The Georgia Department of Public Health created an HIV Care Continuum for persons newly diagnosed with HIV infection in 2011 in Fulton and DeKalb Counties. These two counties have the highest HIV prevalence and rate among all counties in Georgia. In 2011, Fulton and DeKalb Counties had a combined total of 1,311 new HIV diagnoses. More than half of the cases (722/1,311 or 55%) of the new diagnoses were among blacks. Among 1,311 new HIV diagnoses in 2011 in Fulton County, 59% were linked to care within 3 months, 45% engaged, 44% retained and 52% were virally suppressed. After diagnosis (59% vs. 67%), but engaged, retained, ART use and VS are similar within groups (females vs. males and in different race groups). Because American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islanders combined equal <2% of the population, these groups are included in Other/Unknown category. Race was not reported for the remaining 2% of the population.

Overall, the HIV Care Continuum for Georgia, Fulton County and DeKalb County is for all three populations (e.g., young Black MSM in Fulton County) but caution must be used in interpretation because of small numbers.

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The Georgia Department of Public Health HIV/AIDS Program staff

Conclusions

- Overall, the HIV Care Continuum for Georgia, Fulton County and DeKalb County is for all three populations (e.g., young Black MSM in Fulton County) but caution must be used in interpretation because of small numbers.
- The youngest age group (aged 13-24 years at diagnosis) had the lowest proportions of linkage, engagement and retention in care as well as viral suppression and viral suppression was lower among females compared to males. Blacks newly diagnosed with HIV in 2011 had lower proportions of linkage, engagement and retention in care and viral suppression compared to other race/ethnicities.
- The proportion among African Americans was similar to Hispanic/Latinos (HL) and Whites (W) by residence at diagnosis revealed disparity in all three geographic regions considered.

Methodology

- A more detailed description of the care continuum for Georgia, Fulton County and DeKalb County can be found at https://gisph.gov/health/hiv-care-continuum.
- The 2011 and 2012 care continuum figures plus downloadable data sets on a public domain site may be used in presentations without copyright concerns, though we appreciate attribution for data used.

Limitations

- Incomplete case reporting.
- Missing data for race/ethnicity, sex, transmission category information (HIV test address at diagnosis).
- Surveillance data collection is ongoing which will result in decreased numbers of “unknown” cases in future analyses.
- Individuals may be reported with aliases or false identifying information making de-duplication a continuous process.
- Missed laboratory reports.
- Federal laboratory facilities are not mandated by Georgia state law to report.
- Fulton County contains a large Veterans Administration hospital. Diagnoses of HIV infection are reported but not laboratory values and thus may lead to underestimation of linked, engaged, retained and viral suppression for this population.
- Multiply enrolled care continuums can be found in one or very specific populations (e.g., young Black MSM in a single county) but caution must be used in interpretation because of small numbers.