



## What is Outreach, Testing and Linkage?

**Outreach, Testing and Linkage (OTL)** is an HIV testing intervention conducted **in nonclinical settings**. The main objective of this intervention is to increase HIV testing among high risk populations who might not access medical services regularly. The OTL intervention priority populations are men who have sex with men (MSM), injection drug users (IDU), and other persons at high risk for HIV infection in Connecticut. Examples of nonclinical settings where HIV testing may be offered include, but are not limited to, community-based organizations (CBOs), mobile testing units, churches, bathhouses, parks, shelters, syringe services programs, health-related storefronts, homes, and other social service organizations.<sup>1</sup>

## CDC Recommendations

CDC recommends that all adolescents and adults get tested for HIV at least once as a routine part of medical care. CDC also recommends more frequent testing (at least annually) for men who have sex with men (MSM), injection drug users (IDU), and other persons at high risk for HIV infection.<sup>2</sup>

### To implement HIV testing in nonclinical settings targeting populations at high risk for HIV infection<sup>3</sup>

- Agencies should **adherence to program standards**, including local and state public health policies and laws, to ensure they deliver high-quality HIV testing services that are culturally competent and linguistically appropriate.
- HIV testing in nonclinical settings should be **simple, accessible, and straightforward**. Minimize client barriers and focus on delivering HIV test results and on supporting clients to access follow-up HIV care, treatment, partner and prevention services as indicated.
- Agencies should **employ strategic outreach and recruitment efforts, establish metrics for key program indicators, and monitor service delivery** to ensure targeted testing is achieving program goals.
- To facilitate referral and linkage, agencies should **establish partnerships with organizations that offer essential follow-up services**, including clinics that offer HIV care and treatment, Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and non-occupational postexposure prophylaxis (nPEP).



Scan this QR Code for more information regarding CDC recommendations on Implementing HIV testing in nonclinical settings

## Reporting Requirements

Agencies funded (directly or given HIV testing supplies) are required to report data to the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

The annual report required agencies implementing the OTL intervention to document the following data points.

### Demographic:

- Date of Birth-Year
- Race/Ethnicity
- State/Territory of Residence
- Assigned Sex at Birth and Current Gender
- Client County

### Priority Populations:

- MSM
- MSM/IDU
- IDU
- High Risk Heterosexuals

### HIV Testing:

- Previous HIV test
- HIV Test Election
- Result Provided
- Test Type
- HIV Test Result-Final Determination

### Linkages:

- Medical care (**HIV+**)
- Partner services (**HIV+**)
- Prevention Services (**HIV+/HIV-**)
- PrEP/nPEP (**HIV-**)

1. "Implementing HIV Testing in Nonclinical Settings," Center for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed November 5, 2019, [https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/testing/CDC\\_HIV\\_Implementing\\_HIV\\_Testing\\_in\\_Nonclinical\\_Settings.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/testing/CDC_HIV_Implementing_HIV_Testing_in_Nonclinical_Settings.pdf)  
 2. CDC. Revised guidelines for HIV counseling, testing, and referral. MMWR 2001; 50(RR-19):1-62.  
 3. Implementing HIV Testing in Nonclinical Settings, 7



## How Does OTL Benefit Communities and Public Safety?

About 1.1 million people in the United States have HIV, and 1 in 7 of them don't know they have it.<sup>4</sup>

**By ensuring that everyone with HIV is aware of their infection**, receives the treatment they need, and achieves sustained viral suppression, we can sharply reduce new infections.<sup>5</sup> According to a recent report, nearly 40% of new HIV transmissions in 2016 came from people who didn't know they had HIV.<sup>6</sup>

## Annual Report

January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

## 8 OTL Agencies in Connecticut

- Advancing CT Together (**Hartford**)
- APNH (**New Haven**)
- APEX (**Danbury**)
- City of Waterbury Health Dept. (**Waterbury**)
- GBAPP (**Bridgeport**)
- Hartford Gay & Lesbian HC (**Hartford**)
- Perception Programs, Inc. (**Windham**)
- StamfordCARES (**Stamford**)

**1,844** individuals were HIV tested during the reporting period. **11** (.60%) were newly dx HIV cases. The percentage of people HIV tested by county were: (**39%**) New Haven, (**36%**) Fairfield, (**15%**) Hartford, (**2%**) Windham, (**3%**) Litchfield, (**2%**) New London (**1%**) Middlesex and (**<1%**) Tolland.

## Demographic Information

The percentage of individuals tested by Race/Ethnicity were **35%** White, **31%** Black/AA, **27%** Hispanic/Latinx, and **8%** some other race.

**70%** of individuals HIV tested identified as a male, **28%** as female, and **2%** as Transgender.

**37** years old was the average (age range 15-f82; mode: 29 yrs).

For the HIV risk categories: **35%** of clients were MSM, **46%** were Heterosexuals (Hetero), **10%** were IDU, **7%** did not have a risk and **2%** were MSM-IDU.

4. "HIV.gov: U.S. Statistics," U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, accessed November 14, 2019, <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/data-and-trends/statistics>  
5. "Selected National HIV Prevention and Care Outcomes in the US," Center for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed November 14, 2019, <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/library/factsheets/cdc-hiv-national-hiv-care-outcomes.pdf>  
6. "HIV Testing," Center for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed October 28, 2019, <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/testing/index.html>

## HIV Testing Positive Results

The OTL intervention identified **11** HIV newly diagnosed individuals:

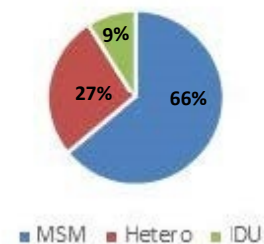
- **6** (55%) of them were Hispanic/Latinx and
- **4** (36%) were Black/AA.
- **82%** (9) of them were male and **18%** (2) of them were female.

33 years old was the average age (age range 20-54 mode: 34 yrs.). HIV risk information was collected at the time of HIV diagnosis. 9 of 11 (**66%**) were MSM 3 of 11 (**27%**) were heterosexual and 1 (**9%**) was IDU.

**66%** of HIV newly diagnosed were among MSM.

Below is a chart that shows the breakdown of newly diagnosed HIV positives by HIV risk groups.

Newly Diagnosed



The percentage of HIV newly diagnosed individuals by county were: (**36%**) Fairfield, (**27%**) Hartford and (**36%**) New Haven.

From 2020 to 2021, the number of OTL HIV newly diagnosed increased by **175%** (i.e., [n=4] in 2020 vs. [n=11] in 2021).

## OTL Outcomes

Out of the 11 HIV newly diagnosed people, **100%** (**11**) were referred for medical care and attended the 1<sup>st</sup> medical appointment within 30 days and **82%** (**9**) were interviewed by partner services within 30 days.