



## AND

## TRANSGENDER PERSONS



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

### Defining Transgender

- Transgender is defined as an individual whose gender identity, expression or behavior is not traditionally associated with their birth sex.
- Some transgender individuals experience gender identity in conflict with their anatomical sex and may seek some degree of sex reassignment surgery, take hormones, or undergo other cosmetic procedures. Others may pursue gender expression (masculine or feminine) through external self-presentation and behavior.
- There is no reliable data on the number of transgender individuals in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

### What We Know

- The federal government currently does not collect data on transgender HIV status.<sup>2</sup>
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) across multiple studies found that 27.7% of male-to-female (MTF) transgender people tested positive for HIV infection, while 11.8% self-reported being HIV-positive. Two out of three of those infected did not know their status.<sup>3</sup>
- In a study of persons diagnosed with AIDS between 1990-2000, and reported to the CDC from 34 states, transgender persons were more likely to be Black, Hispanic, or Asian/Pacific Islanders, compared to other persons with HIV/AIDS.<sup>1</sup>
- High HIV infection rates were found among African American MTF people, with 56.3% testing positive, and 30.8% indicating that they knew they were positive.<sup>4</sup>

### Critical Issues / Barriers to Service

- Many transgender individuals do not access HIV prevention or health services due to the insensitivity of service providers and health care staff, or fear of being revealed as transgender.<sup>5</sup>
- Hormonal therapy is an essential part of some transgender person's healthcare. Many insurance companies and ADAP programs don't pay for hormonal therapy. Finding ways to get the hormones and needles to inject them may lead to sex for money, sharing needles and/or substance use.<sup>6</sup>
- The stigma of transgender status is associated with lower self esteem, increased likelihood for substance abuse and lessened likelihood of safer sex practices.<sup>7</sup>
- Transgender individuals are often victims of stigma from gay/lesbian and heterosexual communities and often must deal with discrimination about perceived sexual orientation and gender prejudices.<sup>8</sup>



Care Coordination Committee  
Minority Concerns Workgroup

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<sup>1</sup> US Surgeon General - *Leadership Campaign on AIDS 2007*

<sup>2</sup> Natl. Library of Medicine - *Transgender, HIV and Comm. of Color 2002*

<sup>3</sup> Campaign to End AIDS (C2EA) - *Transgender Right to Fight 2007*

<sup>4</sup> Transgender HIV Health Services - *Best Practices 2006*

<sup>5</sup> Clement, Noelle, Wilkinson & Kitano-2001; Feinberg-2001

<sup>6</sup> About.com: AIDS/HIV - *HIV Risk and Transgender 2007*

<sup>7</sup> National Minority AIDS Council - *Overview of HIV/AIDS June 2007*

<sup>8</sup> Dean, L.-*LGBT Health Findings & Concerns-Jan 2000*