

## DESCRIPTION

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus spread through certain body fluids that attacks the body's immune system. Acquired immunodeficiency virus (AIDS) refers to a set of symptoms and illnesses that occur at the very final stage of HIV. Over time, HIV destroys so many cells, specifically CD4 (T cells) that the body can no longer fight off infection and disease. HIV is spread most often through sexual contact; contaminated needles or syringes shared by drug use; infected blood or blood products; and from infected women to their babies at birth or through breastfeeding. Opportunistic infections or cancers take advantage of a very weak immune system and signal that the person has AIDS. No effective cure currently exists, but with proper medical care, HIV can be controlled.<sup>1</sup>

## HOW WE ARE DOING

In 2016, Ramsey County's HIV diagnoses made up 14 percent of the state total and 16.6 percent of the metro total. HIV diagnoses between 2013 and 2016 averaged 31.5 cases annually in Ramsey County. HIV diagnoses have fluctuated during this time period, hitting a high in 2014 with 39 diagnoses. AIDS diagnoses have also fluctuated during this time, averaging 21.5 cases annually. In 2016, Ramsey county total AIDS diagnoses made up 20.4 percent of the metro total and 16 percent of the state total.<sup>2</sup>

## BENCHMARK INDICATOR

Healthy People 2020: Reduce the number of new HIV diagnoses.

U.S. Target: Ten percent reduction for each year 2014-2017, and 15 percent reduction for each year 2018-2020.<sup>3</sup>

## DISPARITIES

In 2015, most people living with HIV or AIDS in Minnesota were male (76 percent), white (50 percent), and over the age of 45 (58 percent). African-American people are affected disproportionately in Minnesota.<sup>4</sup>

## RISK FACTORS

HIV in Minnesota is primarily driven by sexual exposure. For males, sexual contact with other men is the primary mode of exposure. For females, most cases are due to heterosexual contact.<sup>4</sup> When a person is infected, the following body fluids have been proven to spread HIV: blood, semen, vaginal fluid and breast milk.<sup>5</sup>

## WHAT RAMSEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

Recently, Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health's Clinic 555 made HIV prevention, outreach, diagnostic and referral services a priority. Some of these improvements include integrating a new laboratory test that detects HIV sooner and adding additional HIV prevention services including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). If these treatments are followed correctly, they can decrease the chances of contracting HIV among high-risk clients. In 2018, Saint Paul – Ramsey County Public Health received funding from the Minnesota Department of Health to target residents who are at higher risk for contracting HIV, including: injection drug users, African-American men, African-born women and Latino men who have sex with men.

## Information to note

- African-American residents are affected disproportionately with HIV.
- HIV and AIDS diagnoses among Ramsey County residents make up about 16% of cases in Minnesota.
- Ramsey County is not meeting the Healthy People 2020 target of a 10% reduction in new HIV diagnoses.

<sup>1</sup> What Are HIV and AIDS? HIV.Gov. <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/about-hiv-and-aids/what-are-hiv-and-aids>. Accessed June 2018.

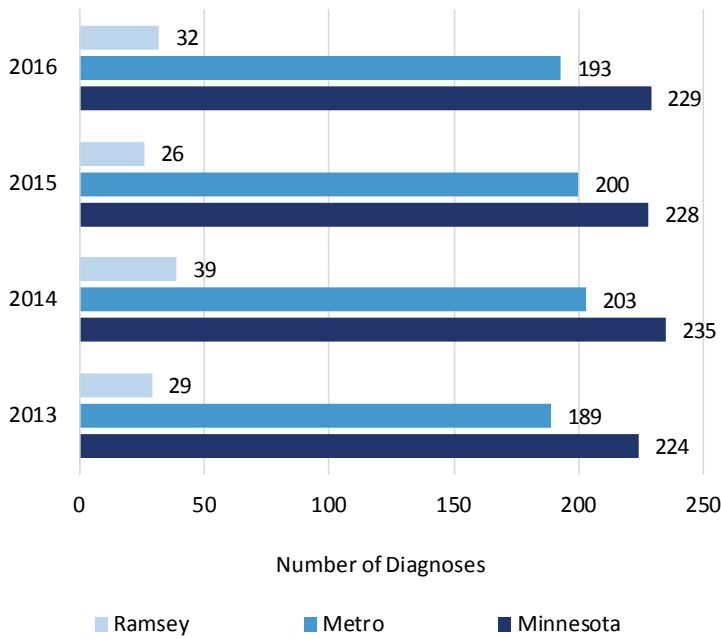
<sup>2</sup> Data and Statistics. Minnesota Department of Health. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/macros/topics/stats.html>. Accessed June 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Reduce new HIV Infection. Healthy People 2020. [https://www.healthypeople.gov/node/4607/data\\_details](https://www.healthypeople.gov/node/4607/data_details). Accessed June 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Minnesota HIV/AIDS Epidemiologic Profile. Minnesota Department of Health. <http://docplayer.net/21274337-Minnesota-hiv-aids-epidemiologic-profile.html>. Accessed June 2018.

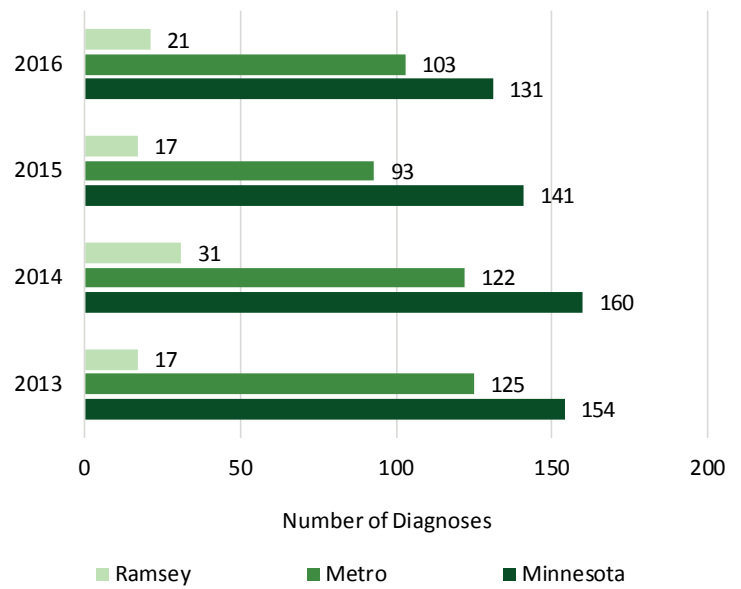
<sup>5</sup> Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Minnesota Department of Health. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/hiv>. Accessed October 16, 2017.

### Total Number of HIV Diagnoses by Year



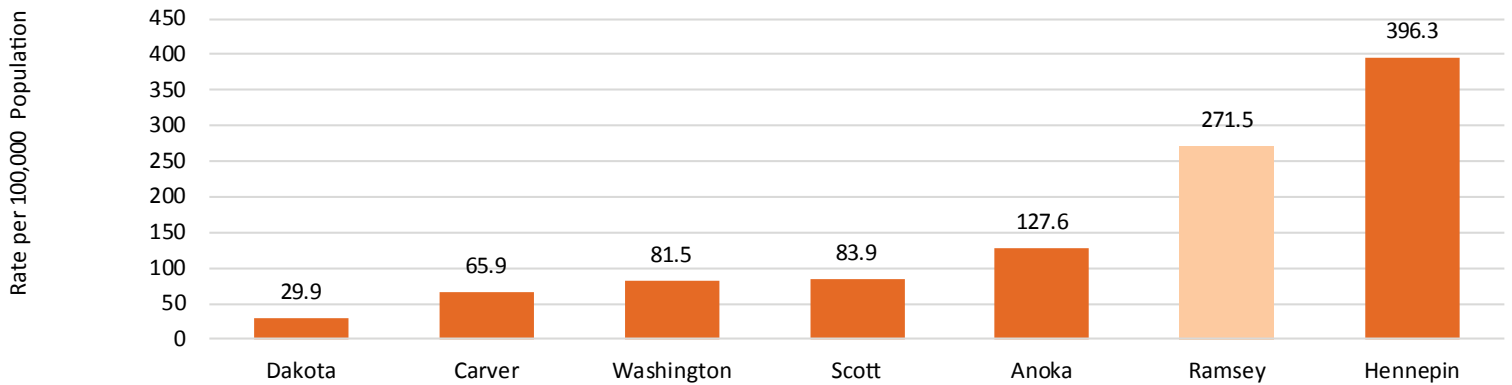
Source: Minnesota Department of Health.<sup>6</sup>

### Total Number of AIDS Diagnoses by Year



Source: Minnesota Department of Health.<sup>6</sup>

### Residents Living with HIV and AIDS, 7-County Metro, 2016



Source: Minnesota Department of Health.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Data and Statistics. Minnesota Department of Health Web site. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/macros/topics/stats.html>. Accessed June 2018.