

## **HIV Infections Among Injection Drug Users in the United States<sup>1</sup>**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there were 38,281 new HIV diagnoses in the United States during 2017. There were 1,335 new diagnoses attributed to injection drug use (IDU) in males and 1,009 new diagnoses attributed to IDU in females. Additionally, there were 1,241 new diagnoses reported in males who had male-to-male sexual contact and also used injection drugs. In all, almost nine percent (n=3,585) of new diagnoses in the United States in 2017 were attributed to IDU.

Of males diagnosed with HIV in 2017 in the United States, over eight percent (n=2,576) were reported with either IDU or male-to-male sexual contact/IDU as the transmission category, while over 14 percent (n=1,009) of females diagnosed with HIV in 2017 in the United States were attributed to IDU.

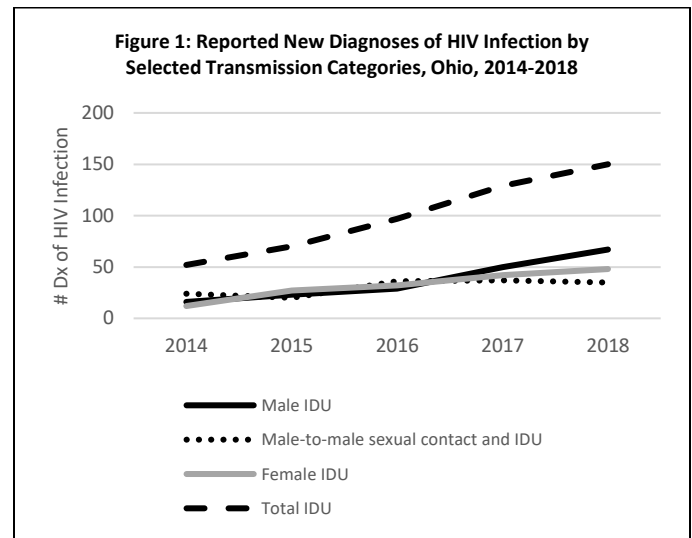
Nationally, Blacks/African-Americans made up 29 percent (n=1,050) of the total number of new diagnoses of HIV infection attributed to IDU in 2017. Hispanics/Latinx made up 20 percent (n=732), and whites made up 45 percent (1,623).

<sup>1</sup>Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *HIV Surveillance Report*, 2017; vol. 29. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/reports/hiv-surveillance.html>. Published November 2016. Accessed 8/8/19.

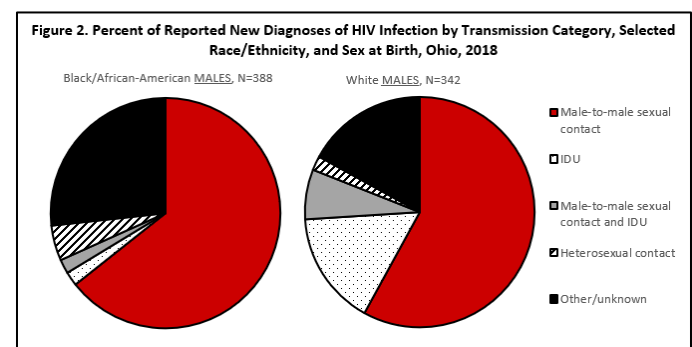
## **New Reported Diagnoses of HIV Infection Among IDU in Ohio**

There were 989 new diagnoses of HIV infection in Ohio in 2018. Among males diagnosed with HIV in Ohio in 2018, there were 67 new diagnoses of HIV infection reported with IDU as the transmission category, and 35 reported with male-to-male sexual contact/IDU as the transmission category. IDU and male-to-male sexual contact/IDU are mutually exclusive transmission categories. There were 48 females diagnosed with HIV in Ohio in 2018 reported with IDU as the transmission category. In all, nearly 15 percent (n=150) of new diagnoses of HIV infection in Ohio in 2018 were attributed to IDU, up from 52 in 2014. Of the 150 new diagnoses of HIV infection in Ohio in 2018 reported with IDU or male-to-male sexual contact/IDU as the transmission category, 83 percent (n=124) were among whites and 11 percent (n=16) were among blacks/African-Americans.

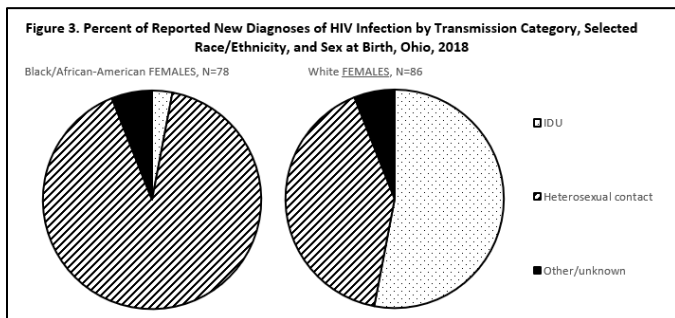
The percent of new diagnoses of HIV reported in Ohio attributable to IDU has increased from five percent of the total number of diagnoses in 2014 to 15 percent in 2018. The total number of new diagnoses of HIV infection attributed to IDU has nearly tripled from 2014 (n=52) to 2018 (n=150) (Figure 1).



When examining transmission categories among males diagnosed with HIV in Ohio in 2018, there are apparent differences between black/African-Americans and whites (Figure 2). Sixty-five percent of new diagnoses of HIV among black/African-American males and 58 percent among white males were reported with male-to-male sexual contact as the transmission category. Two percent of new diagnoses of HIV among black/African-American males and 16 percent among white males were reported with IDU as the transmission category. It is important to note that the percentage where the transmission category is unknown is higher in black/African-American males than in white males.



However, when comparing transmission categories for females diagnosed with HIV in Ohio in 2018, there are significant differences between blacks/African-Americans and whites (Figure 3). Three percent of new diagnoses of HIV among black/African-American females and 53 percent among white females were reported with IDU as the transmission category. Ninety-one percent of new diagnoses of HIV among black/African-American females were reported with heterosexual contact as the transmission category, while 41 percent were reported for white females.



Of the 150 new diagnoses of HIV infection in Ohio in 2018 attributed to IDU, 65 percent were in persons residing in the three largest counties in Ohio—Cuyahoga, Franklin, and Hamilton. However, 31 percent were in persons who resided in less populous counties and four percent were in persons diagnosed while in a correctional facility or whose county of residence was unknown.

### **Injection Drug Users Living with Diagnosed HIV Infection in Ohio**

There were 24,130 persons living with diagnosed HIV infection in Ohio at the end of 2018. Of these, 2,352 (10 percent) were reported with an IDU-related transmission category. Thirty-six percent (n=835) of persons living with diagnosed HIV infection in Ohio at the end of 2018 who were reported with an IDU-related transmission category were black/African-American, 49 percent (n=1,148) were white, 11 percent (n=269) were Hispanic/Latinx, and four percent (n=94) were Multi-Race.

Of the 2,352 persons living with diagnosed HIV infection in Ohio at the end of 2018 who were reported with an IDU-related transmission category, slightly over half (n=1,199) are currently living in

one of Ohio's largest counties—Cuyahoga, Franklin, or Hamilton. However, 40 percent of persons living with diagnosed HIV with an IDU-related transmission category are currently residing in less populous counties and eight percent are currently incarcerated in a correctional facility or have an unknown current residence.

It is important to remember that risk factors contributing to transmission categories are self-reported by patients. Due to the stigma and sensitivity of IDU, cases related to IDU transmission are potentially underestimated.

#### **Explanation of Terms:**

- Diagnoses of HIV infection include persons with a diagnosis of HIV (not AIDS), a diagnosis of HIV and an AIDS diagnosis within 12 months (HIV & later AIDS), and concurrent diagnoses of HIV and AIDS (AIDS). The rate is the number of persons with a reported diagnosis of HIV infection per 100,000 population calculated using U.S. Census estimates for that year.

- Living with diagnosed HIV infection represents all persons ever diagnosed and reported with HIV or AIDS who have not been reported as having died as of December 31, 2018. Persons living with diagnosed HIV infection represent persons living in Ohio as of December 31, 2018, regardless of whether the person was a resident of Ohio at time of initial HIV and/or AIDS diagnosis. The rate is the number of persons living with diagnosed HIV infection per 100,000 population calculated using 2018 U.S. Census estimates.

- Males and Females refer to sex assigned at birth.

- Hispanics/Latinx may be of any race. Persons with a race of American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African-American, White, or Multi-Race are not-Hispanic. Asian/Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiians.

- Transmission categories are mutually exclusive, hierarchical categories defined by the CDC and system-calculated using sex at birth and risk factor history to determine mode of transmission. A person with multiple risks is only represented in the highest category based on the CDC hierarchical algorithm. Thus, transgender women are included in the male-to-male sexual contact transmission category if assigned male at birth and risk factor history indicates sex with males. Please note this is for the categorization of HIV transmission categories only and not to describe sexual orientation.

- Source: Ohio Department of Health, HIV Surveillance Program. Data reported through June 30, 2019.

**Please direct questions about this report to: Ohio Department of Health / Division of Health Improvement and Wellness / HIV Surveillance Program / 614-387-2722**