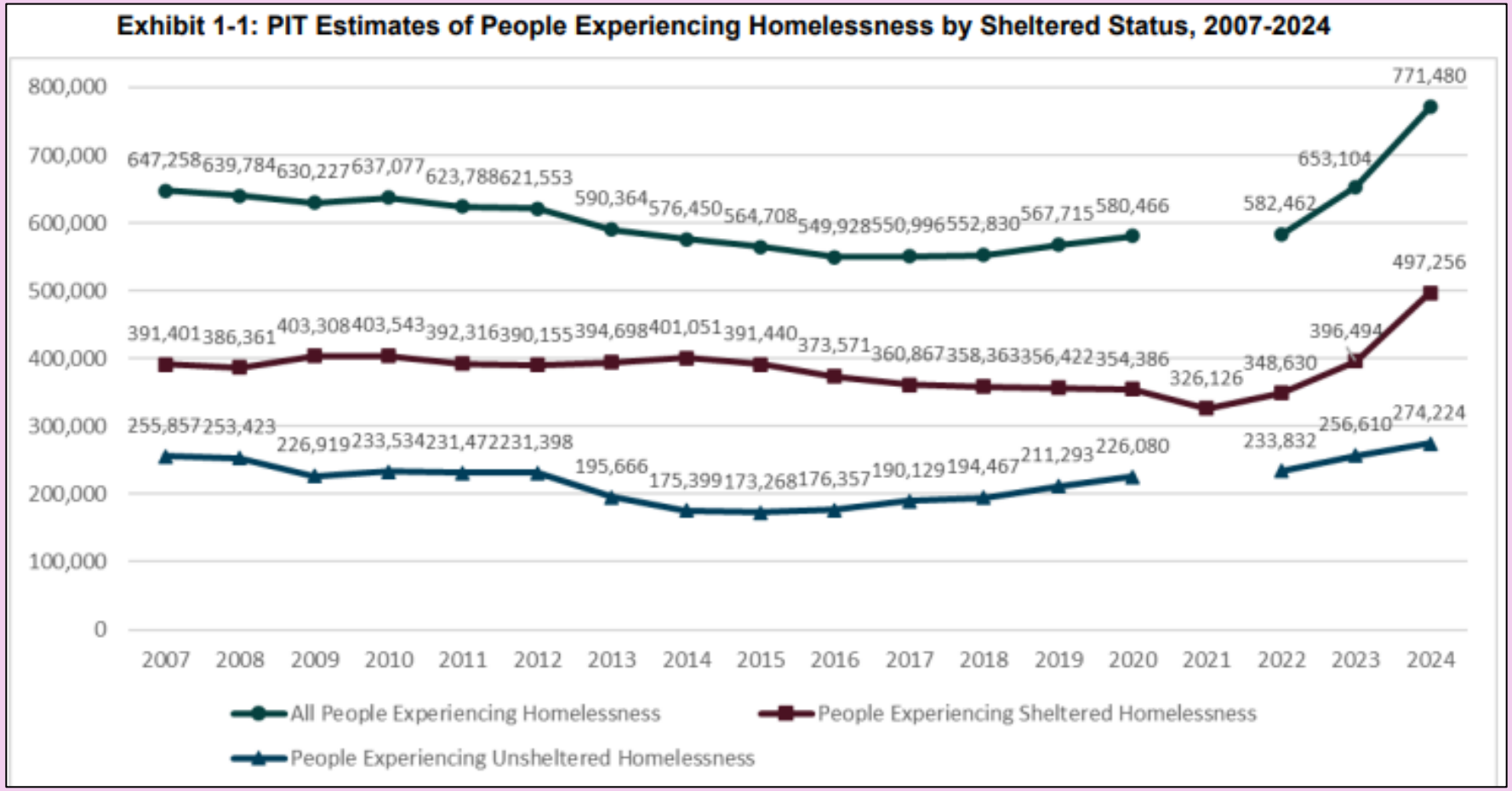
Objectives

- Review risks for HIV acquisition in the setting of homelessness
- Review FDA-approved HIV testing options
- Share outreach strategies for people experiencing homelessness
- Discuss how to integrate HIV testing with outreach and street medicine

Intersectionality of housing costs and homelessness

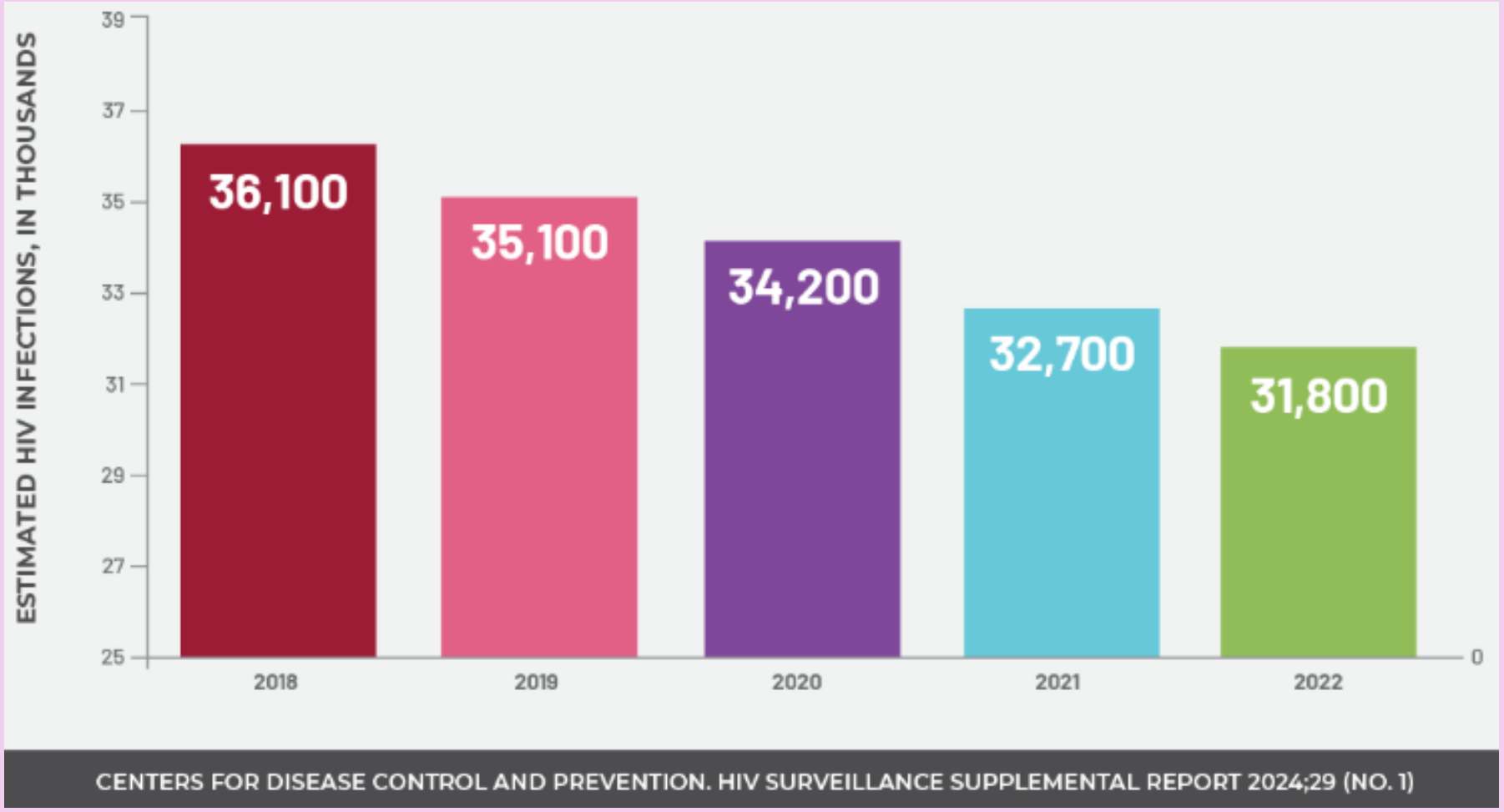


Record number of Americans homeless in 2024



The 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress.
US Dept of Housing and Urban Development,
https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2024-AHAR-Part-1.pdf

HIV in the United States



HIV transmission categories

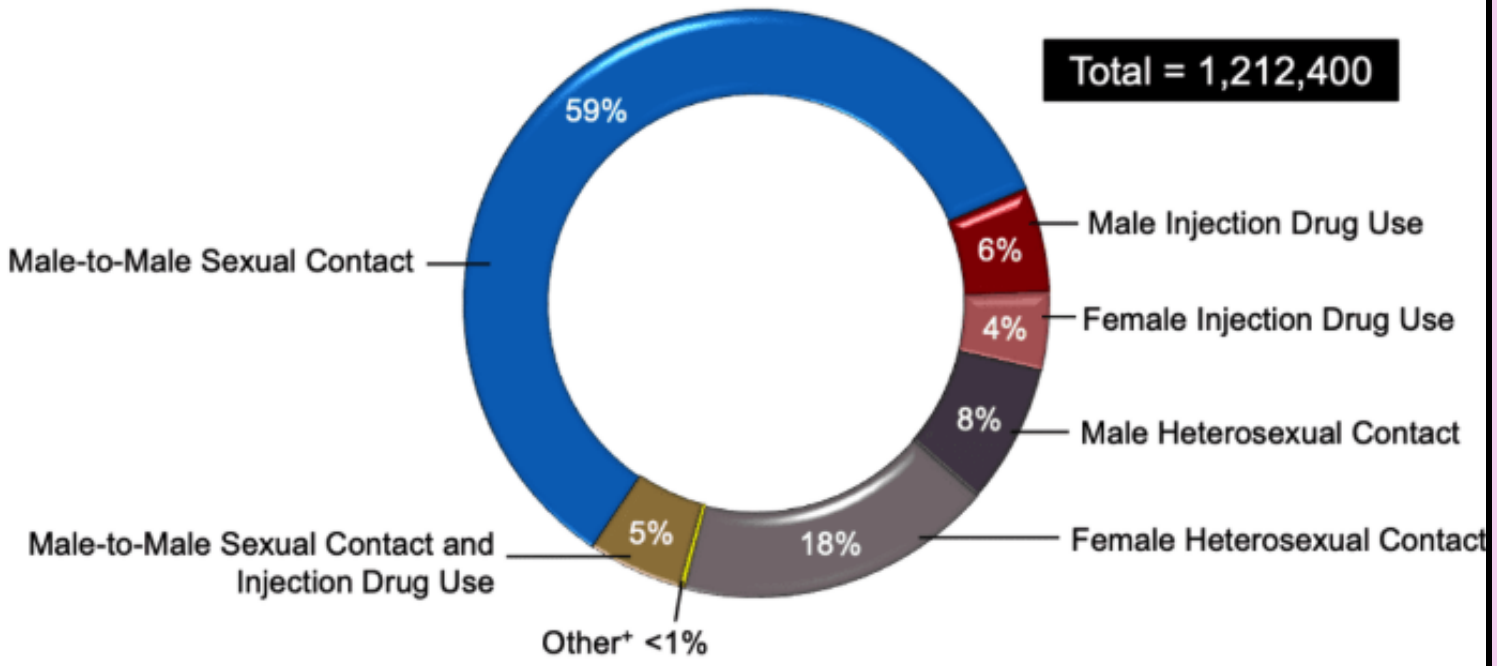


Figure 2A. Persons with Diagnosed and Undiagnosed HIV, by HIV Transmission Categories, United States, 2021

Estimates for persons ≥13 years of age and older; Other = perinatal, hemophilia, blood transfusion, and risk factor not reported or identified

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Estimated HIV Incidence and Prevalence in the United States, 2017–2021. HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report. 2023;28(3). Published May 2023.

HIV transmission categories

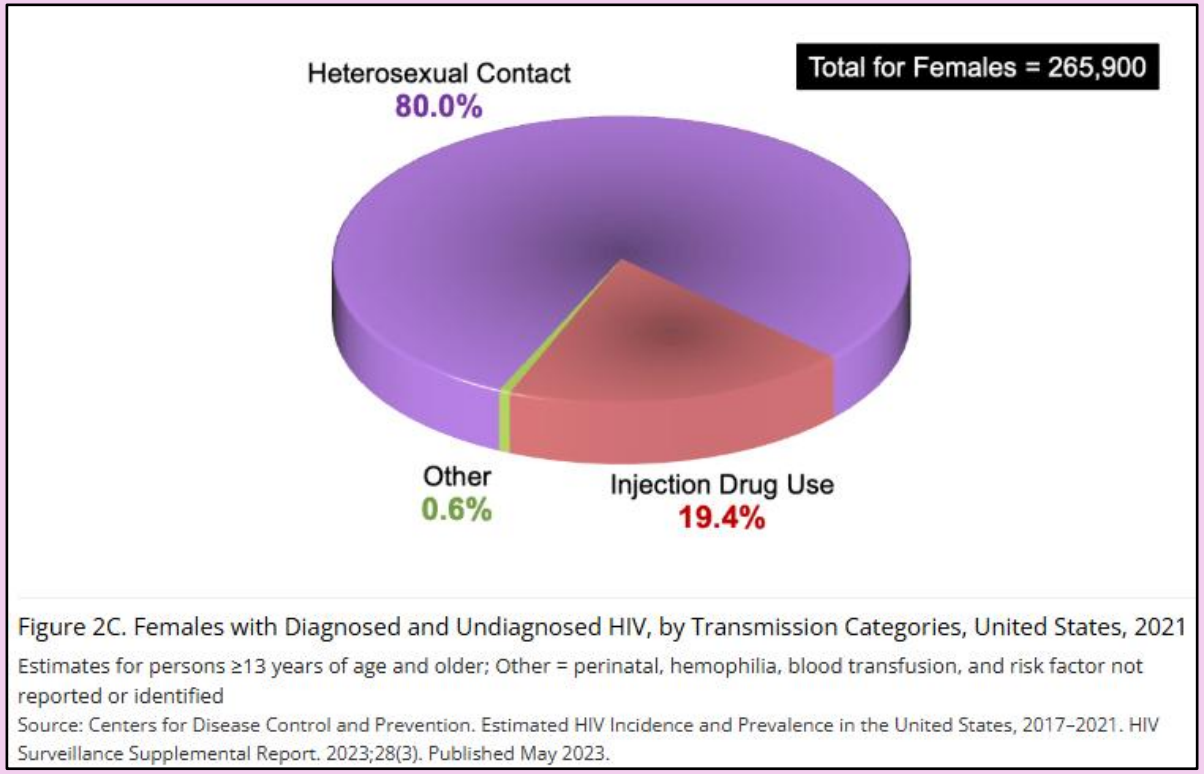


Figure 2C. Females with Diagnosed and Undiagnosed HIV, by Transmission Categories, United States, 2021

Estimates for persons ≥13 years of age and older; Other = perinatal, hemophilia, blood transfusion, and risk factor not reported or identified

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Estimated HIV Incidence and Prevalence in the United States, 2017–2021. HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report. 2023;28(3). Published May 2023.

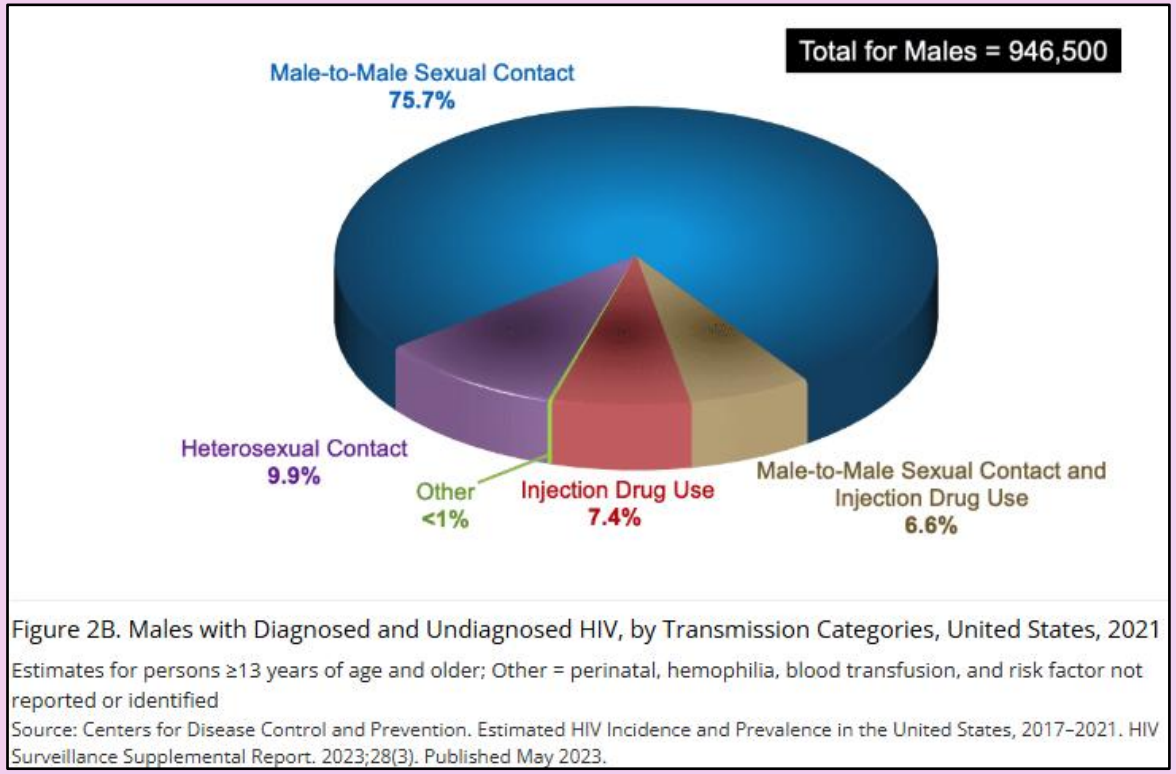


Figure 2B. Males with Diagnosed and Undiagnosed HIV, by Transmission Categories, United States, 2021

Estimates for persons ≥13 years of age and older; Other = perinatal, hemophilia, blood transfusion, and risk factor not reported or identified

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Estimated HIV Incidence and Prevalence in the United States, 2017–2021. HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report. 2023;28(3). Published May 2023.

Transgender women (TGW): 93% sexual transmission; 2% IDU

Highest incidence: >20% LWH, and in some cities > 40%

HIV CARE CONTINUUM:

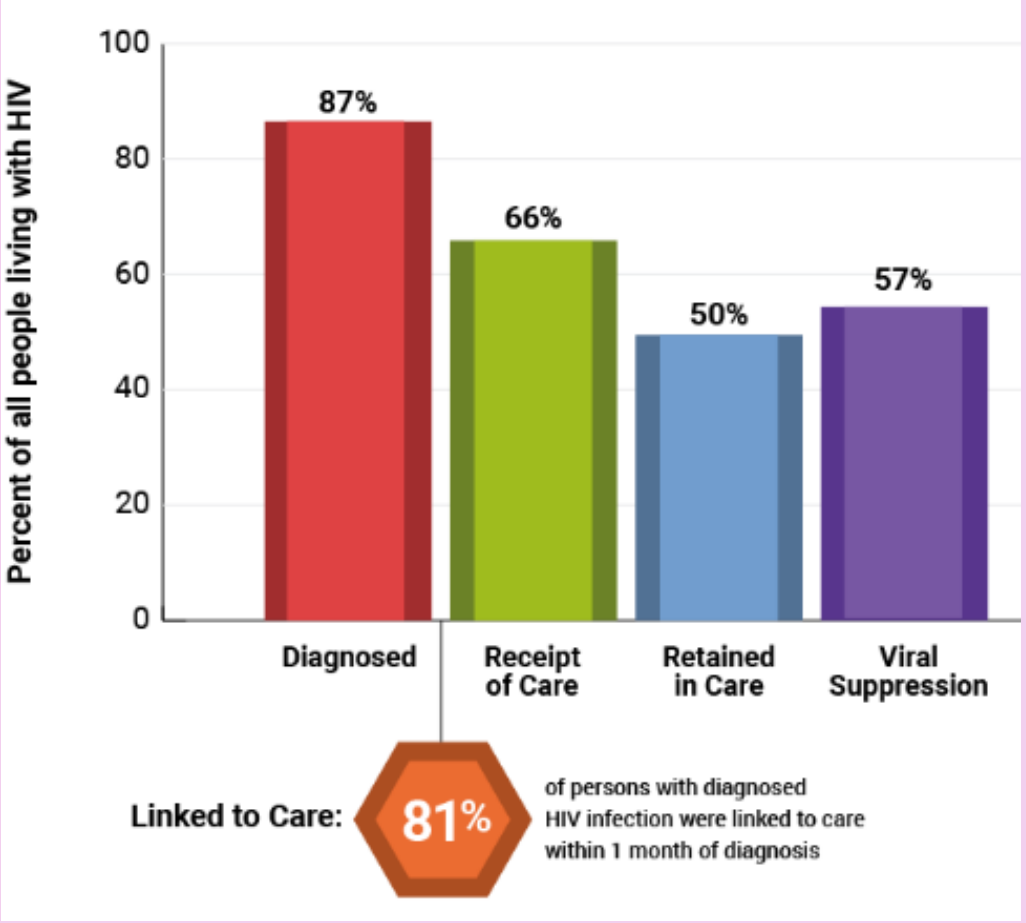
The steps that people with HIV take from diagnosis to achieving and maintaining viral suppression.

HIV care continuum: we are not there yet

13% (158,249) unaware of diagnosis

24% (288,000) LWH not in care

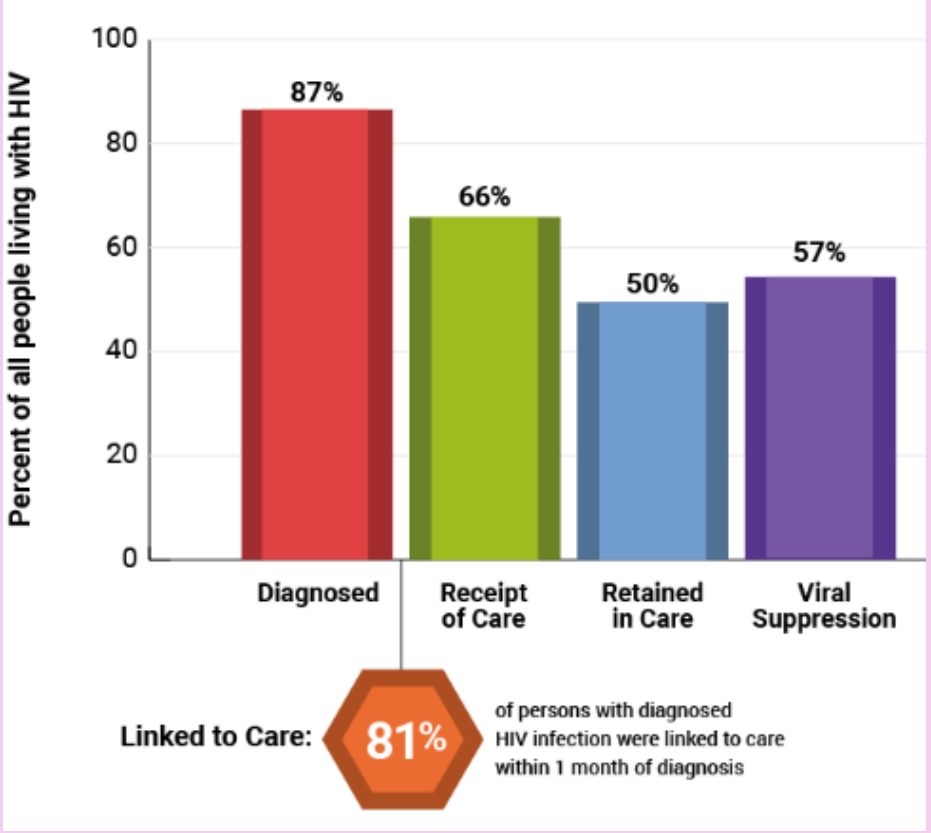
2024 US viral suppression rate
- 89.6 % in Ryan White programs
- 65.1% non-Ryan White programs



Health Resources and Services Administration. Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Annual Client-Level Data Report 2021. ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/data/reports. Published December 2022

HIV care continuum & housing status

- People living w HIV (PLWH) experiencing homelessness/unstable housing: **17%**
- Rate of viral suppression for unhoused/unstably housed is **13%** lower than those stably housed
- Homelessness is associated with a **44% decrease** in overall progression through the HIV care continuum
- Homelessness is associated with a **41-54% decrease** in odds of receiving ART, adherence and suppression

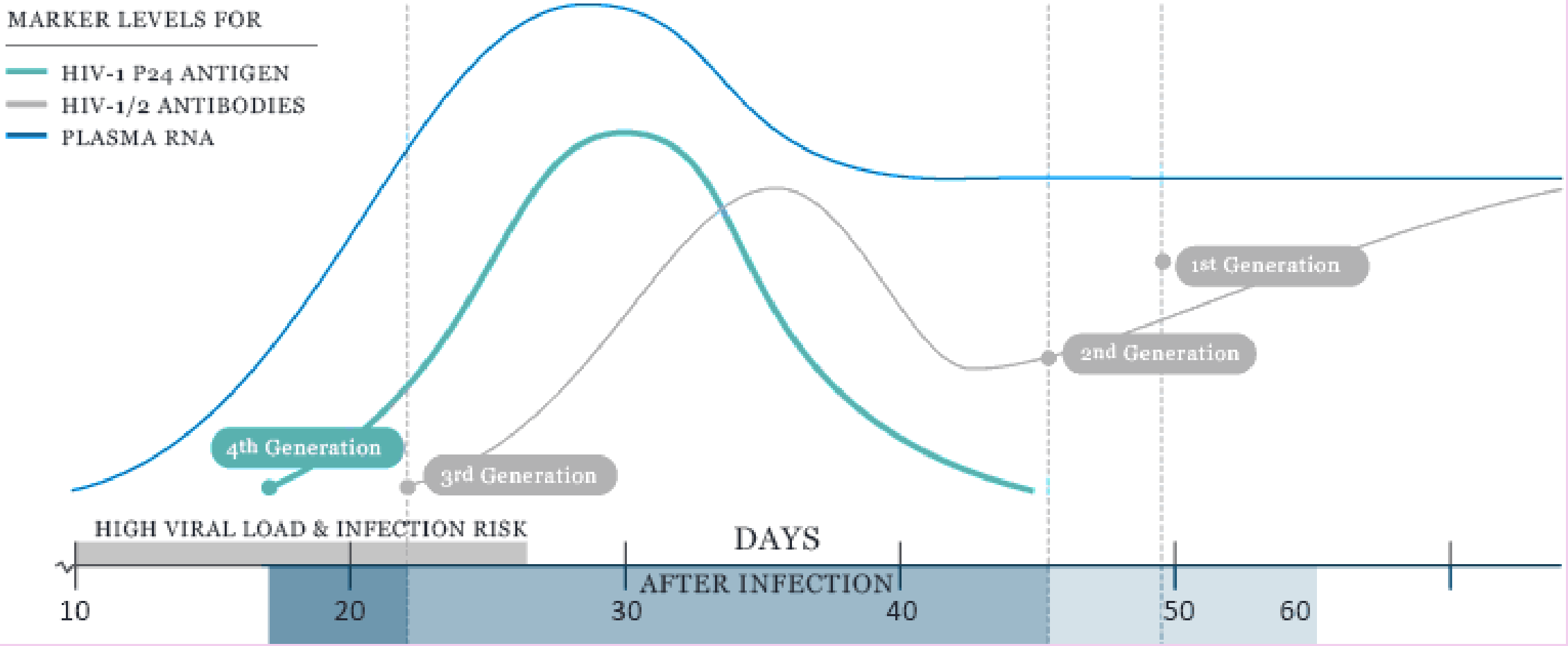


Reddon et alExperiencing homelessness and progression through the HIV cascade of care among people who use drugs AIDS. 2023 Apr 5;37(9):1431–1440. doi

HIV testing

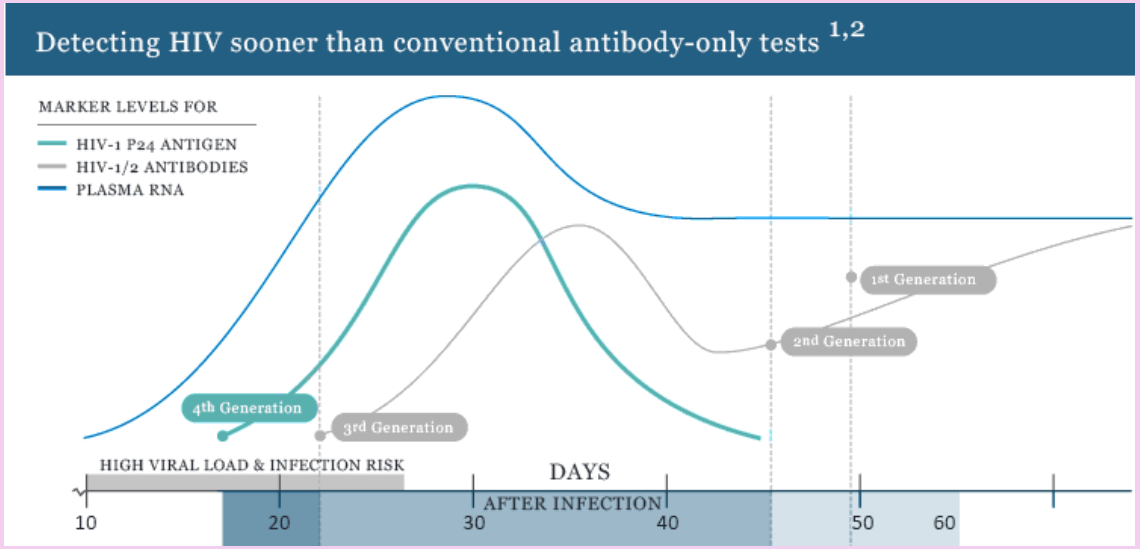
FDA-approved tests for HIV

Detecting HIV sooner than conventional antibody-only tests [1,2]



HIV serologic testing

- Nucleic acid test (NAT)
  - viral load test
  - + 10 days after exposure
  - Earliest marker to show infection
- HIV 1/2 Ag/Ab-4th generation test
  - 12-26 days after exposure



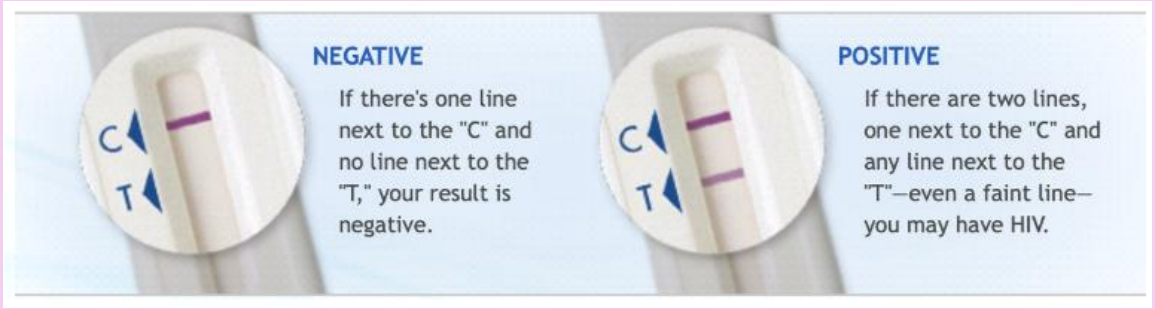
Antigen/antibody point of care test

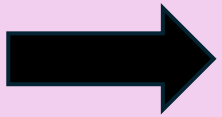
- Abbott Determine HIV 1/2 Ag/Ab combo
  - Fingerstick
  - 20 minutes
  - Detects presence of HIV 12-26 days after exposure

- Free through Maine CDC with completion Counseling, Testing, Referral (CTR) training through the Maine CDC HIV/STI Prevention Program

Rapid self-test: OraQuick

- 99.9% for HIV negative result
- 91.7% positive result
- Cheek swab
- 20 minutes
- Free-Frannie Peabody Center
  - Katie Rutherford, ED
  - krutherford@peabodycenter.org



HIV testing and care for people experiencing homelessness  Healthcare for the Homeless (HCH) Care Model

Healthcare for the Homeless (HCH) Care Model

- Brick and mortar clinic
- Co-location
  - Homeless shelters
  - Housing First sites
  - Recuperative Care
- Outreach
  - Street medicine

Avoid Rigidity!

- Low-barrier
- Walk-in appointments
- Visit: patient-directed, shared decision making, **trust**
- Provision of daily/weekly dosing to avoid loss or theft of medications

HCH at GPH: low-barrier, trauma-informed care

- Daily dosing and weekly dosing
- Injectable and oral MAT and ART
- Harm reduction supplies
- Family planning
- Viral hepatitis care
- Same day STI treatment and prevention
- Dental program
- SUD community health worker & peer
- RW cell phone for texting/whatsapp
- Ryan White RN
- Ryan White community health worker (CHW)

GREATER PORTLAND HEALTH

CARING FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

- Specialty pharmacy
- Social work
- Food
- Clothing
- Transportation assistance
- Camping gear
- Mail

HCH-A strong team is essential

- Humility
- Compassion
- Nonjudgment
- Supportive
- A sense of humor

HCH cannot succeed without strong community partnerships

- Police and police behavioral health liaisons
- Jail
- Pharmacies
- Outreach organizations
- Foodbanks
- Shelters
- Syringe service providers (SSPs)
- Detox and recovery facilities

Street medicine-leave the 4 walls of the clinic

Homeless outreach at GPH

Integrating HIV testing with street medicine

- Staff must be trained to talk about HIV testing
- Must be trusted by the community
- Must have clear linkage to care if test is positive

- Counseling, Testing, Referral (CTR) training through the Maine CDC HIV/STI Prevention Program
  - Contact Public Health Educator eSBee Buhlman esbee.buhlman@maine.gov

Integrate HIV testing with all harm reduction

- Syringe Services Program (SSP)
- Fentanyl test kits
- Wound kits
- Narcan
- MAT
- HIV PrEP

Summary

- HIV prevention includes free access to self-test and point-of-care tests
- HIV prevention should include access to MAT and harm reduction
- HIV testing should be integrated to outreach for people experiencing homelessness
- Self-test kits should be a part of any outreach bag
- Linkage to care essential part of distributing self-test kits

Thank you!