



June 14, 2010

Dear Colleague:

Today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released its *HIV Surveillance Report, 2008 Vol. 20*. This report presents data for cases of HIV infection and AIDS reported to CDC through June 2009.

CDC's 2008 *HIV Surveillance Report* is intended for use by epidemiologists, researchers, public health practitioners, and others as one source of information to help guide program planning, evaluation, and resource allocation. To put the surveillance report's findings in context, as well as to explain some of the changes to this year's surveillance report, CDC also is releasing two fact sheets: *HIV in the United States: An Overview*, which draws on multiple sources to provide an overall picture of the HIV epidemic in the United States; and *Summary of Changes to the National HIV Surveillance Report*, which describes and explains changes to the surveillance report. CDC's 2008 *HIV Surveillance Report* and both fact sheets are posted on the web site of the Division of HIV/ AIDS Prevention.

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports>

In addition to new data, CDC's 2008 *HIV Surveillance Report* has some new elements. Based on feedback from partners and issues such as the 2008 changes to the HIV case definition, the report has undergone some structural changes from previous years' reports.

- There are now 42 areas (37 states and 5 dependent areas) that have been reporting confidential, name-based HIV infection data to CDC long enough (defined as being submitted to CDC by at least January 2005) to apply statistical adjustments to the data and be included in CDC's estimates in this report. According to the number of reported AIDS cases, these 37 states represent approximately 68% of the epidemic in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- Advancing technologies and effectiveness of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) is changing the epidemic of HIV infection so people are living longer and healthier lives. Therefore, to accurately track the epidemic, growing emphasis needs to be placed on HIV surveillance more than on AIDS surveillance, a gradual process that is reflected in changes to the report, such as renaming the report the *HIV Surveillance Report*.
- Most data analyses are presented in two formats: one that includes data from the dependent areas (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and one that is presented without the data from the dependent areas. This change makes better use of data from the dependent areas, which previously were not included in breakouts by age, race/ethnicity, transmission category or sex.

Other changes are outlined in the *Summary of Changes to the National HIV Surveillance Report* fact sheet.

Almost 30 years after the first case of AIDS was reported, HIV remains a significant cause of illness and death. Through our collective work, we have made great progress in slowing the epidemic. But within the overall epidemic, some groups and areas are more affected than others. Therefore, we must remain vigilant and focus our resources where they will make the biggest difference.

We hope this report will be useful to you as we continue to work together to reduce this unacceptable burden of HIV/AIDS. Thank you for your continued commitment to HIV/AIDS prevention.

Please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports> to access CDC's 2008 *HIV Surveillance Report*, and the fact sheets *HIV in the United States: An Overview* and *Summary of Changes to the National HIV Surveillance Report*.

Sincerely,

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