



HEALTH ADVISORY #133

Increased Screening Recommendations for HIV Outbreak Detection Among Persons Who Inject Drugs

TO: West Virginia Healthcare Providers, Hospitals and other Healthcare Facilities

FROM: Rahul Gupta, MD, MPH, FACP, Commissioner and State Health Officer
WVDHHR, Bureau for Public Health

DATE: March 21, 2017

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS: Please distribute to Community Health Providers, Hospital-Based Physicians, Infection Control Preventionists, Laboratory Directors, and Other Applicable Partners

OTHER RECIPIENTS: Please Distribute to Association Members, Staff, etc.

The epidemic of non-prescription opioid addiction has led to an increase in injection drug use, hepatitis C virus (HCV) infections, and hepatitis B virus (HBV) infections in West Virginia. Though West Virginia is a low incidence state for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections, several counties have been deemed at high-risk for an HIV outbreak similar to the one in Scott County, Indiana in 2015 predominantly among people who inject drugs (PWID). In order to detect an outbreak of HIV among PWID, increased screening is necessary.

The West Virginia Bureau for Public Health recommends the following:

- Determine if unsafe injection drug use is occurring (survey, interview, etc.) in at-risk patients.
- Screen (routinely) for HIV when testing for HCV or HBV.
- Report increased numbers or clusters of HIV infections **within 24 hours** to the Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services, Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology (DIDE). (*The Scott County, Indiana HIV outbreak was first identified by an astute clinician who noticed an increase in HIV infections in the area.*)
- Recommend that individuals between 15 to 65 years of age get tested for HIV at least once in their lifetime and those with risk factors (such as injection drug use, male-to-male sexual contact, multiple sex partners) get tested more frequently (i.e. annually).
- Provide routine HIV testing and counseling where PWID may seek services:
 - Opioid substitution therapy programs (e.g. methadone)
 - Buprenorphine-prescribing facilities
 - Drug rehabilitation or detoxification programs
 - Mental health service providers for substance use disorder
 - Harm reduction and syringe service programs
 - Emergency departments and in-patient settings
 - Jails and prisons

For more information on HIV reporting and surveillance, visit www.hiv.wv.gov or call the STD/AIDS Hotline at 1 (800) 642-8244. To report clusters or outbreaks of HIV (or HBV and HCV), contact DIDE at (304) 558-5358, extension 1 or the answering service at (304) 925-9946.

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health to local health departments and professional associations. Receiving entities are responsible for further disseminating the information as appropriate to the target audience.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance. Warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation. May not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation. Unlikely to require immediate action.