

HIV Surveillance Internship Overview

HIV and Hepatitis Surveillance, Division of Disease Prevention of the Office of Epidemiology

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Internship Aim

- To understand the reporting of HIV related laboratory findings, how HIV case investigation is completed, what HIV related data are reported, and what programs rely on HIV surveillance data
- To provide insight into the many interrelated tasks and programs that fall under HIV surveillance, and produce improved data as a direct result of quality assurance efforts learned during the internship

Additional Activities

- Attended a Hepatitis and HIV Rapid Test Clinician Training at Bremo Pharmacy
- Attended Nationz mobile HIV testing site visit for national HIV Testing Day
- Met with work units in the Office of Epidemiology including Tuberculosis Control, Cluster Detection and Response, Comprehensive Harm Reduction, the HIV analyst team, National HIV Behavioral Surveillance, Hepatitis Testing, and PrEP services

Projects and Tasks

Update HIV Case Reported Risk Information Data

- Reviewed HIV case's field interviews in the Virginia Electronic Disease Surveillance System (VEDSS) and Counseling, Testing, Referral (CTR) forms to update individual's risk information (e.g. men who have sex with men (MSM), intravenous drug use, transplant recipient) in the HIV CDC reporting system

Active Surveillance for Facilities

- VDH receives line lists of HIV diagnoses from hospitals/clinics. I compared these lists to the VDH HIV reporting database to see if there were any confirmed HIV cases that VDH did not have record of to improve surveillance data

Lab Management System (LMS)

- VDH receives labs (e.g. CD4 count, CD4 percents, HIV viral load tests) for individuals through LMS. I reviewed these labs and search if the patient is a confirmed case in the VDH HIV database. I update the labs in LMS to successfully import them to the database.

Daily Adult Case Report Form Quality Assurance

- Review list of confirmed HIV cases in the VDH HIV database to see if an individual has a changed case status from HIV to AIDS to report to the case epidemiologists for investigation

Facility UID Updates

- Updates the LMS list of facilities that send reportable labs to VDH for the HIV lab information to be entered in the HIV database correctly

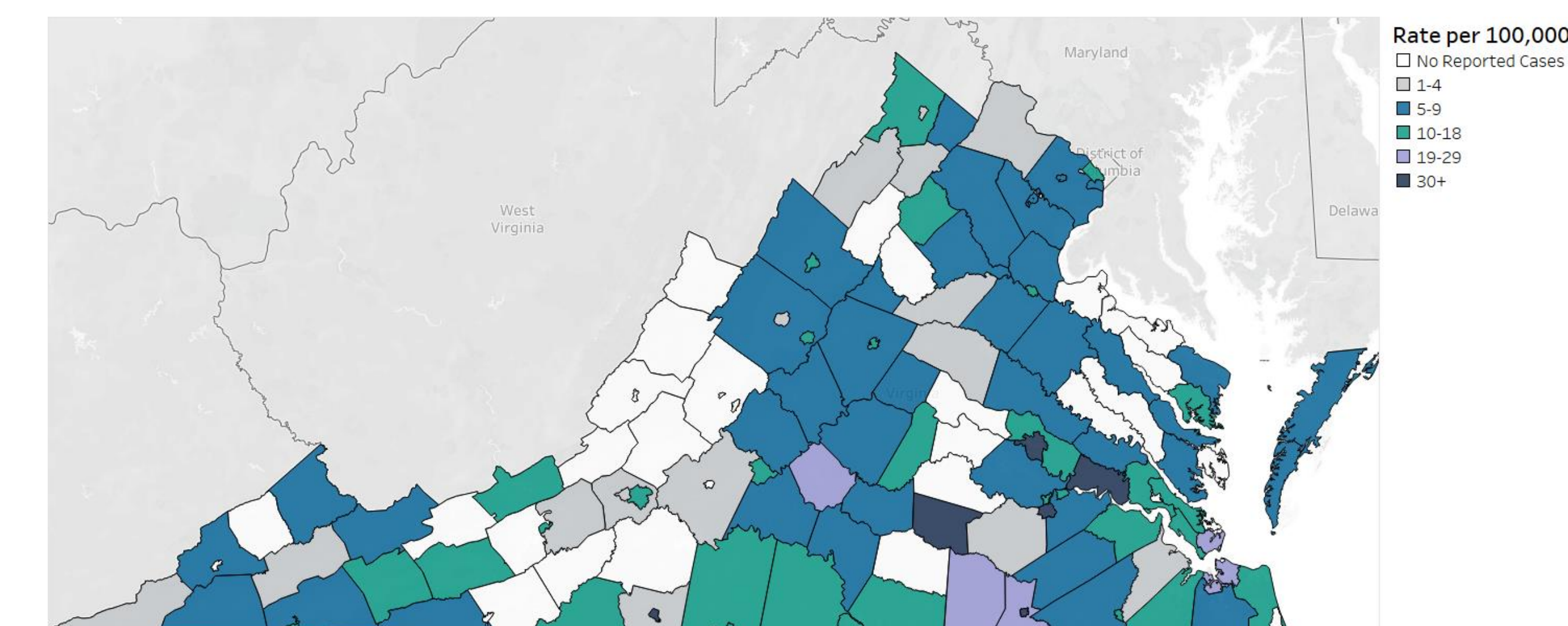
Medical Record Abstraction

- Under the Medical Monitoring Program (MMP), I abstracted key health information and labs from individual's medical records for their goal of obtaining clinical data to learn more about the health-related experiences and needs of people who are HIV infected in Virginia

Lessons & Takeaways

Context of HIV in Virginia

Newly Diagnosed HIV Cases by Locality, 2021 (eHARS):



- In 2022, the Central and Eastern region had the highest rate of new HIV diagnoses
- MSM and Black men and women are disproportionately affected by HIV infection
- A person's housing status is a large indicator on whether an individual is linked to and stays with HIV services, care, and treatment

Takeaways

The most important takeaway from my internship in HIV Surveillance is that HIV continues to impact stigmatized and minority groups at disproportionate rates (e.g. MSM, people who use injection drugs, Black men and women). This internship gave me perspective on how an individual's behavior and environment interact to influence one's health outcomes, and how health agencies in Virginia serve to improve the health and lives of citizens. I learned successful public health initiatives require teamwork, and I saw first-hand how the CDC, state agencies, and community health workers work together to get people tested for HIV, monitor HIV infections, and link individuals to care.

New Confirmed HIV Case Surveillance in Virginia Process Chart

