

2012 Profile of HIV in Out-State Michigan

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Data from Michigan Disease Surveillance System (MDSS)

Overview:

Several sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are more common than HIV infection, have a short incubation period, and are curable. Reviewing their patterns of transmission can provide additional information regarding recent sexual behavior and potential risk not available from HIV data. Studies have shown that the risk of both acquiring and spreading HIV is two to five times greater in people with STDs. Aggressive STD treatment in a community can help to reduce the rate of new HIV infections.

Gonorrhea and chlamydia:

During 2011 alone, there were over 23,000 cases of chlamydia and nearly 4,000 cases of gonorrhea reported in Out-State Michigan (table 9, page 218). For both gonorrhea and chlamydia, the highest rates of infection are among persons ages 20-24. This age group comprises seven percent of the Out-State population but accounted for 35 percent of gonorrhea and 39 percent of chlamydia cases. The rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea among black persons were much higher than among white persons. Even though 23 percent of gonorrhea cases and 28 percent of chlamydia cases were missing race information, the rates among black remain higher even if all unknown cases were white. The rate for gonorrhea among black persons is 25 times the rate among white persons, and the chlamydia rate is 11 times the rate among white persons. Sixty-two percent of gonorrhea cases were female and approximately 74 percent of reported chlamydia cases were female. This is because chlamydia screening targets females.

Syphilis:

In 2011, Out-State Michigan contributed 29 percent of primary and secondary syphilis cases statewide. Since 2006, primary and secondary syphilis cases in Out-State Michigan have increased substantially (from 35 in 2006 to 79 in 2011). Twenty-five percent of Out-State Michigan primary and secondary cases were under the age of 25. Thirty-eight percent of cases were 25-39, and 34 percent were over the age of 40, representing an older at-risk population than gonorrhea or chlamydia (table 9). Syphilis cases reported in 2011 were more likely to be white (68 percent) and male (92 percent); however the rate of syphilis was still higher among black persons.

Sexual orientation:

Nationwide, there have been increases in STD cases among self-identified men who have sex with men (MSM). Michigan collects data on sexual orientation for syphilis cases but not all gonorrhea or chlamydia cases. Of male primary and secondary syphilis cases in 2011, 75 percent of males were MSM. The male to female syphilis ratio in Out-State Michigan was 4.5:1, but it increased to 12:1 in 2011. Forty-one percent of males with syphilis are co-infected with HIV (data not shown in tables).