

# Dear Colleague,



Each year, we renew our commitment to improve the lives of people with HIV and ensure equitable access to prevention and care services. **We ask you to partner with us to end the HIV epidemic in Allegheny County and southwestern Pennsylvania.**

Today, people with HIV can live long, healthy lives thanks to improved treatment. Plus, powerful prevention tools — including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) — can practically eliminate transmission. Yet, despite these successes, progress has slowed, and far too many people in Allegheny County still are not benefiting equally from HIV prevention and care. In 2023, there were 66 new diagnoses in Allegheny County, and 29% of these were late diagnoses (i.e., diagnosed with AIDS within 90 days of HIV diagnosis). In recent years, women have accounted for approximately 20% of all new HIV diagnoses. Racial disparities in the burden of HIV still exist too, with an incidence rate 9 times higher for Black individuals than for white individuals in 2023.

AIDS Free Pittsburgh is a public health movement committed to ending the HIV epidemic in Allegheny County by 2030. **AIDS Free Pittsburgh asks that you and your clinic commit to:**

- 1. Normalizing routine HIV testing:** It is recommended everyone receive a test in their lifetime, and for many more frequently. If testing is not available at your clinic, you can refer to other locations.
- 2. Increasing access to PrEP:** Identifying eligible individuals and prescribing PrEP (pill or injection) is key to prevention. If your clinic does not prescribe PrEP, you can refer patients to other locations.
- 3. Improving linkage to care:** Efficiently linking individuals who test positive to treatment (ideally within 24–48 hours) ensures better health outcomes and faster times to viral suppression.

**AIDS Free Pittsburgh provides support to local clinics to help with your HIV prevention efforts.** AIDS Free Pittsburgh offers the following:

- 1. Lunch and Learns:** AFP can provide information on testing, prevention, and care to your clinic staff.
- 2. Care Options Guide:** Local clinics have “RAPID” phone numbers if somebody tests positive, which bypass central scheduling to ensure patients start treatment immediately (see Resources).
- 3. PrEP Toolkit for Providers:** AIDS Free Pittsburgh has developed a guide to assist with prescribing PrEP (see Resources).
- 4. Patient Resources for Your Clinic:** Scan the Resources code for examples and a free order form.
- 5. Linkage to Ryan White Program:** For individuals with HIV and an income  $\leq 500\%$  of the Federal Poverty Level, medical/support services are available. Contact us for assistance referring patients.

Contact AIDS Free Pittsburgh at [info@aidsfreepittsburgh.org](mailto:info@aidsfreepittsburgh.org) or **412-773-1120**.

Your partnership is key to ending the HIV epidemic. Thank you for committing to this effort and for all that you do to ensure the wellbeing of residents in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,  
**AIDS Free Pittsburgh Collaborative**

## Resources

