

SFHIS – San Francisco HIV Incidence Study

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Project Description: The HIV Incidence Study (HIS) is a population-based, cross-sectional and longitudinal HIV incidence survey of men who have sex with men (MSM) who reside in San Francisco. HIS is a collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH), the University of California San Francisco (UCSF), and WESTAT Corporation. The study recruited MSM through a random digit dial telephone survey, conducted home collection urine-based HIV and STD testing, and in-person re-testing of a sub-sample. The overall goal of the study was to pilot a system to monitor recent HIV seroconversion in a high-risk population in a defined geographic area. The specific study aims of the study are:

- To obtain population-based estimates of the incidence and prevalence of HIV, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and related risk behavior among MSM in San Francisco.
- To determine the proportion of HIV-infected MSM who were previously unaware of their infection, who are receiving HIV-specific care, and who are using antiretroviral therapy, prophylactic treatments, and preventive care.
- To characterize factors associated with lack of HIV testing among MSM and to identify missed opportunities for counseling and testing.
- To assess knowledge of California's AIDS/HIV reporting laws and whether HIV reporting would deter MSM from seeking testing or delay infected MSM from receiving medical care.
- To compare the representation of MSM in the proposed survey to MSM participating in prevention programs, sentinel surveillance studies, epidemiological surveys, and other research in San Francisco.

Significance: Population-based surveys of persons at high risk for HIV are rare. A population-based HIV incidence and prevalence survey of MSM will provide multiple public health benefits. First, HIV incidence data will directly assist in planning and evaluating prevention programs for MSM populations at greatest risk in San Francisco. Second, data on HIV-positive MSM will provide information relevant to secondary prevention, including access to and the use of antiretroviral therapy. Third, the survey will enable us to validate and compare other approaches to monitoring the HIV/AIDS epidemic. For example, the HIS Study will assess which populations of MSM are or are not represented in sentinel surveillance at STD clinics, gay-identified venues, and counseling and testing sites. Fourth, the HIS Study will compare HIV incidence estimated by STARHS to that estimated by longitudinal follow-up. Fifth, HIS Study findings will contribute to the evaluation of HIV case reporting, scheduled to begin in California in 2002, by providing information on HIV testing practices. Additionally, the HIS Study will serve as a pilot for a recent infection surveillance system to be potentially implemented by the CDC in other cities. Finally, documenting an association between gonorrhea and/or Chlamydia infection and recent HIV infection has the potential to document the utility of monitoring trends in these sexually transmitted diseases as one of several markers for trends in HIV infections.

Project Ending Date: Late 2003