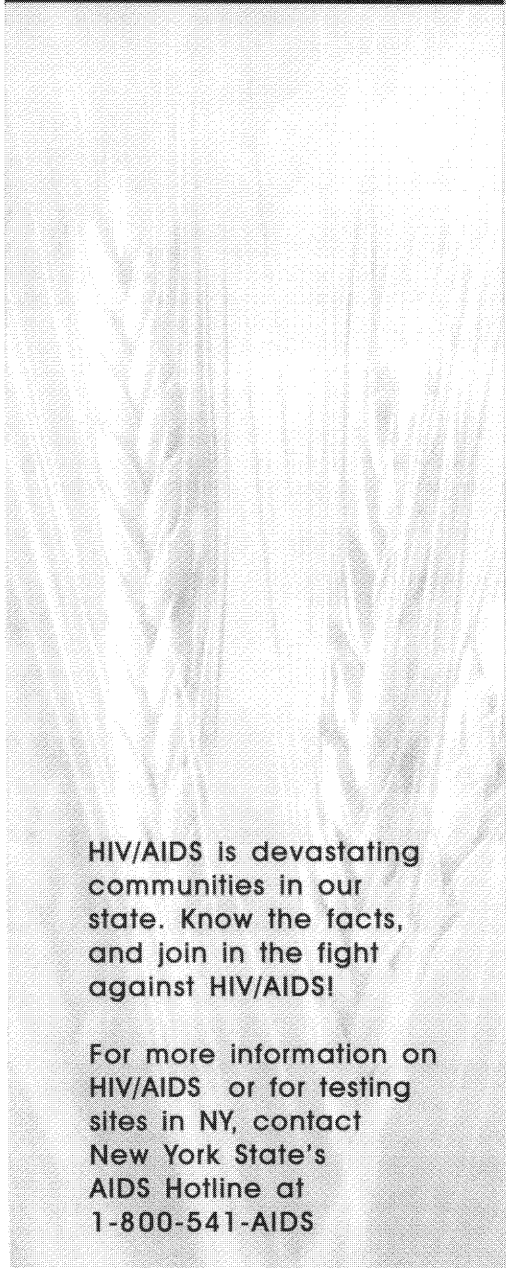


# HIV/AIDS

## AND

## RURAL RESIDENTS



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

### In New York State

- There are 57 counties and 5 boroughs in New York State - 53 of the counties are classified as non-metropolitan areas.<sup>1</sup>
- In Western New York, seven of the eight counties are considered non-metropolitan<sup>1</sup>
- In Western New York, the seven counties outside of Erie represent 23% of the living HIV/AIDS cases.<sup>2</sup>

### In the United States

- Male rural AIDS cases are comprised of 60% men who have sex with men (MSM) and about 20% injection drug users.<sup>3</sup>
- Heterosexual transmission accounts for most AIDS cases among rural women.<sup>3</sup>
- African Americans and Latinos are disproportionately affected by HIV in rural areas. In the Northeast, African Americans and Latinos each represent 1% of the rural population, but 25% and 20% of the AIDS cases respectively.<sup>4</sup>
- Among rural, sexually active HIV-infected people, one-third to one half reported they never use condoms.<sup>5</sup>
- Compared with their urban counterparts, rural residents report hearing less about HIV, and having more problems accessing HIV/AIDS care and treatment.<sup>6</sup>

### Critical Issues / Barriers to Service

- Stigmatization of HIV, geography and low overall HIV/AIDS rates are combined factors making it difficult financially and practically to implement rural HIV programming.<sup>7</sup>
- Residents of rural areas may face additional barriers to accessing HIV testing and care, drug treatment and mental health counseling. Barriers may include, poverty, unemployment, lack of education, lack of childcare services and attitudinal and cultural factors.<sup>8</sup>
- Geographic challenges can hinder access to prevention and care services for rural residents who have limited access to transportation. Inclement weather and long distances between towns can mean traveling several hours for medical care and social support services.<sup>9</sup>
- Rural MSM may avoid stigma, social hostility and expected violence by hiding their sexuality, assimilating into the heterosexual culture and regularly traveling to higher seroprevalence areas to seek sexual relationships.<sup>9</sup>
- Substance use poses a significant problem in rural areas, methamphetamines in particular. The National Center on Addiction and Substance Use reports rural residents (especially youth) are at a higher risk of becoming substance users than residents in urban settings.<sup>10</sup>



Care Coordination Committee  
Minority Concerns Workgroup

March 2009

<sup>1</sup>NYS HIV/AIDS Surveillance Semiannual Rep.-Dec.2005

<sup>2</sup>NYS HIV/AIDS Surveillance Semiannual Rep.-Dec. 2006

<sup>3</sup>USCF, Rural HIV Prevention Needs-May 2006

<sup>4</sup>Heckman TG, Ohio University, Sexual Transmission-2003

<sup>5</sup>Hall HJ, HIV in Rural United States-2005

<sup>6</sup>Sallar AM, Abstract, HIV Prevention Conference-2003

<sup>7</sup>Williams ML, Journal of Rural Health-2005

<sup>8</sup>National Rural Health Association-November 1997

<sup>9</sup>Castaneda D, HIV/AIDS Services for Women-2000

<sup>10</sup>National Center on Addiction & Substance Use-2000