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CDC APPLAUDS DOH'S HIV DATA PROGRAM AS NATIONAL LEADER



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TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Today, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) announced that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recognized the DOH for continued excellence and high levels of achievement in meeting all of the national HIV case surveillance process and outcome standards. The CDC visited the DOH's HIV surveillance program in January to conduct a periodic review of processes and ensure compliance with national HIV data requirements. View the CDC's entire report [here](#).

Interim Surgeon General Dr. Celeste Philip said, "As the CDC report shows, Florida's HIV data program is a national leader in helping health officials better understand and treat this terrible disease. We are also proud to have the opportunity to train professionals from other states on the best practices for collecting and interpreting HIV data. Having complete and accurate data allows us to better direct resources to communities and ultimately, individuals who need it. With the continued elimination of the ADAP waitlist for treatment as well as record funding for HIV prevention, Florida is at the forefront of fighting HIV/AIDS. I would like to thank the CDC for recognizing the good work we do at the department and our commitment to addressing their recommendations to make Florida's surveillance program even better."

In 2012, Governor Rick Scott and the Florida Legislature invested \$2.5 million in recurring funding to eliminate the waitlist for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). The program has continuously served all patients needing this lifesaving medication each year since. Florida has seen much success with the ADAP program preventing the HIV disease from advancing to later phases of the disease. Because of this success, Florida is now focused on linking newly diagnosed patients to treatment even faster through the "test and treat" strategy.

Highlights from CDC Report

- CDC reports that the DOH has an impressive HIV surveillance module training program for field staff with best practices for collecting complete and accurate information. CDC states that this program is of such notable excellence, that other states have been sending their HIV surveillance staff to attend the Florida training program.
- In its core surveillance findings, the CDC lauded the department's progress and success toward meeting national criteria for complete reporting of HIV-related lab results.
- CDC notes that excellent intra-agency collaboration in Florida between the HIV surveillance program, sexually transmitted disease program and tuberculosis program

has been vital for improved data collection and facilitated the use of data to inform care and prevention activities. In its report, CDC recommended automating the Routine Interstate Duplicate Review (RIDR) process, **which the department has already fulfilled.**

- In 2015, the increased number of cases sent by the CDC for deduplication created a backlog of cases needing research and collaboration with other states. This caused a delay in updating the federal database, however, **an automated process is now in place and is being used routinely in the deduplication process.**
- The CDC recommended increasing staff at DOH's Miami lab to address a backlog of specimens collected as part of a special study to estimate HIV incidence. **DOH has already hired new lab technicians this month who will be dedicated to eliminating the backlog within 60 days.** DOH will conduct a site visit at the Miami lab to verify that the backlog has been eliminated and assess if additional resources are needed to ensure the timely processing of lab specimens in the future.

The full site visit report from the CDC can be viewed [here](#).

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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