



March 28, 2008

Dear Colleague:

This week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released its annual report, *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report—Cases of HIV Infection and AIDS in the United States and Dependent Areas, 2006 Vol. 18*. This report presents data for cases of HIV infection and AIDS reported to CDC through June 2007. We recognize this report is being issued later than normal in the data cycle, due to unavoidable delays. We appreciate your patience and support as we transition to a new electronic HIV/AIDS reporting system.

This report contains estimated numbers of cases of HIV/AIDS from the 38 areas (33 states and 5 dependent areas) that have had confidential name-based HIV infection reporting since at least 2003. According to the number of reported AIDS cases, these 33 states represent approximately 63% of the epidemic in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The *2006 HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report* is organized into 5 sections: (1) cases of HIV/AIDS and AIDS, (2) deaths of persons with AIDS, (3) persons living with HIV/AIDS, AIDS, or HIV infection (not AIDS), (4) length of survival after AIDS diagnosis, and (5) reports of cases of HIV/AIDS, AIDS, and HIV infection (not AIDS).

Key conclusions of this report include

- African Americans and gay and bisexual men of all races continue to be most severely affected.
- From 2003 through 2006, the estimated number of HIV/AIDS cases in the 33 states with confidential name-based HIV infection reporting remained stable.
- From 2002 through 2006, the estimated number of newly diagnosed AIDS cases in the 50 states and the District of Columbia remained stable, while the estimated number of deaths of persons with AIDS decreased.

Although the total number of new cases of HIV/AIDS remained stable, HIV prevalence (i.e., the number of persons living with HIV/AIDS) increased steadily from 2003 through 2006. It is important to note that HIV prevalence differs from HIV incidence, which reflects the annual number of new HIV infections each year. CDC is currently working with states to implement the first national system for estimating HIV incidence based on direct measurement of new HIV infections that will provide a critical missing piece in tracking the U.S. epidemic. In addition, data from this new system, when available, will provide the clearest picture to date of HIV infections in the U.S. and, over time, will allow us to better target prevention efforts and measure progress in populations at highest risk.

In the interim, data on *estimated* HIV diagnoses provide the best indication of the impact of the epidemic. It is important to note that estimated HIV diagnoses do not necessarily represent new infections. This is because some individuals with new HIV diagnoses were infected recently, while others were infected many years ago.

Also please note that Table 16 contains data on reported cases of HIV infection. The table titled “Reported cases of HIV infection (not AIDS), by area of residence, 2006 and cumulative—45 states and 5 U.S. dependent areas with confidential name-based HIV infection reporting” reflects an increase in the number of states with confidential name-based HIV infection reporting from 2005 to 2006. These data do not represent an increase in estimated HIV diagnoses or HIV incidence. In 2005, CDC received reported cases of HIV infection from 38 states and 5 dependent areas. In 2006, CDC received reported cases of HIV infection from 45 states and 5 dependent areas. This increase in the number of states reporting has resulted in an increase in the number of reported cases of HIV from 35,537 in 2005 to 52,878 in 2006.

This *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report* confirms that more than 25 years into the AIDS epidemic, HIV continues to exact a tremendous toll in the United States. While the total number of new cases of HIV/AIDS remained stable through 2006, certain populations remain disproportionately affected such as African Americans and gay and bisexual men of all races. While the 2006 analysis has not yet been finalized for young (aged 13-24) black men who have sex with men, 2005 data suggest this population may be particularly vulnerable, underscoring the need for expanded access to HIV prevention services for everyone at risk. We hope this report will be useful to you as we continue to work together to reduce the unacceptable burden of HIV/AIDS. The *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report* is available on the CDC HIV/AIDS Web site at www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/2006report/pdf/2006SurveillanceReport.pdf and fact sheet at <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/factsheets/us.htm>

Thank you for your continued commitment to HIV/AIDS prevention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert S. Janssen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert S. Janssen, M.D.
Director,
Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention
National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and
TB Prevention