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HIV/AIDS Rates by Race/Ethnicity in the 22 Highest HIV Prevalence Counties
in Michigan: Focus on Hispanics

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As of April 1, 2005, there are 10,762 people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the state of Michigan (0.11% of the population). However, among some racial/ethnic minorities, the rate at which people are acquiring HIV is disproportionate. For example, blacks comprise 14% of the state's population and 59% of the state's HIV/AIDS cases with a rate of 425 HIV/AIDS cases per 100,000 persons. By comparison, whites comprise 80% of the state's population and 37% of the state's HIV/AIDS cases with a rate of 51 HIV/AIDS cases per 100,000 persons. The percentage of population vs percentage of PLWHA in the other racial/ethnic groups are more comparable. For example, Hispanics comprise 3% of the general population and 4% of PLWHA and have a rate of 119 HIV/AIDS cases per 100,000 persons. Table 1 below shows this information for the 22 counties with 15 or more total living HIV/AIDS cases and five or more white and black cases (each) in the un-incarcerated population, based on residence at diagnosis.

Hispanics could be under represented in the HIV/AIDS surveillance system due to the potential of ethnic misclassification. Differences in the assessment and collection of race and ethnicity by health care providers may contribute to ethnic misclassification. Therefore, when assessing the extent of the epidemic among Hispanics in Michigan, several questions arise:

- 1) How completely and accurately are Hispanics included in the census?
- 2) How much of the migrant population is Hispanic?
- 3) How much HIV infection occurs in the migrant population?
- 4) Do Hispanics in the general population and migrant workers get tested for HIV more or less frequently than blacks or whites?
- 5) To what extent is the Hispanic migrant population integrated with the general Hispanic population in the counties in Michigan with the highest Hispanic rates?
- 6) Are HIV/AIDS cases among Hispanics under reported compared to whites?
- 7) How completely and accurately is Hispanic ethnicity being recorded in the HIV/AIDS case report?

Of the 22 counties in Michigan with the highest HIV prevalence rates, only 7 counties had enough Hispanic cases to calculate a reliable rate (i.e., 10 or more cases). Six of these had HIV/AIDS rates for Hispanics that are close to or greater than the overall statewide rate of 108 per 100,000 persons, these are: Ingham (135.9), Kent (164.2), Oakland (137.9), Van Buren (177.5), Washtenaw (147.1), and Wayne (181.3). All 7 of these had HIV/AIDS Hispanic rates higher than the county rate for whites living with HIV/AIDS (Table 1 and graph).

In Michigan, a more thorough evaluation of HIV/AIDS in the Hispanic community is necessary for better characterization of the epidemic affecting this population. While racial disparities in health and healthcare are not unusual in US populations, a better understanding of the factors behind them will help to close the gap. Continued support of activities that further characterize HIV disease in specific populations will be the key to understanding these disparities so that recommendations can be made in an effort to eliminate them.

Table 1-Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the 22 Counties of Highest HIV Prevalence in Michigan*, as of April 1, 2005

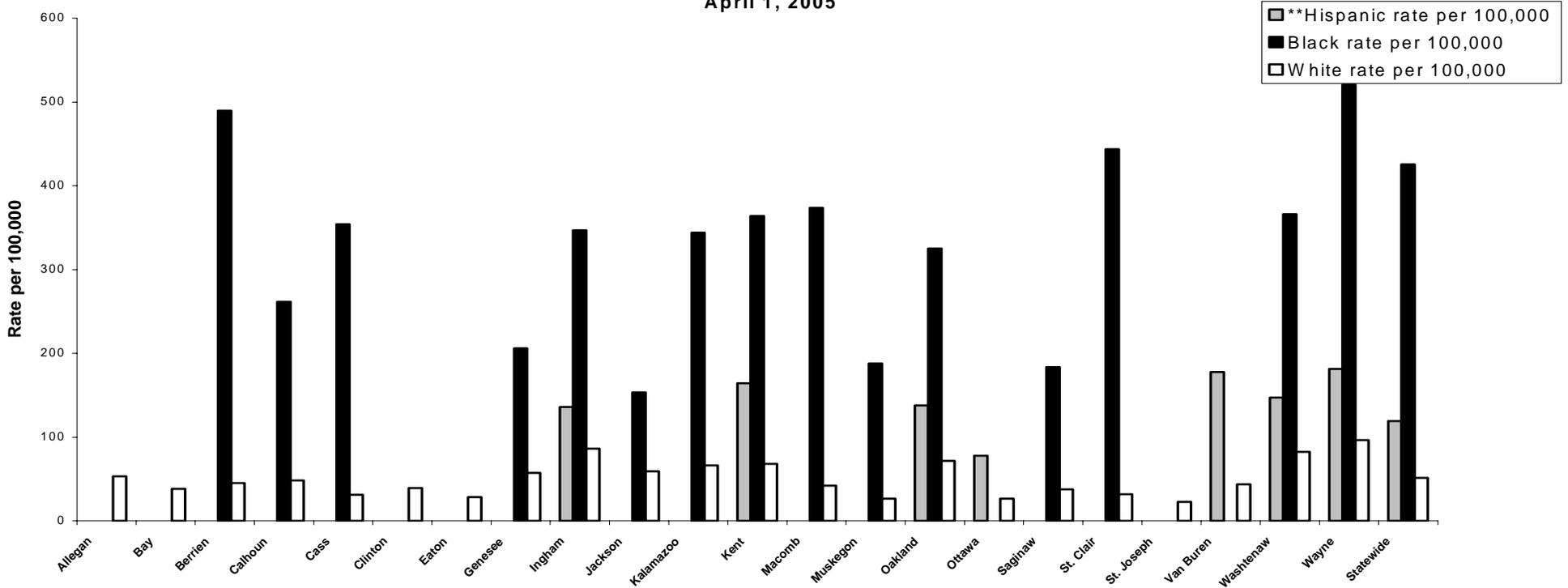
County	HIV Rate for All Races	Number HIV + Hispanic	Percent HIV + Hispanic	**Hispanic rate per 100,000	2000 Census Hispanic Pop	Number HIV + Black	Percent HIV + Black	Black rate per 100,000	2000 Census Black Pop	Number HIV + White	Percent HIV + White	White rate per 100,000	2000 Census White Pop	Number of PLWHA
Allegan	60.6	5	7.8%	**	6040	6	9.4%	**	1315	51	79.7%	53.0	96167	64
Bay	45.4	<5	**	**	4308	6	12.0%	**	1343	39	78.0%	38.2	102119	50
Berrien	118.8	9	4.7%	**	4888	126	65.3%	489.7	25729	57	29.5%	45.0	126798	193
Calhoun	70.3	0	**	**	4351	39	40.2%	261.5	14912	55	56.7%	48.4	113723	97
Cass	50.9	<5	**	**	1233	11	42.3%	354.0	3107	14	53.8%	31.1	45069	26
Clinton	51.0	<5	**	**	1688	8	24.2%	**	401	24	72.7%	39.1	61416	33
Eaton	34.7	<5	**	**	3323	5	13.9%	**	5397	26	72.2%	28.3	91895	36
Genesee	90.6	8	2.0%	**	10152	182	46.1%	206.0	88356	185	46.8%	57.3	323136	395
Ingham	115.3	22	6.8%	135.9	16190	103	32.0%	346.7	29712	185	57.5%	86.2	214685	322
Jackson	66.3	<5	**	**	3493	19	18.1%	153.3	12396	82	78.1%	59.2	138528	105
Kalamazoo	92.6	7	3.2%	**	6311	79	35.7%	344.0	22968	132	59.7%	66.3	199180	221
Kent	100.1	66	11.5%	164.2	40183	182	31.7%	364.0	49994	314	54.6%	68.1	461162	575
Macomb	51.0	8	2.0%	**	12435	79	19.7%	373.5	21151	304	75.6%	42.1	721882	402
Muskegon	52.9	6	6.7%	**	6001	45	50.0%	187.7	23971	36	40.0%	26.6	135379	90
Oakland	96.7	40	3.5%	137.9	28999	389	33.7%	325.0	119708	694	60.1%	71.4	971752	1155
Ottawa	33.1	13	16.5%	77.9	16692	6	7.6%	**	2380	56	70.9%	26.5	211058	79
Saginaw	65.2	6	4.4%	**	14075	71	51.8%	183.6	38675	57	41.6%	37.5	151977	137
St. Clair	40.8	0	**	**	3593	15	22.4%	443.7	3381	49	73.1%	31.8	153893	67
St. Joseph	36.8	5	21.7%	**	2488	5	21.7%	**	1561	13	56.5%	22.8	56994	23
Van Buren	56.4	10	23.3%	177.5	5634	5	11.6%	**	3939	28	65.1%	43.4	64466	43
Washtenaw	113.7	13	3.5%	147.1	8839	144	39.2%	366.2	39326	202	55.0%	82.4	245033	367
Wayne	278.0	140	2.4%	181.3	77207	4501	78.5%	520.6	864627	991	17.3%	96.3	1028984	5731
Statewide	108.3	390	3.6%	119		6061	56.3%	425		4061	37.7%	51		10762

**Counties of highest prevalence were determined by selecting counties with 15 or more total living cases and 5 or more Black and White living cases (each) by residence at HIV/AIDS diagnosis (excludes prison cases).*

*** Rates are only calculated for categories greater than or equal to 10 because small numbers create unstable rates.*

Together Blacks, Hispanics and Whites comprise 98% of all PLWHA in the state of Michigan (with Blacks comprising 59%, Hispanics comprising 4% and Whites comprising 37%).

**HIV/AIDS Prevalence Rates by Race/Ethnicity in the 22 Counties of Highest HIV Prevalence in Michigan*
April 1, 2005**



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