



HIV/AIDS

AND

OVER AGE 50 OLDER ADULTS

In Western New York

- Older adults (ages 50+) represent 29% of the 2007 reported living HIV/AIDS cases in Western NY.¹
- Older adults (ages 50+) represent 16% of the 2007 newly diagnosed HIV/AIDS cases.²

In the United States

- Older adults accounted for 15% of new HIV diagnoses and 24% of persons living with HIV/AIDS in the United States, this is a 17% increase from 2001.³
- People over age 50 make up 35% of overall HIV/AIDS cases in the United States, an increase of more than 700% between 1990 and 2005.³
- While men who have sex with men form the largest group of HIV/AIDS cases in older adults, the number of women infected heterosexually has been rising at a higher rate and women compromise a greater percentage into the 60s and older.⁴

Critical Issues / Barriers to Service

- Despite myths and stereotypes, many older adults are sexually active, may not be practicing safe sex and may be drug users.⁵
- Health care professionals may underestimate their older patients' risk for HIV/AIDS, may miss opportunities to deliver prevention messages, offer HIV testing or make an early diagnosis.⁶
- The introduction of erectile dysfunction remedies introduces new issues not seen previously. People who use these medications may not have had current sexual health education or the knowledge to make healthier sexual decisions.⁶
- Older adults often mistake the signs of HIV/AIDS for the aches and pains of normal aging, so they are less likely than younger people to get tested. They may also be ashamed or afraid of being tested.⁷
- Older people with HIV/AIDS face a double stigma: ageism and infection with a sexually or IV drug transmitted disease. Because of the stigma, it can be difficult for older individuals to disclose their HIV status to family, friends and the community.⁷
- As people survive longer with chronic HIV they may experience long term consequences of anti-HIV treatments, the extent of which are not fully known.⁷

HIV/AIDS is devastating communities in our state. Know the facts, and join in the fight against HIV/AIDS!

For more information on HIV/AIDS or for testing sites in NY, contact New York State's AIDS Hotline at 1-800-541-AIDS



Care Coordination Committee
Minority Concerns Workgroup

March 2009

¹ AIDS Network of Western NY - Data Collection Report 2009

² New York State Dept. of Health - Epidemiological Report 2009

³ CDC - HIV/AIDS Fact Sheets 2006

⁴ National Association of People Over Fifty - www.hivoverfifty.org

⁵ Linsk, NL. - HIV among older Adults-AIDS Reader 2005

⁶ Center for AIDS Prevention Studies - Fact Sheet - June 2006

⁷ AIDS Network of Western NY - Service Delivery Plan 2008