



FY22: \$2 million increase for HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C Services

HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis C Line Item (DPH 4512-0103) at \$32.8 M
Harm Reduction Line Item (DPH 4512-0206) at \$4.7 M

On the COVID-19 front line

Many of the organizations funded by these line items have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring no lapses in service delivery, continuing to serve hard to reach populations, and maintaining the infrastructure that the COVID-19 response has relied upon.

HIV programs serve as an important network for the COVID response: front line staff have been contact tracing, connecting people to testing, and ensuring that COVID vaccines get into the arms of vulnerable populations, along with still delivering all their original programs and services in new, COVID-safe ways.

These programs need more funding in order to address a growing HIV outbreak ([DPH BPHC HIV advisory](#)) in the context of COVID, continue outreach on foot, test hard to reach folks, make sure people have access to HIV treatment, and ensure that people living with HIV (PLWH) stay engaged in care.

HIV in Massachusetts

- The MA Department of Public Health and the Boston Public Health Commission have confirmed an **outbreak of new HIV cases** among people who inject drugs and have experienced recent homelessness, historically hard to reach populations.
- A total of 113 cases since 2018 have been investigated and identified as part of the cluster, including **13 newly identified cases between January 1, 2021 and February 28, 2021**.
- Inequitable healthcare structures cause HIV to continue to disproportionately affect Black and Latinx populations.

Hepatitis C in Massachusetts

- In Massachusetts, Hepatitis C (HCV) cases have remained high, with 8,000 to 9,000 cases reported each year.
- Based on reported data, DPH estimates that there are **over 250,000 people living with HCV infection in Massachusetts**.
- The CDC and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends universal screening and testing for all adults aged 18 to 79. In MA, in 2018, the Department of Public Health reported that the 15-39 age group has a higher rate of HCV infection compared to all other age groups. MA must implement this universal screening recommendation in order to find and treat this new, growing demographic.

What does the HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis C Line Item pay for?

- Services for people living with HIV/AIDS like Health Navigation and Housing Support Services
- Syringe Service Programs (SSPs) and holistic harm reduction drug user health programs
- Testing for HIV, Hepatitis C, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Linkage to care and navigation to treatment for infectious diseases like HIV, HCV, and now COVID-19
- Access to Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), which prevents the transmission of HIV

Please support an increase in funding

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