

HIV Testing Trends Among Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSM)

In late 2007, the Bureau of HIV/AIDS released 'Out in the Open' (OIO), a report highlighting the disproportionate impact of HIV on MSM and calling for better HIV prevention efforts and interventions targeted to Florida's MSM. The 2006 Florida HIV incidence estimates, which were based on a new and more accurate estimation methodology developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), were released in November 2008. Over half of Florida's new infections in 2006 occurred among MSM, a group that has historically been heavily affected by HIV/AIDS. In this analysis of routinely collected data from the statewide publicly funded HIV testing program, we focus on testing patterns among MSM (N = 25,552). The data presented here include both MSM (N = 23,955) and MSM who also use injection drugs (MSM/IDU) (N = 1,597). Combined, these two risk groups accounted for just 6.9% of HIV tests performed in 2008, but 36.3% of the HIV-positive test results (data not shown).

HIV disproportionately impacts black MSM. In 2008, white MSM had 43.3% of tests but only 32.9% of positives. In contrast, black MSM accounted for only 24.5% of tests but 37.0% of positive results. Hispanics accounted for 29.8% of the tests and 28.8% of the positives (data not shown).

Figures 1 and 2 show the number of MSM tested and the positivity rate from 2004 through 2008 by race/ethnicity. These figures show that while black MSM test in fewer numbers, their positivity rates continue to be the highest of any racial/ethnic group tested. They also show that since the release of OIO, MSM testing has increased.

Figure 1. MSM Tested by Race/Ethnicity, 2004 - 2008

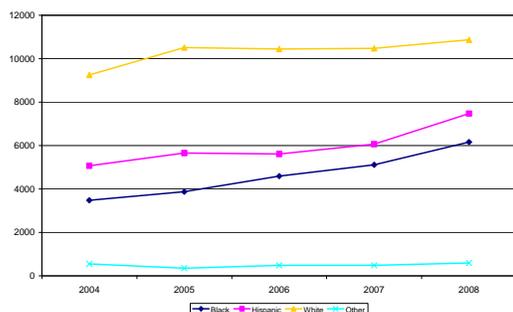
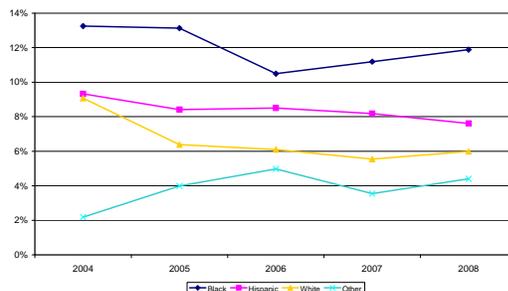


Figure 2. MSM Positivity Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2004 - 2008



# Tested	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Black	3479	3868	4593	5111	6160
Hispanic	5063	5649	5609	6062	7473
White	9251	10511	10444	10478	10876
Other	550	351	483	479	590

% Positive	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Black	13.25	13.13	10.49	11.19	11.88
Hispanic	9.32	8.41	8.50	8.18	7.61
White	9.08	6.38	6.10	5.54	5.99
Other	2.18	3.99	4.97	3.55	4.41

Figure 3 compares testing venues for MSM against those for all other risk groups in Florida. More MSM (56.6%) seek HIV testing at community-based organizations (CBOs) than any other venue, which affords CBOs an excellent opportunity to provide targeted prevention and empowerment messages in a location their clients already prefer. County health department (CHD) field visits find and test comparable numbers of MSM (4.3%) and other risk groups (3.8%).

Figure 3. Testing Venue for MSM and for All Other Risks, 2008

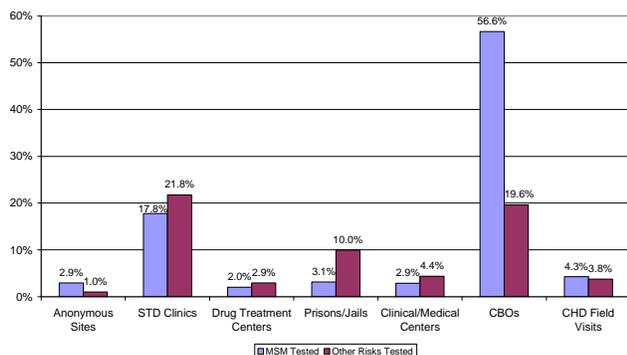


Figure 4. Number of MSM Tested, Number (%) Positive by Testing Venue, 2008

Testing Venue	# Tested	# Positive (%)
Anonymous Sites	753	32 (4.25%)
STD Clinics	4,537	505 (11.13%)
Drug Treatment Centers	522	11 (2.11%)
Prisons/Jails	804	53 (6.59%)
Clinical/Medical Centers	737	69 (9.36%)
CBOs	14,474	833 (5.76%)
CHD Field Visits	1,097	90 (8.2%)
Total (includes venues not shown)	25,552	2,013 (7.88%)

Figure 4 shows the number of MSM tested and the number and proportion that tested positive for HIV by testing venue. Counselors at all venues have the chance to encourage MSM to be tested for HIV, to know their status, and if they are positive, encourage them to seek treatment and care for themselves as OIO recommends.