



How to Decrease HIV and Sexually Transmitted Disease Transmission:

- **SEEK** patients who are unaware they may be infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or have another sexually transmitted infection.
- **TEST all patients who are sexually active**, and connect those who test HIV-positive with immediate care.
- **TREAT** early those referred to HIV care with antiretroviral medications that are critical for the patient's progress, and help prevent further spread of HIV.
- **MAINTAIN** continuity of care for individuals living with HIV/AIDS and for sexually active patients at risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) through primary care.

SEEK THOSE WHO ARE "UNAWARE"

Identifying patients to be tested—especially those who are unaware they may be HIV infected or are at risk of contracting HIV—is the first step. You should pursue HIV and STD testing aggressively. If you talk to people clearly about sexual behaviors and partners at each visit, your patients will be more comfortable talking to you. You can educate patients about condoms and screenings, as well as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

TEST ROUTINELY

Rhode Island legislation encourages you to employ opt-out HIV testing. You can offer HIV testing routinely, as with a patient's panel of medical tests. The patient can verbally consent or elect to decline testing, either of which should be documented in the medical record. Current legislation to guide you can be found at www.health.ri.gov/ under "Laws and Regulations."

TREAT

All persons with HIV should be linked to treatment and support services at the time of diagnosis so that antiretroviral medication can be initiated as soon as appropriate. HEALTH asks you to provide culturally competent care and treatment for all sexually active patients and to use a translator if the patient does not speak English as his or her first language. **Don't let anyone leave without initiating such treatment.**

MAINTAIN

Refer HIV-positive patients for other services (e.g. mental health, substance abuse treatment, social services) as needed. Keeping HIV-positive people in treatment prevents transmission.

For more information, visit www.health.ri.gov/diseases/hivaids/for/providers.