

For Immediate Release

Date: June 26, 2014

Contacts:	Cathleen Wilczynski, MS, FNP, BC Adult Health Program Supervisor Washtenaw County Public Health wilczynskic@ewashtenaw.org 734-544-2963	Jimena Loveluck, MSW President/CEO HIV/AIDS Resource Center loveluck@hivaidresource.org 734-572-9355 ext 224
-----------	---	---

New HIV Cases Increase Sharply in Washtenaw County *National HIV Testing Day is Friday, June 27th - Get Tested. Know Your Status.*

YPSILANTI, Mich., June 26, 2014 – New HIV cases in Washtenaw County are at a 15 year high. A total of 33 new cases were reported in 2013, up 37% from 24 cases in 2012. This is the highest number of cases seen in the County since 1999. National HIV Testing Day is Friday, June 27th. Washtenaw County Public Health and the HIV/AIDS Resource Center (HARC) urge residents to know their HIV status.

“Testing is important. Know your status.” says Cathy Wilczynski, nurse practitioner and program supervisor with Washtenaw County Public Health. “Get others you know to test. If you have sex, use a condom. It’s that simple.”

New HIV Cases in Washtenaw County are Overwhelmingly Young, Male

The majority of new cases (73%) are among young people, under the age of 30. Most are men. The age range of new cases is 18 to 59 years. Black residents are disproportionately affected, representing 55% of new infections. In Washtenaw County, the most frequently-reported risk factor among new cases is men who have sex with men (79% of all new cases). Additional information about HIV and other sexually transmitted infections reported in Washtenaw County is available at:

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/public_health/adult_health/ph_hltstdst.html

HIV Testing

Public Health and HARC offer free and confidential or anonymous testing. Results from rapid HIV testing are available within 30 minutes.

Washtenaw County Public Health is located at 555 Towner Street in Ypsilanti. HIV testing is available by appointment, call 734-544-6840. Walk in for HIV testing on Thursdays 1-4 pm.

HARC is located at 3075 Clark Road, Suite 203, in Ypsilanti. HARC provides testing, counseling and referral services in Ypsilanti, on the University of Michigan Campus and at various community locations. Call 734-572-9355 for an HIV testing appointment.

“It is important to know your HIV status,” says HARC president and CEO Jimena Loveluck. “If you don’t know your HIV status, take advantage of [National HIV Testing Day](#) and get a free rapid HIV test during HARC’s mobile testing tour with three locations throughout the day in our community. Encourage others to get tested and to get educated, especially our youth,” Loveluck added.

Details about [HARC’s National HIV Testing Day activities in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti](#) are available in the linked flyer.

What is HIV?

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus, and it is the virus that can lead to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, or AIDS. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), HIV in the United States is spread mainly by having sex with or sharing drug injection equipment with someone who is infected with HIV. HIV cannot be spread by casual contact such as hugging or shaking hands.

Prevention

When used correctly and consistently, condoms are highly effective in preventing HIV infection. Use a new, latex condom every time you have sex. Know your HIV status and the status of your partner or partners. Do not share drug injection equipment. If you need support making healthier decisions, use the prevention and education services at Public Health and HARC or talk with your health care provider.

Treatment

Medical treatment can slow down the rate at which HIV weakens the immune system and reduce the amount of virus in someone infected with HIV. Treatment may prevent or cure some of the illnesses associated with AIDS. Treatments have prolonged the lives of people with HIV and improved their quality of life. Early detection offers more options for treatment and preventive care.

Partner Notification

When an individual is diagnosed with HIV or another sexually transmitted infection, his or her sexual or needle-sharing partners also need access to testing, information and treatment. HIV prevention specialists at Public Health and at HARC can provide support and guidance, if needed, when a diagnosed individual talks to his or her partner or partners.

Staff can also confidentially notify the partner or partners of individuals diagnosed with HIV or another sexually transmitted infection if the client is unwilling or unable to do so. Partner notification services are available whether the individual is newly diagnosed or not.

About Washtenaw County Public Health

Washtenaw County Public Health promotes health and works to prevent disease or injury in our community. This includes monitoring communicable diseases, like HIV, and working to prevent additional cases. For more information, please visit <http://publichealth.ewashtenaw.org> or call us at 734-544-6700.



About the HIV/AIDS Resource Center



The HIV/AIDS Resource Center (HARC) is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1986 by volunteers to provide HIV-related services. The mission of HARC is to provide HIV-related services to our community through compassionate direct care, prevention and education activities. HARC is the only agency of its kind serving Washtenaw, Jackson, Livingston and Lenawee Counties and provides medical case management and support services for people living with HIV/AIDS, as well as prevention and education services to decrease the spread of HIV. Visit HARC online at <http://hivaidresource.org/> or call 734-572-9355.

###