

## **HIV Incidence Surveillance (HIS) in New Jersey**

In 2005, the State of New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Division of HIV/AIDS Services (DHAS) received federal funding from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to incorporate HIV Incidence Surveillance into Core HIV/AIDS Surveillance activities.

In the past, HIV/AIDS surveillance was limited to monitoring prevalence, the proportion of individuals with HIV regardless of the duration of the infection. To classify HIV infections in populations or groups of people as likely or not likely to be recent (occurring within the past 6 months), the CDC developed the Serologic Testing Algorithm for Recent HIV Seroconversion (STARHS). The STARHS is performed on remnant serum specimens from confirmed HIV positive antibody tests and uses the BED HIV-1 Capture enzyme immunoassay (EIA). The BED assay measures the proportion of HIV antibodies among all IgG antibodies that increases as the body responds to infection. This information along with demographic data and the history of testing behavior will be used to estimate HIV incidence in New Jersey.

Information about early stages of HIV will allow for more effective monitoring of the epidemic, as well as improved planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs. All cases newly reported to the routine HIV/AIDS Reporting System (HARS) using the adult case report form (ages  $\geq 13$ ) will be eligible for STARHS and will contribute to the estimate of HIV incidence.

As of 2007, all publicly-funded counseling and testing sites using the rapid testing technology were enrolled in the project, as well as six national private reference laboratories that perform HIV confirmatory testing for New Jersey residents. Cumulatively, 257 of 1,063 (24%) specimens diagnosed from 2005 to 2007 were determined to be recent infections; 806 were determined to be long standing. At this time, statistical techniques for calculating incidence are preliminary, and therefore unavailable to generate a reliable incidence measure for New Jersey.

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