

The Florida Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS is collaborating with the University of Miami and the CDC to conduct National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS) in South Florida. NHBS involves a repeated, cross-sectional survey of populations at high risk for HIV infection: men who have sex with men (MSM), injection drug users (IDU), and heterosexuals at risk for HIV infection (HET). NHBS activities are implemented in one-year cycles so that data are collected from each risk group every three years; these study cycles are referred to as NHBS-MSM, NHBS-IDU, and NHBS-HET. Individuals who consent to participate undergo an anonymous interview and are paid for their time. NHBS is conducted in over 20 US metropolitan statistical areas with high AIDS prevalence rates. The overarching goal of NHBS is to help evaluate and direct local and national prevention efforts.

The second cycle of data collection (May 2005 – February 2006) focused on IDUs. Respondent-driven sampling (respondents refer others to participate) was used to recruit 934 IDUs in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. Consenting participants completed an anonymous interview consisting of the core NHBS questionnaire and a local questionnaire tailored to South Florida. NHBS-IDU participants were offered anonymous HIV counseling and testing, as well as referrals to psychosocial and healthcare services.

#### ◆ **IDU Sample**

- 934 completed IDU surveys (572 in Miami-Dade; 362 in Broward)
- Eligibility was limited to persons who reported injecting non-prescription drugs in the past 12 months; had physical evidence of recent injection (e.g., fresh track marks, abscesses) or knowledge of injection practices; reported residence in Miami-Dade, Broward, or Palm Beach counties; reported being 18 years of age or older; did not report previous participation in the study cycle; and were alert and able to complete the interview in English or Spanish.

#### ◆ **Demographic Characteristics of the Sample**

- The mean age was 43 years; 65% of sample over 40 years of age
- 29% were white, 50% black, 17% Hispanic, and 3% other
- 71% male and 29% female
- 16% self-reported as HIV positive
- About 1/3 (34%) self-reported hepatitis C (HCV) infection
- Majority (89%) self-identified as heterosexual
- About 3/4 (73%) met depression criteria (according to CES-D 10)
- About 3/4 (72%) without health insurance
- Over half (57%) homeless in past 12 months
- Nearly half (48%) incarcerated in past 12 months
- Over 2/3 (67%) have a high school education

#### ◆ **History of Injection Drug Use**

- 83% reported injecting for over 5 years; median years of injection is 20
- Only 1/3 of sample (35%) participated in drug treatment in past 12 months
- Nearly 1/3 of sample (31%) has never participated in drug treatment

#### ◆ **Types of Drugs Injected in Past 12 Months**

- The vast majority (92%) reported heroin injection
- Nearly 2/3 (63%) reported speedball (heroin and cocaine together) injection
- About half (53%) reported cocaine injection
- About 1/4 (23%) reported crack injection
- 17% reported oxycontin injection
- 6% reported amphetamine injection

## National HIV Behavioral Surveillance Among Injection Drug Users (NHBS-IDU)

### ◆ Injection Risk Behaviors

- Over 1/4 (29%) reported reuse of needle/syringe at last injection
- Over half (52%) reported reuse of injection equipment at last injection

### ◆ Sexual Risk Behaviors - Men

- Over half the men (58%) reported having more than 1 female sex partner during the past 12 months
  - Median number of partners was 3
- 72% of the HIV- male IDUs and 39% of the HIV+ male IDUs reported unprotected vaginal sex at last sex act

### ◆ Sexual Risk Behaviors - Women

- Over half of the women (53%) report having more than 1 male sex partner during the past 12 months
  - Median number of partners was 2
- Over 2/3 (67%) of the women reported having unprotected vaginal sex with a male partner at last sex act

### ◆ Serosorting Practices

- Serosorting was identified among male IDUs with main female partners. Men were more likely to report unprotected sex at last sex act with a main female partner of the same serostatus (both partners HIV+ or HIV-) than with a main female partner of different serostatus (adjusted odds ratio 1.87; 95% CI, 1.33, 3.09).

### ◆ HIV Testing

- Nearly all (96%) have tested for HIV in their lifetimes
- The majority (62%) have tested for HIV in the past 12 months\*
- The most frequently reported facilities administering participants' most recent HIV test include public health clinics, correctional facilities, hospitals (inpatient), and drug treatment facilities
- The most frequently reported reasons for not seeking an HIV test in the past 12 months include perceived low risk for HIV infection, fear of an HIV-positive diagnosis, and not having time

### ◆ HCV Testing

- Over 3/4 (77%) reported testing for HCV in their lifetime
- 1/3 (34%) reported testing for HCV in the past 12 months\*

### ◆ Receipt of Prevention Services in Past 12 Months

- Over half (56%) reported receiving free condoms
- Only 11% reported receiving an individual-level intervention
- Only 6% reported participation in a group-level intervention
- Almost no IDUs received free sterile syringes (3%) or free injection equipment (2%)\*\*

\* Analysis excludes persons diagnosed with infection over 12 months ago

\*\* Needle exchange programs are illegal in the state of Florida

*For additional information about NHBS in Florida, contact Dano Beck, MSW, or Marlene LaLota, MPH, at (850) 245-4336, or visit our website at [www.FloridaAIDS.org](http://www.FloridaAIDS.org)*