



## Rhode Island Comprehensive HIV Prevention Plan 2008 Update

November 2007

Dear Friends:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Community Planning Group for HIV Prevention, we are proud to present the 2008 Update to Rhode Island's Comprehensive HIV Prevention Plan.

2007 has been a year of significant growth and change for the RICPG. In particular, we have made great strides in two areas:

- Recruitment and retention: In our ongoing commitment to ensuring that the RICPG's deliberations and decisions are informed by the perspectives of affected communities, we successfully recruited and retained several individuals serve on the RICPG and our Task Forces.
- Needs assessment: In preparation for our new five-year comprehensive plan for HIV prevention, which will take effect in 2009, we began an in-depth community needs assessment in relation to HIV prevention.
  - Specifically, we are **conducting a series of focus groups with at-risk populations**, to learn how the services we offer today are meeting their needs—and where they may fall short.
  - We have **invited the programs that receive HIV prevention funding from the state to present information to the RICPG about their services** and the individuals they are reaching.
  - We are **analyzing the latest epidemiological data to learn how HIV and AIDS patterns in Rhode Island are changing**.

Clearly, 2007 has given us much to celebrate as a community planning group: We are a diverse and vital group, each of us extraordinarily committed to battling the spread of HIV in our community, and we are working together more effectively and knowledgeably than ever before.

Of course, important work remains to be done. And as we look toward the critical work ahead—including the task of re-evaluating priorities for target populations and interventions—Rhode Islanders should know that their Rhode Island Community Planning Group for HIV Prevention is geared up for the challenges ahead.

Felicia Delgado  
RICPG Community Co-Chair

Paul G. Loberti, Jr.  
RICPG Co-Chair

Donna (Dee-Dee) Williams  
RICPG Community Co-Chair



### **HIV in Rhode Island**

Between **1 January 2001** and **31 December 2006**, 856 newly diagnosed HIV cases were reported to the Rhode Island Department of Health. This number represents a minimum estimate of HIV infection, as it does not include either HIV-infected individuals who do not get tested or those who get tested anonymously.

**The years 2005 and 2006 saw 20 percent fewer newly diagnosed HIV cases than in the two prior years prior (2003 and 2004).** In 2006, the greatest number of new cases resulted from homosexual sex between men (41% of all new cases), followed by heterosexual contact (28%), intravenous drug use (10%), and unspecified risk (17%).

### **AIDS in Rhode Island**

As of 31 December 2006, a total of 2,857 cases of AIDS had been diagnosed in Rhode Island residents. Of those cases, the majority were males (75%), between 30 and 39 (43%) years of age and White (55%). Collectively, intravenous drug use (IDU) and homosexual sex between men were the most common modes of exposure.

Since 1993, the incidence—or the number of new cases of AIDS per year—and deaths among AIDS cases have decreased dramatically, coinciding with the widespread use of more effective treatments. During this time period, AIDS incidence has decreased by 72% (from 317 new cases in 1993 to 89 new cases in 2006). At the same time, the AIDS prevalence—or the total number of people living with AIDS in Rhode Island each year—has increased more than seven-fold (from 203 cases in 1993 to 1,467 cases in 2006).



## Outlook for 2008

As 2008 begins, the Rhode Island Department of Health, RICPG members, and RICPG consultants are confident that the RICPG's increasingly efficient and participatory structure and focus on evaluating community needs will allow the group to respond to upcoming challenges.

The full membership of the RICPG meets every second Thursday of the month, in the late afternoon and early evening. These meetings typically run three to four hours. The Community Capacity Committee and Task Forces also meet on a monthly basis, or as needed. Meeting locations vary. Meetings are open to the public. For more information on meeting times and locations, please visit [www.ricpg.org](http://www.ricpg.org) or call 401.397.5616.

## Rhode Island Community Planning Group Members

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To learn more about the RICPG, visit [www.ricpg.org](http://www.ricpg.org) or call 401.397.5616.

