

People Living  
with HIV/AIDS  
in Western New York

# 2006-2007 Survey Results



Presented by the PLWHA Committee—AIDS Network of Western New York, Inc.

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# Introduction

The survey was first developed and conducted in 1997 by the PLWHA (persons living with HIV/AIDS) Committee of the AIDS Network of Western New York, Inc. Through this survey, the committee can monitor the self-reported behaviors, knowledge, and beliefs of those individuals living with HIV/AIDS throughout Western New York. The survey provides an instrument that assists the region in assessing the HIV service delivery gaps, priority settings, and related strategy recommendations. The survey was conducted in 1997, 1999, 2001, 2004 and 2006. It has evolved and been modified to include a wider range of specified topics, increase data reliability, and assure the privacy and confidentiality of all people participating.

## **The 2007 Survey**

308 people living with HIV/AIDS residing in the eight counties of Western New York completed the survey from May 2006 - January 2007. Respondents were compensated \$3 and/or given other token incentives for participating in the survey. The survey represents a sampling of 12.5% of all those estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS in Western New York.<sup>1</sup> The survey margin of error is +/- 5.7%.

The 2007 survey was administered through various methods: 1) random one-to-one interviews were conducted by committee members at several locations; 2) the committee in conjunction with service providing agencies and employees administered the survey to clients accessing services, and 3) committee members privately administered surveys to other persons living with HIV/AIDS known personally by them, especially concentrating on those not accessing services.

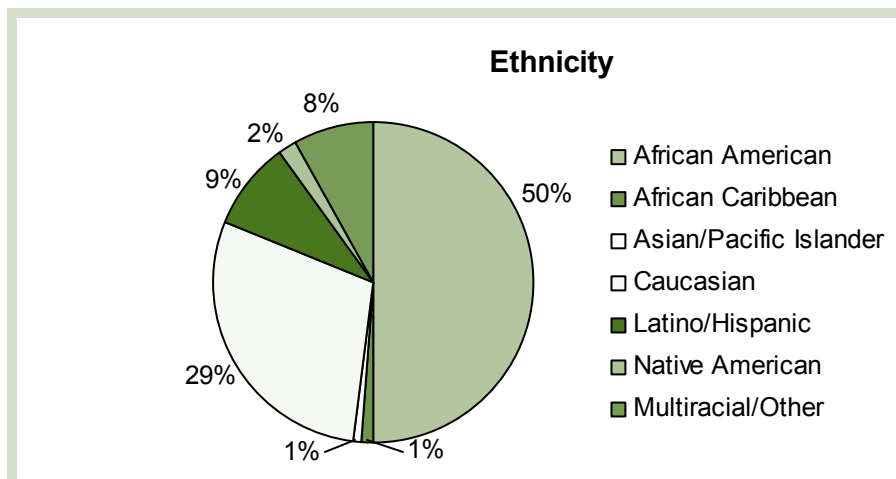
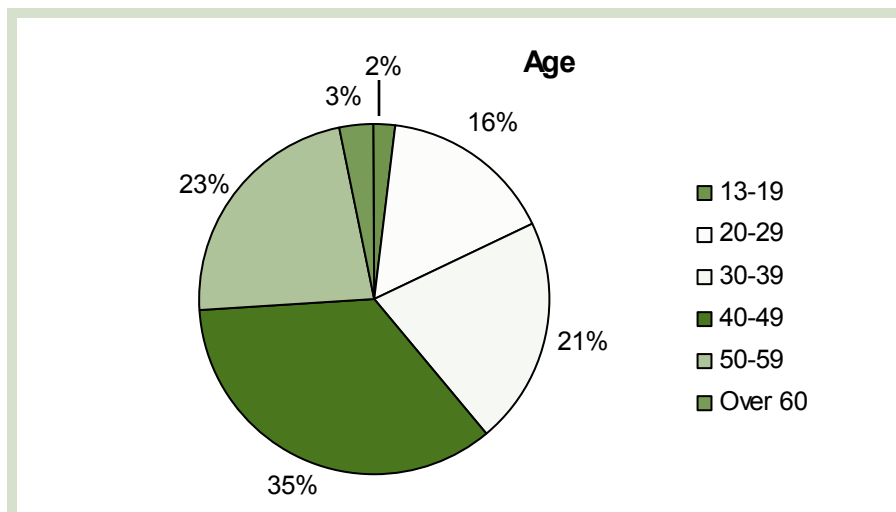
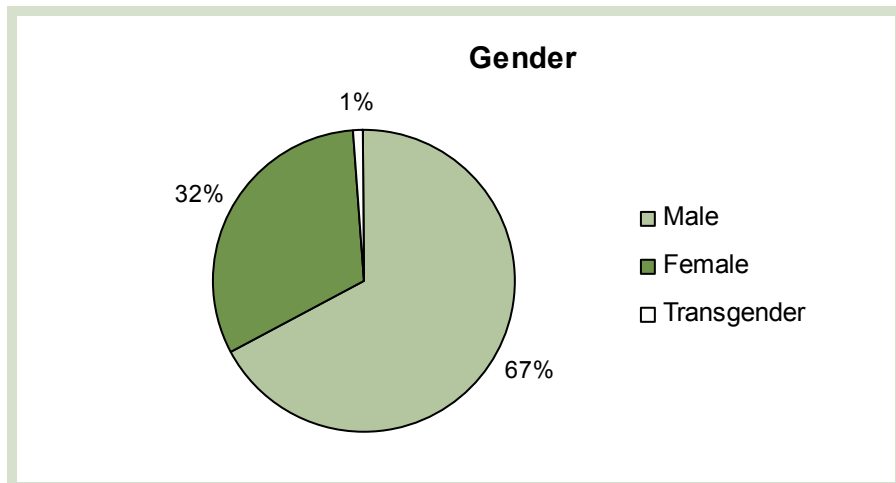
<sup>1</sup> As reported by AIDS Network Data Collection Committee Report 2006-2007

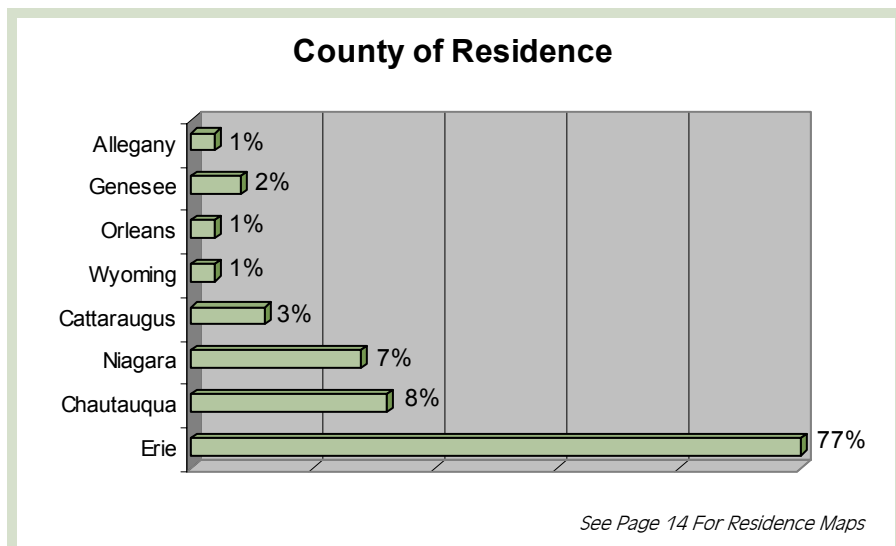
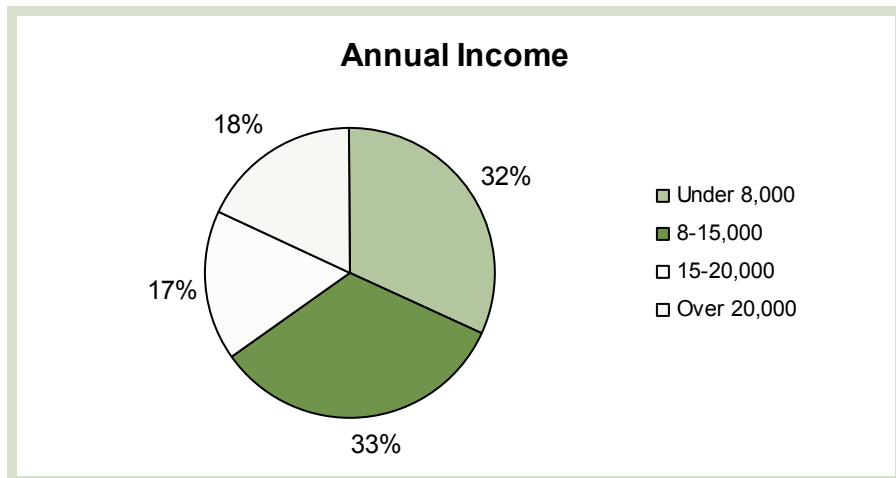
## Did You Know?

### **Of the PLWA/HIV responding to the 2007 survey. . .**

- ◆ The majority are Male (67%); African American (50%); Age 40 or over (61%); do not have children (56%); and earn less than \$15,000 annually (65%).
- ◆ 57% are afraid to disclose their HIV status.
- ◆ 20% are unaware of New York State's AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP).
- ◆ 32% missed medical appointments because of transportation problems.
- ◆ 77% feel that workers in benefit/entitlement agencies are not informed nor educated about HIV/AIDS. 70% do not feel that workers in these agencies treat them fairly or with respect.
- ◆ 66% have suffered from depression, excessive worrying, emotional concerns, or attempted suicide. Of these, 18% have never received treatment.
- ◆ 20% reported they were hit, threatened or abused by their partner.
- ◆ 63% are unemployed. 41% of these individuals stopped working because of their HIV status.

# Demographics

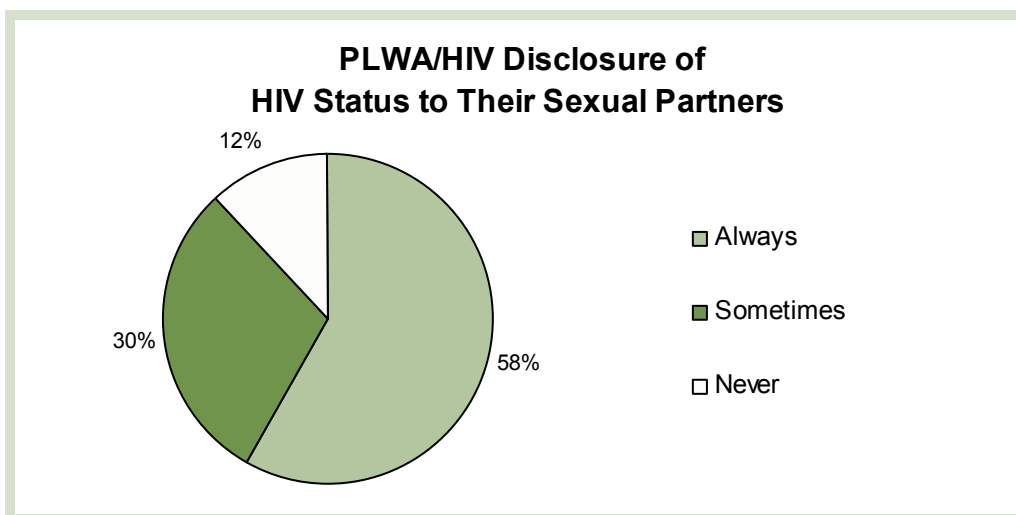
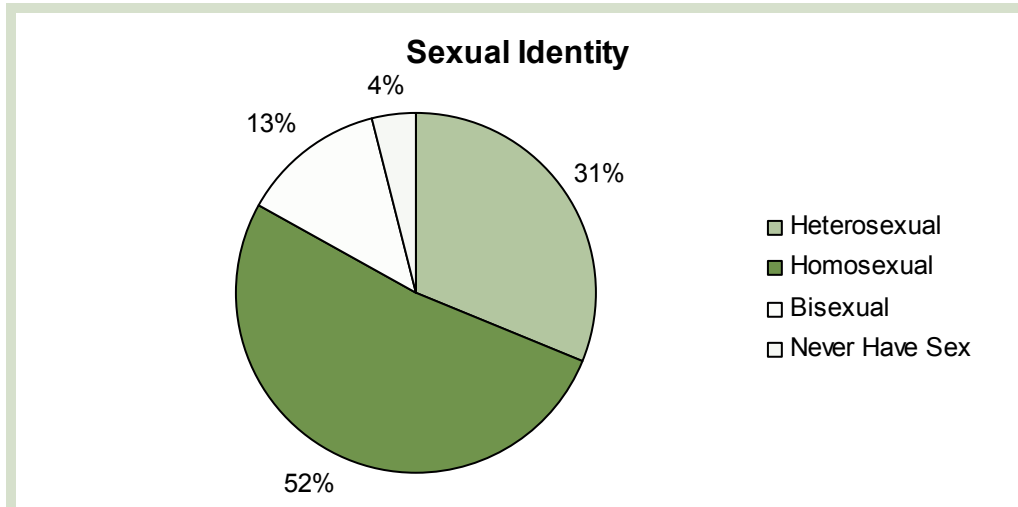




### Miscellaneous

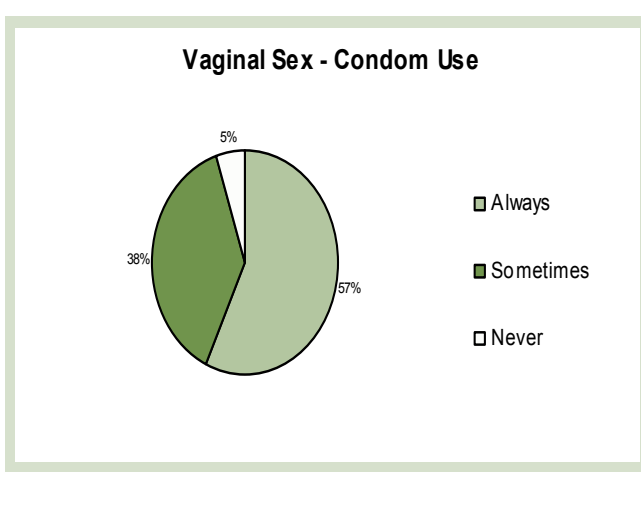
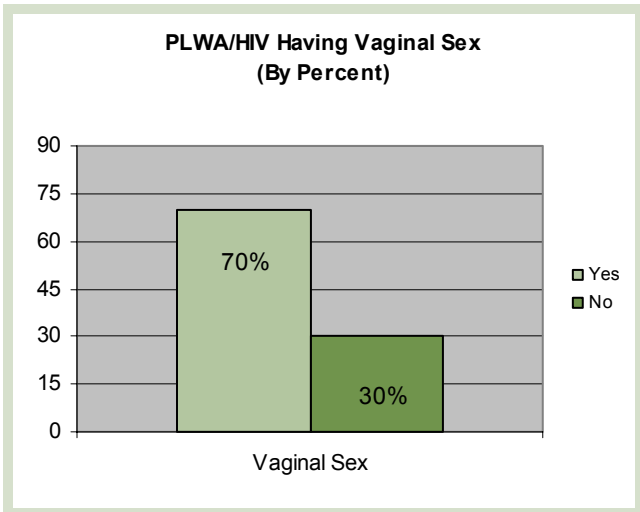
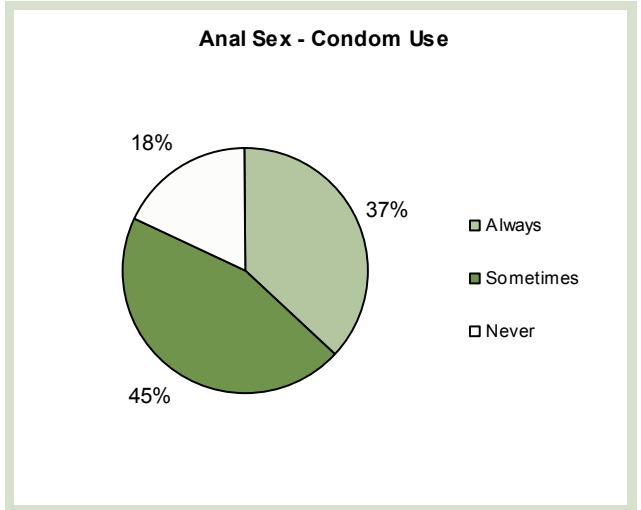
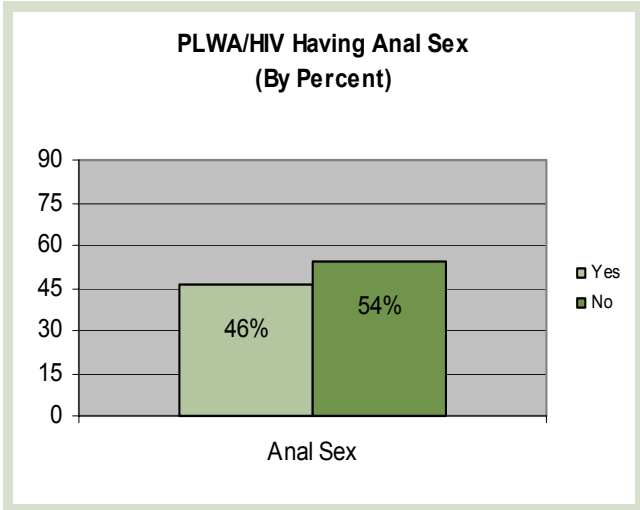
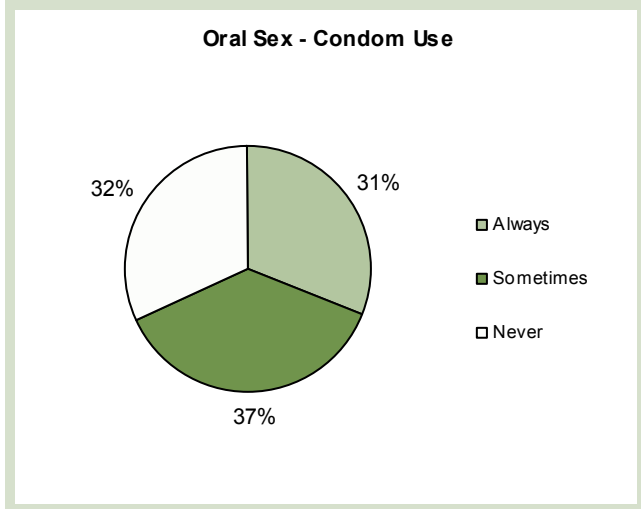
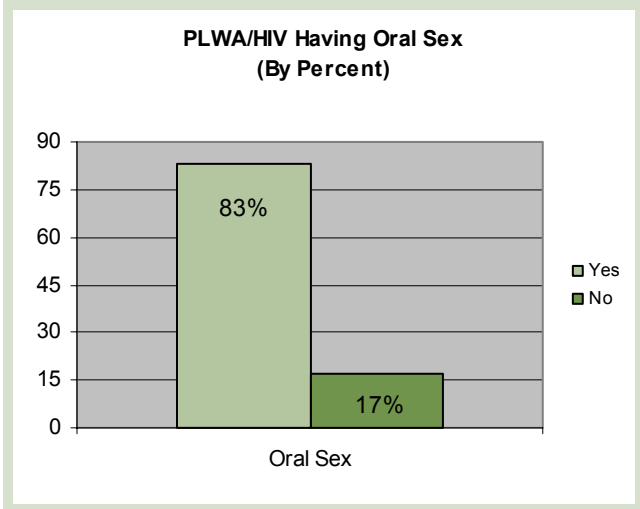
- 63% of respondents identified as Single, while 14% identified as Married or having a Domestic Partner.
- 97% are U.S. citizens, while <01% identified as Documented or Undocumented Immigrants; and 1% as North American Indians.
- 96% identify English as their primary language.
- 10% have spent time in jail or prison in the past year, a significant decrease from the 2004 survey result of 32%.
- 5% of respondents have had HIV less than one year; 28% one to five years; 27% five to ten years; and 40% more than ten years.
- 85% reported they tested positive in New York State.

# Identity & Sexual Behavior



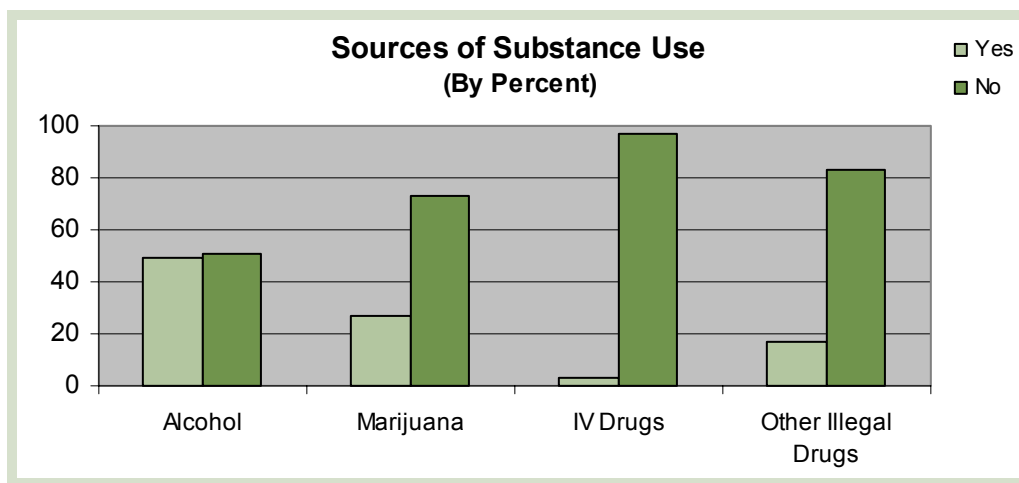
## Miscellaneous

- 84% of all respondents reported having sex with another person since testing HIV positive. This is a decrease from the 2004 survey result of 85% and 2001 survey result of 92%.
- 31% reported always using condoms for oral sex and 57% always using condoms for vaginal sex. This is an increase from the 2004 survey results of 23% and 41% respectively. 37% reported always using condoms for anal sex, down from 39% in 2004.
- At least 45% of all respondents reported that they engaged in some form of unprotected sex since testing HIV positive. This is an increase from the 2004 survey result of 44%, the 2001 survey result of 24% and the 1999 result of 33%.



# Alcohol and Other Substance Use

- 49% of respondents reported using alcohol in the past 6 months. This is a significant decrease from the 2004 survey result of 78%.
- 17% reported using illegal drugs other than marijuana, an increase from the 2004 survey result of 6%.
- 27% reported that their substance use interferes with their daily life or their health. This is a significant increase from the 2004 result of 14%.
- 22% reported that their substance use resulted in not practicing safe sex and 5% reported that their use of drugs and/or alcohol resulted in them using unclean needles. In 2004, 33% reported their substance use resulted in not practicing safe sex and 7% reported that their use of drugs and/or alcohol resulted in their using unclean needles.
- 18% reported that their drug or alcohol use caused them to miss HIV related appointments. This is an increase from the 2004 survey result of 14%.
- 2% reported that they had shared needles in the past 6 months.



# Disclosure & Discrimination

- 88% disclosed their HIV status to someone other than their health care provider.
- 58% told their partners of their HIV status, an increase from 48% in the 2004 survey.
- 57% reported they are afraid to disclose their status to others. This is a significant increase from the 2004 survey result of 41%.
- 31% reported that they have been discriminated against because of their HIV status. This is a decrease from the 2004 survey result of 34%.
- 10% reported they took legal action because of this discrimination. There is an increase from the 2004 survey result of 4%.

# Benefits & Entitlements

- 64% of all respondents report receiving some form of public benefits or entitlements. (WIC, Veterans Benefits, Housing Assistance, HEAP, Public Assistance, Section 8 Housing, Social Security, Food Stamps, etc.)
- 48% of PLWA/HIV have had problems (with workers, shutoffs, waiting lists, etc.) in obtaining benefits/entitlements. This is a significant increase from the 2004 survey result of 33%.
- 77% feel the workers in these agencies are not informed or educated about HIV/AIDS. There is an increase from the 2004 survey results of 55%.
- 70% feel they are not treated fairly or with respect by the workers in these agencies. There is an increase from the 2004 survey results of 40%.

# Case Management

- 62% of respondents reported having a case manager. This is an increase from the 2004 result of 57%.
- 89% of these respondents reported that their case manager helped them to meet their basic needs.
- 17% of respondents have had 3 or more case managers and 11% have had to wait 6 months or longer to receive a new case manager.
- 18% reported being on a waiting list for services; 19% of these reported waiting for a year or more.

## Women & Children

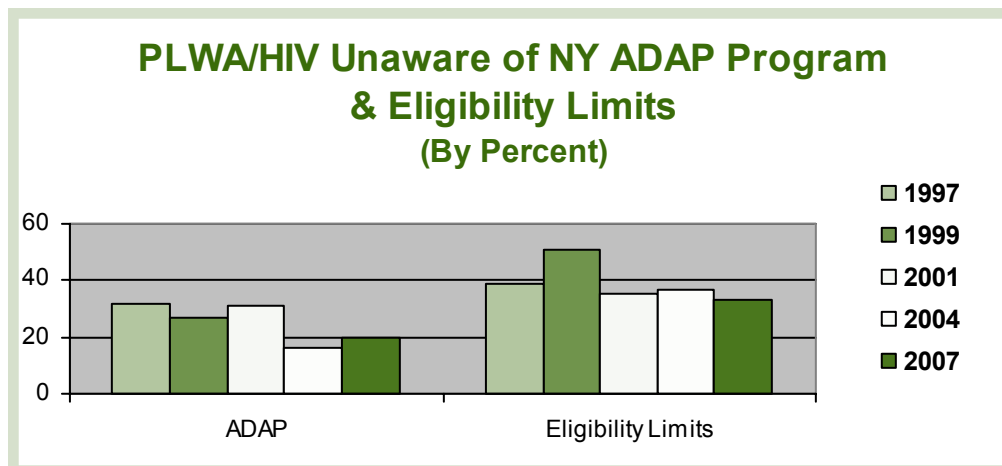
- 42% of respondents (both male and female) have children. This is a decrease from 2004 when 45% reported having children and an increase from 2001 when 29% reported having children.
- 66% of these children have been tested for HIV and 7% have tested HIV positive. The 2004 survey results reflected 68% of respondent's children had been tested for HIV and 9% tested HIV positive.
- 49% of PLWA/HIV parents have a legal plan in place to take care of their children in the event of their death. This is an increase from the 2004 survey result of 45%.
- 46% of respondents do not have a current health care proxy; 69% do not have a current living will.
- 5% of the female respondents reported that they were currently pregnant.
- 71% of the female respondents reported to have ever been pregnant.
- 26% reported they knew they were HIV positive before becoming pregnant. Of these, 62% reported their pregnancy was unplanned.

## Medical Care & Mental Health

- 93% reported they are currently under a doctor's care. 87% see their doctor every one to six months.
- 13% reported difficulty keeping appointments because their health care provider was unavailable to see them.
- 66% of the respondents have suffered from depression, excessive worrying, emotional concerns, or attempted suicide. 18% of these respondents have never received treatment.
- 20% reported that they have been hit, threatened or abused by their partner. This is a decrease from 2004 when 25% reported partner abuse.

# Medications & Health Insurance

- 95% reported they have some form of health insurance. This is an increase from the 2004 survey result of 91%.
- 78% reported they are currently taking HIV-related medications. There is no change from the 2004 survey result.
- 59% of those not currently taking HIV-related medications reported that they had taken them previously but stopped.
- Of the respondents not taking HIV-related medications, 43% reported they stopped due to side effects, 26% reported their doctor told them to stop, and 9% reported their substance use interfered with taking the medications.

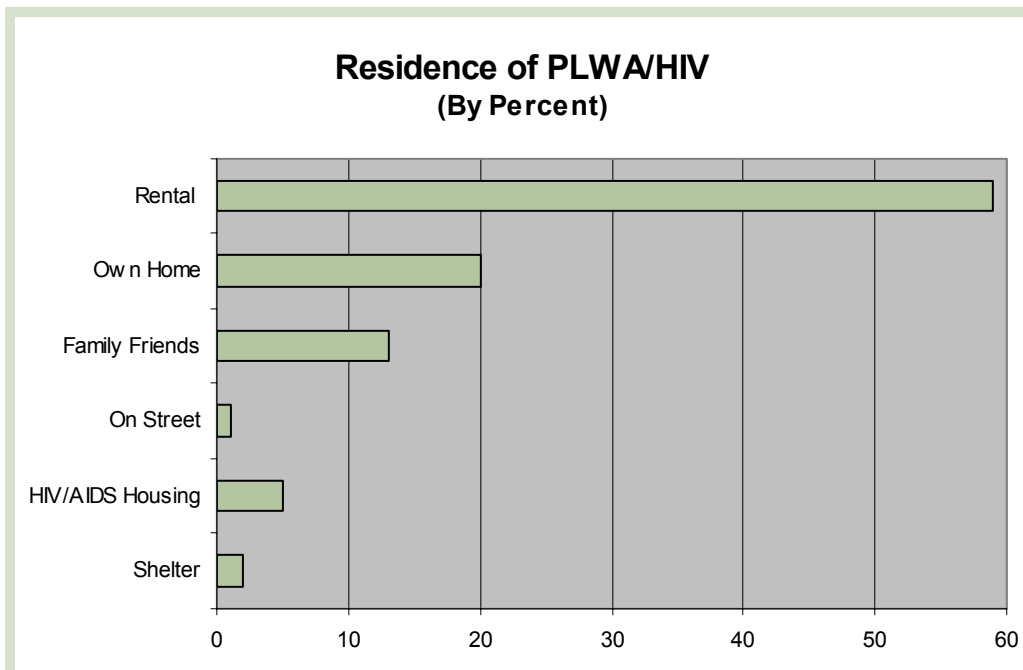


# Employment

- 63% of PLWA/HIV reported they were unemployed. This is an increase from the 2004 survey results of 54%.
- 34% of those unemployed feel well enough to work. This is a slight decrease from the 2004 survey of 36%.
- 46% of those unemployed stopped working because of their HIV status.

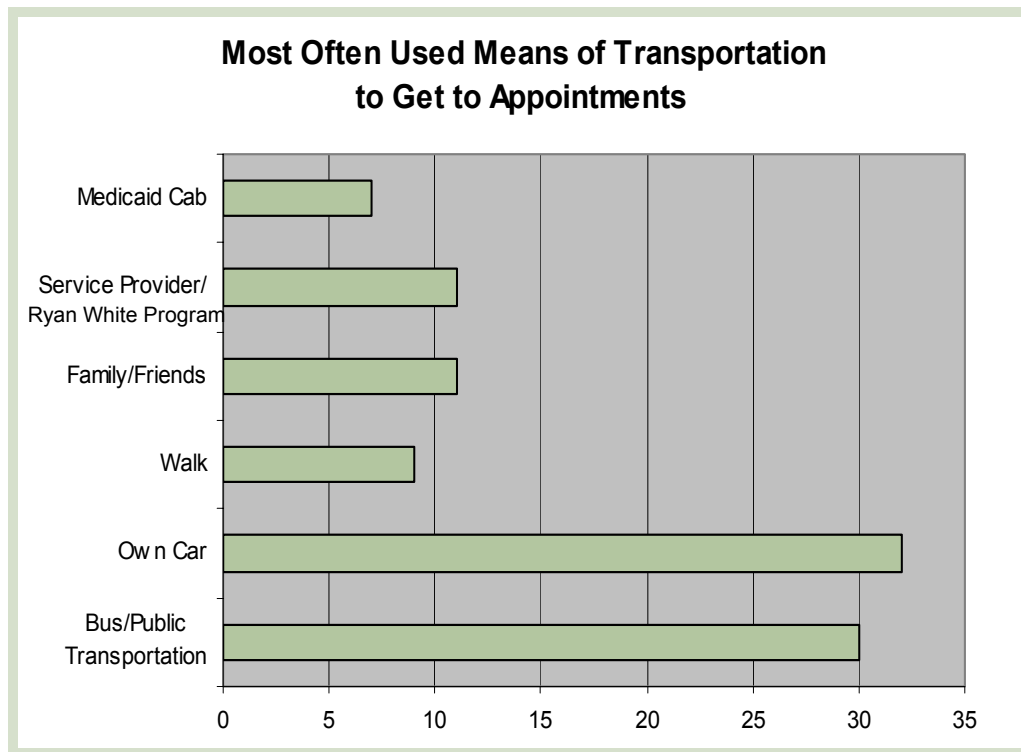
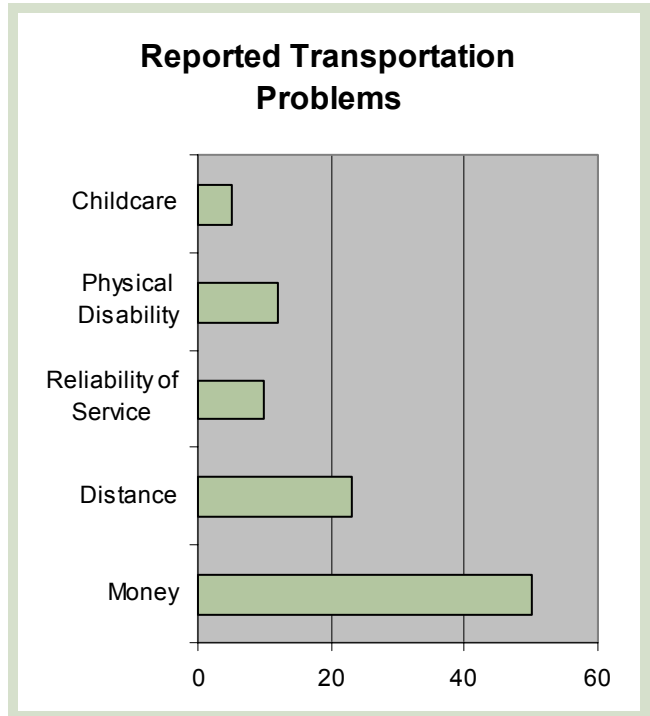
# Housing

- 23% have spent time on the streets or in an emergency shelter since testing HIV positive, up from 11% in 2004.
- 17% of these respondents have spent time on the streets or in an emergency shelter within the last month 46% within the last year.
- 3% currently live on the streets or depend on emergency shelters.
- 59% of respondents live in a rental unit and 20% own their own home..



# Transportation

- 32% of respondents report they have missed appointments because of transportation problems in the past year.
- 39% reported transportation problems for medical appointments and 35% had problems for support services.
- 32% use their own automobile as the most often used means of getting to appointments while 30% use public transportation.
- 9% walk to their appointments and 11% obtain a ride with friends or family members.
- 7% obtain a ride from their service providers to get to appointments, 7% use a Medicaid cab, and 4% utilize a funded Ryan White transportation program.



## Conclusion

In conclusion, this report describes the results of the 2007 Western New York People Living with HIV/AIDS Survey. The results of this study can be used to help make important inferences concerning the priorities of PLWA/HIV residing in Western New York, and can provide input into program development and modification.

Through analysis of these results, the AIDS Network and its members can determine some of the needs of PLWA/HIV and stimulate discussion regarding the development and implementation of effective HIV/AIDS related services. This can only help to further support and enrich the lives and futures of all those impacted by HIV and AIDS throughout the region.

## For More Information



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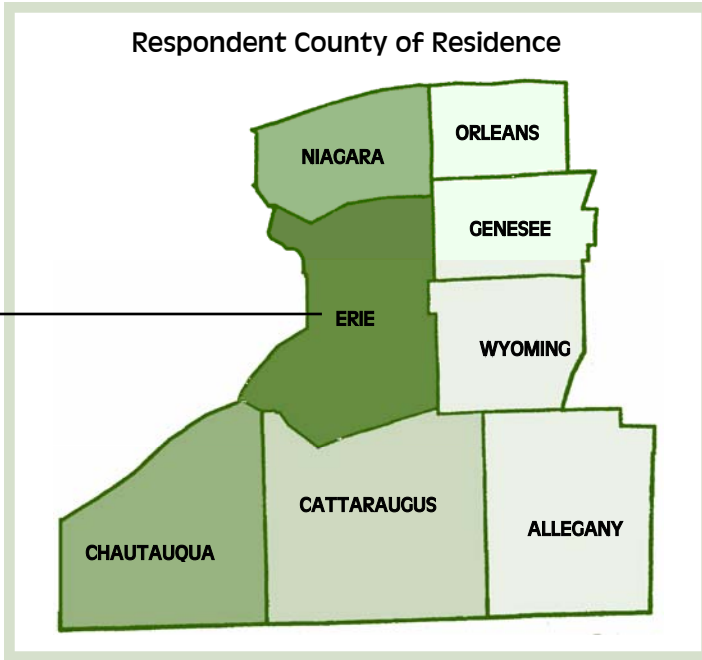
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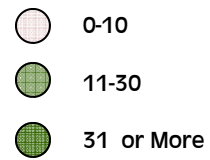
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# Residence Maps

Respondent County of Residence



Number of Respondents



Greater Buffalo Area Respondents (By Zip Code)

