

OUTREACH INTO CTRS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does CTRS stand for?

CTRS stands for Counseling, Testing & Referral Services

What is Outreach into CTRS?

Outreach into CTRS is an HIV prevention intervention designed to encourage people at highest risk for HIV to get tested for HIV.

Outreach means getting outside of the health department and reaching people at risk in other settings.

What are the populations of people at highest risk for HIV that we should be trying to reach?

- Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)
- Persons who use injection drugs (IDU)
- Partners of Persons Living With HIV (Partners of PLWH)

There are individuals outside of these categories who may be at high-risk, and who certainly should be tested if they come in and request a test. However, for the purposes of Outreach into CTRS, we are most interested in targeting our efforts to reach the largest number of people at highest risk. By targeting our outreach to the populations with the greatest number of HIV infections, we increase the likelihood of finding new infections.

What are some examples of Outreach into CTRS activities?

Outreach into CTRS activities include, but are not limited to:

- Placing ads about testing in local newspapers;
- Posting information about testing in places where high risk people are likely to see;
- Doing presentations about HIV prevention (including encouraging HIV testing) in alcohol and drug treatment centers, correctional facilities, and other settings where people at high risk for HIV congregate;
- Talking with people one-on-one in public meeting areas such as bars, parks, rest areas, adult video stores and local public sex environments;
- Implementing an evidenced-based outreach intervention such as “Social Networks Testing” (<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/guidelines/snt/index.htm>).
- Subcontracting Outreach to CTRS funds to a Community Based Organization (CBO) that has access to populations at highest risk and can do the outreach work to promote HIV testing conducted by the health department and other sites.

Why is my HIV program expected to implement and report on this intervention now? We didn't do this last fiscal year.

Beginning Fiscal Year 07 (July 2006-June 2007), five county health departments who, in the recent past, only conducted HIV counseling and testing, received a significant increase in their HIV prevention funding due to increases in HIV infections reported in those counties in the past three years and a newly adopted statewide funding formula.

Receiving more funds raises the State HIV Prevention Program's expectations for HIV programming. A growing number of HIV infections in your community indicates that, if you reach out to high risk individuals in your community and encourage testing, you are likely to continue to find undiagnosed infections. Outreach into CTRS is an intervention that enhances your existing HIV Counseling and Testing efforts.

How do we collect data on our Outreach into CTRS activities?

Data for any outreach activity is collected on a yellow "Outreach Event Encounter Form." A packet of multiple copies of this form can be sent to you by the State HIV Prevention Program. One form is used for each outreach event (a presentation, an outreach visit to a community setting, etc). Tally marks are made indicating client demographics. The tally marks are added up at the end of the event. Client demographics can be collected in a number of ways and depend on the event type. For presentations, a short anonymous survey might be distributed where individuals can check off their demographics voluntarily. One-on-one encounters will likely involve the outreach worker asking questions conversationally.

Obviously client demographics cannot be collected in conjunction with placing ads in the newspaper, distributing flyers or posting information about the availability of testing. However, you will still be asked to report on these efforts, so keep track of how many presentations, ads, flyers and postings occur.

How do we report data on our Outreach into CTRS activities?

Totals from the yellow Outreach Event Encounter Forms are added up quarterly and the data is entered into the quarterly Outreach into CTRS report form and sent as an email attachment to the State HIV Prevention Program.

There is a place on the form to report newspaper ads, flyers, postings and presentations.

Is Outreach into CTRS data just the same as our HIV testing data?

No. Outreach into CTRS is a separate activity that has nothing to do with whether the individuals you reach actually get tested. It is simply about reaching high risk people outside of the health department and encouraging them to get tested for HIV.

HIV testing numbers are reported each time a test is done and the HIV Test Request Form is sent into the State Public Health Lab. We do not ask you to report testing numbers to us quarterly because we already get that data from the lab.