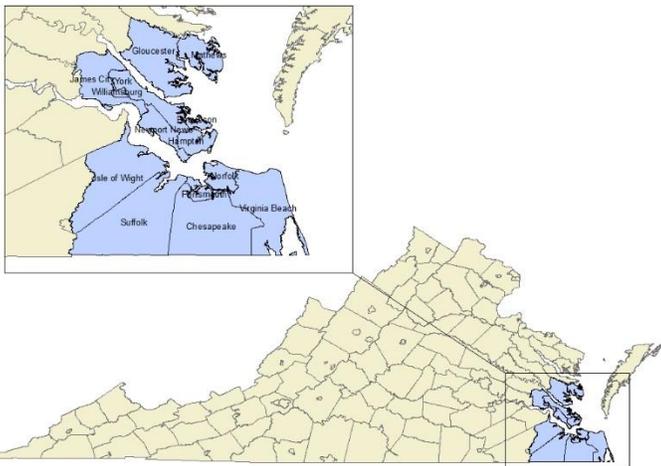


National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS) is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) surveillance project that collects behavioral data and conducts anonymous HIV testing among persons at increased risk for acquiring HIV¹. NHBS collects data in 22 urban areas with high prevalence of HIV, each of which rotate data collection between three key populations: men who have sex with men (MSM), people who report injection drug use (IDU), and heterosexual persons at increased risk of HIV infection (HET). Virginia conducts NHBS activities in the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Statistical Area (Hampton Roads MSA)— Figure 1. NHBS participants answer sociodemographic, behavioral, and health-related questions during a videoconference interview and, for those who agree to HIV testing, receive an HIV test. This fact sheet presents data for MSM in Virginia who completed the 2021 NHBS interview.

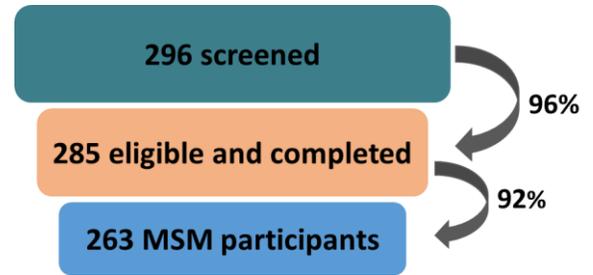
Figure 1. Hampton Roads Metropolitan Statistical Area (Norfolk MSA)



SAMPLE RECRUITMENT AND ELIGIBILITY

In 2021, NHBS participants were recruited through a process called respondent driven sampling, in which participants recruit other people they know to participate. All interviews were conducted remotely, by videoconference call, from July–November 2021. Individuals were eligible to complete the NHBS survey and receive HIV testing if they lived in the Hampton Roads MSA, were aged 18 years or older, had not previously participated in NHBS during the current survey cycle, were born and self-identify as male, had oral or anal sex with another man in the past 12 months, and could provide informed consent and complete the survey². Virginia NHBS screened 296 persons for participation, of which 285 were eligible and completed the survey (96%)— Figure 2. Among those who completed the survey, 263 (92%) were considered MSM. The remainder of this fact sheet will focus on the 263 MSM eligible participants who completed the survey.

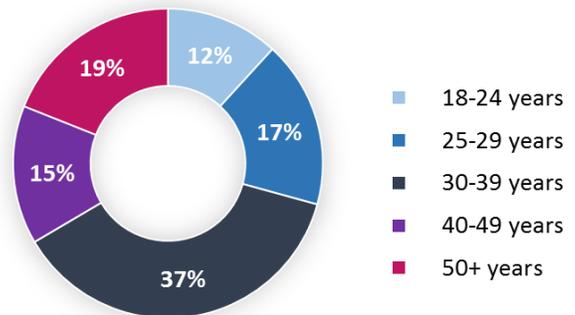
Figure 2. NHBS Eligibility and MSM, Hampton Roads MSA, 2021



SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Among the 263 MSM participants, the majority lived in either Norfolk (44%) or Virginia Beach (15%). The majority of participants were black (60%); 21% were white, 8% were Hispanic, and 12% reported some other race. The participants ranged in age from 18 to 81 years, and the median age was 34 years old. Persons aged 30 to 39 years represented 37% of the sample — Figure 3. Thirty-seven percent of the sample had completed some college or technical degree and an additional 28% had obtained a college degree or more. At the time of the NHBS survey, 69% of participants reported being employed (57% full time, 12% part time), 13% reported being unemployed, and 6% reported being unable to work for health reasons. Thirteen percent of participants reported homelessness in the past 12 months and 17% of participants who have ever been incarcerated reported incarceration at some point in the past 12 months.

Figure 3. Age of MSM Sample, Hampton Roads MSA, 2021



HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE AND HEALTH CARE UTILIZATION

There were 25 participants (10%) who reported that they did not have health insurance at the time of the survey. Among the 238 participants (90%) who reported having insurance, 39% had private insurance, 37% had Medicaid, 12% had Medicare, 8% had TRICARE/CHAMPUS, 6% had some other government plan, 3% had Veterans Administration insurance, and 3% reported other insurance. Most participants (97%) reported having a usual place where they can go when sick or in need of health-related advice: a doctor’s office or HMO (55%), clinic or health center (25%), hospital emergency room (16%), or some other location (4%). Most participants (94%) reported visiting a health care provider in the 12 months before the NHBS interview.

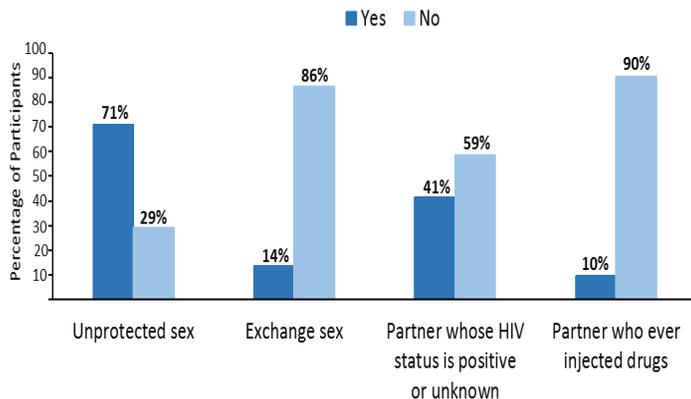
SUBSTANCE USE

Among the 263 MSM participants, 218 (83%) reported having had at least one alcoholic drink in the past 30 days. Of those with recent alcohol use, 27% of participants reported binge drinking (\geq five drinks in about two hours). Sixty-four percent of participants reported non-injection drug use in the 12 months before their interview, with marijuana being reported most frequently. Eight percent of participants reported ever injecting drugs in their life, with methamphetamine being reportedly most frequently.

SEXUAL BEHAVIORS

All participants reported sex with another male in the 12 months before the NHBS interview. The median number of sexual partners reported by participants was three partners in the past 12 months. The majority of participants reported only casual anal sex partnerships (52%), 36% reported only main partnerships, and 11% reported both main and casual partnerships. Seventy-one percent of participants reported having unprotected sex and 14% reported exchanging sex for drugs or money in the past 12 months – Figure 4. When asked about their last sexual encounter, 41% of participants reported a partner whose HIV status is positive or unknown, while 10% of participants reported a partner who has ever injected drugs.

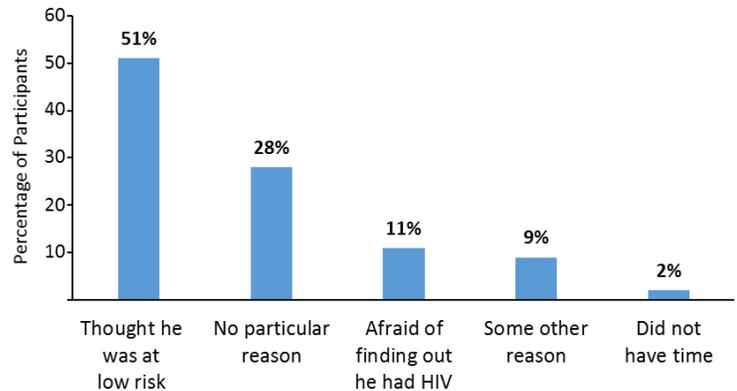
Figure 4. Sex Behaviors During the Past 12 Months, Hampton Roads MSA, 2021



HIV/STD TESTING

Ninety-eight percent of participants reported having ever had an HIV test in their lifetime. Among participants ever tested, 43% reported recent HIV testing (in the past 12 months). Fifty-nine percent of participants reported gonorrhea, chlamydia, and/or syphilis testing in the past 12 months. For participants with recent HIV testing (n=110), the most frequently reported location for testing was an HIV counseling and testing site (29%); 27% reported testing at a public health clinic or community health center and 16% reported testing at a private doctor’s office. For participants who have never tested positive for HIV and did not report recent HIV testing (n=47), the two most common reasons for not testing were “thought he was at low risk for HIV infection” (51%) and “no particular reason” (28%) – Figure 5.

Figure 5. Reason for Not Receiving HIV Test During the Past 12 Months, Hampton Roads MSA, 2021



Note: Values in figure may not equal 100% due to rounding

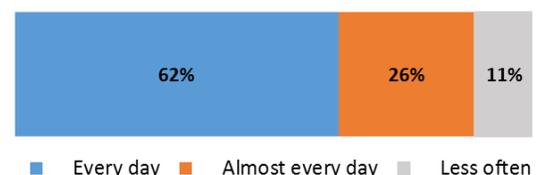
HIV PREVALENCE

Among the 257 MSM participants who have been tested for HIV, 100 participants (39%) tested positive for HIV. Eighty-six percent of these participants were told where to get HIV care within 30 days of their first positive HIV test and 98% have seen a health care provider for their HIV infection. Among participants who have seen a provider, 96% reported currently taking antiretroviral medication at the time of the interview and 87% reported that their most recent viral load test was undetectable.

HIV PREVENTION

Fifty-eight percent of participants reported receiving free condoms in the past 12 months; the most frequently reported location for receiving free condoms was an “HIV/AIDS-focused organization” (46%). Thirty-one percent of participants had a one-on-one conversation or group session with an outreach worker about HIV prevention. Among participants who have never tested positive for HIV, 97% had heard of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) before the interview; 51% of these participants reported discussing taking PrEP with a health care provider and 34% reported taking PrEP in the past 12 months. The majority of participants who took PrEP reported taking it every day – Figure 6.

Figure 6. Frequency of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Use During the Past 12 Months, Hampton Roads MSA, 2021



Note: Values in figure may not equal 100% due to rounding

REFERENCES

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). National HIV Behavioral Surveillance (NHBS). <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/systems/nhbs/index.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National HIV Behavioral Surveillance System Round 6: Model Surveillance Protocol. December 2021. Available from: www.cdc.gov/hiv/statistics/systems/nhbs/operations.html