



Disrupting Syphilis Transmission through Hyper-Localized At-Home Testing Initiatives in a High-Burden Health District, Crater Health District, Virginia



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March 26, 2026

Objectives

Describe

Describe the epidemiologic burden of syphilis in the Crater Health District and its impact on high-risk communities.

Explain

Explain hyper-localized approach to outreach beyond traditional clinic settings.

Identify

Identify strategies to prevent loss-to-follow-up and strengthen continuity of care across clinical, correctional, and community systems.

Number of New Syphilis Diagnoses

Rate of New Syphilis Diagnoses per 100,000

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Trend
Virginia	488	494	626	938	975	32.9	33.1	41.6	61.9	64.4	
Crater Health District											
Dinwiddie Co.	5	4	9	7	10	17.9	14.3	32.0	24.7	35.3	
Emporia	1	5	2	1	2	17.5	88.7	36.1	18.3	36.6	
Greensville Co.	1	3	1	1	0	8.8	26.3	8.9	9.0	0.0	
Hopewell	10	7	24	25	14	43.5	30.3	105.3	109.9	61.5	
Petersburg	40	32	58	71	75	119.8	95.8	173.3	213.2	225.2	
Prince George Co.	12	10	16	29	27	27.9	23.3	37.2	67.6	63.0	
Surry Co.	3	0	0	1	2	45.8	0.0	0.0	15.2	30.3	
Sussex Co.	2	1	2	1	5	18.5	9.2	18.8	9.3	46.5	
District Total	74	62	112	136	135	45.7	38.3	69.4	84.4	83.7	

Capacity Limits

Inconsistent Provider Practices

Health Literacy

Transportation

Stigma/Fear

Competing Priorities

Why
Clinics
Alone
Aren't
Enough

The Intervention: Scaling Access to Rapid Testing

- **First To Know self-test kits introduced to expand community-based testing access**
- **20 kits received August 2025 and piloted at the Pin Oaks Public Housing**
- **Percent Positive: 15%**





Expanding Access to First To Know Self-Test Kits

- **Additional kits provided by Central Office**
- **Outreach to the manufacturer resulted in additional donated kits**
- **Presentations with community partners also generated donations**
- **A total of 400 additional kits were secured**



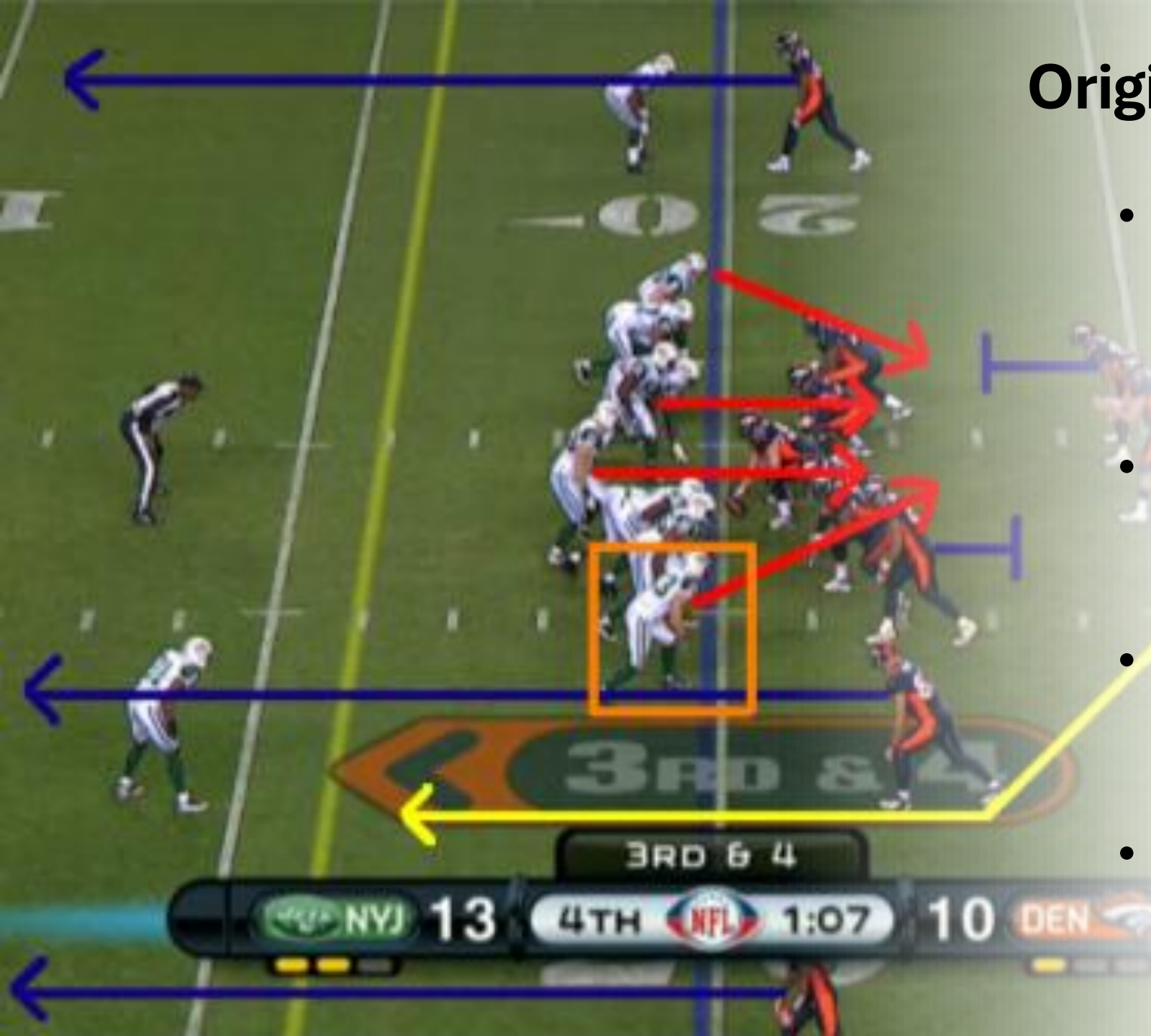
Resource Fair

Wellness Pop-Ups

Mobile Outreach (Blitz)

Origin of the Blitz Strategy

- During a blitz, a higher than usual number of defensive players will rush the opposing quarterback
- ‘Blitz’ concept: all hands-on deck to attack the problem
- One of the highest syphilis rates in the state prompted focused outreach
- Mobile wellness outreach initiated (wagon & foot)



Blitz Hyper-Local Outreach Locations

A photograph of a room with several folding cots and a couch, likely a shelter or temporary housing facility. The room has light blue walls and a grey carpet. In the foreground, there is a dark grey couch with a white cushion and a red and green plaid blanket. In the background, there are several folding cots with white sheets and pillows, and a wooden chair. The lighting is somewhat dim, suggesting an indoor setting.

- **Soup kitchen**
- **Bus station**
- **Gas stations**
- **Men's warming shelter**
- **Public library**
- **ABC store**
- **Hotels & motels**
- **Strip malls**

The 8 Blitz Breakdown

134

At-Home Syphilis
Test Kits

355

Condoms Packs

23

Rapid REVIVE!-
Opioid Response
Training

176

COVID-19 and Flu
A/B test kits

176

Health Department
Services

201

Emergency Food
Boxes



Field Related Challenges



Extreme cold hindered finger-stick testing

Drug & sex transactions observed

Encounters with intoxicated individuals

Blitz ended early due to ICE raid tensions

Field Related Improvements

Safety trainings completed

Location sharing

Reflective vests & uniform appearance

Inventory tracking & field statistics

Daily hot wash debriefs for continuous improvement



At-home Syphilis Test Kits

Condoms & prevention education

Rapid REVIVE! Overdose Response Training

COVID-19 and Flu A/B Test Kits

Health Department Services & Resource Referrals

Emergency Food Boxes

Real Life

Humana

CVHS

Sentara

Brightpoint Community College

Aetna

Better Health of Virginia

Foundations Health

United Health Care

CAPUP

Family Services Inc.

Virginia Poison Center at VCU Health

DentaQuest/Cardinal Care Smiles

BrightView Health

TRIO Educational Opportunity Center

Virginia CHW Association

StarCity Behavioral Health

Greater Reach CSB

Girls on the Run of Greater Richmond

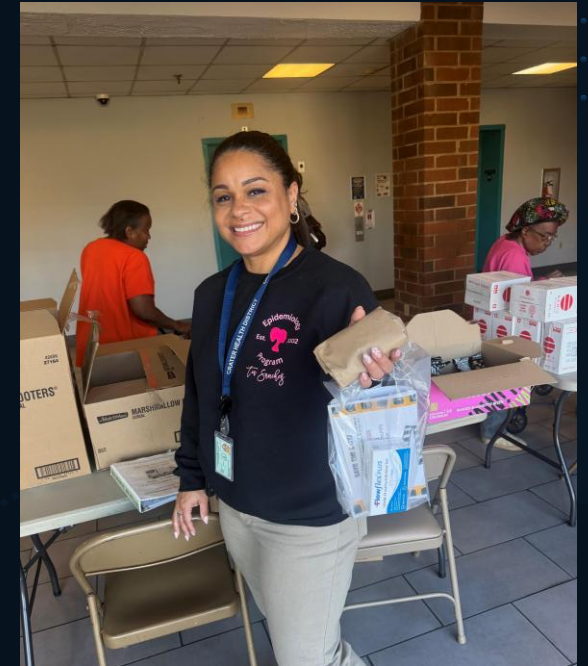
Petersburg Health Options Partnerships

Gateway Justice Services

National Vascular Associates

National Capital Treatment & Recovery

Allstate



The 8 Wellness Pop-Up Breakdown

At-Home Syphilis Test Kits

Rapid REVIVE!- Opioid Response Training

Condoms Packs

COVID-19 & Flu A/B Test Kits

Emergency Food Boxes

134

32

143

208

103

Community Awareness

- Residents understood syphilis transmission
- Community shocked by local rate compared to the state
- Education focused on local impact
- Addressed generational differences and historical imprint
- Ripple effect=word of mouth



The Results

**Aug
2025-
March
2026**

- 8 reactive at-home syphilis test results identified
- 4 individuals received treatment & partner notification
- 1 false positive result
- 1 reinfection retreated
- 2 previous positive adequately treated
- All individuals successfully linked to follow-up evaluation

Reactive Results Examples

27-Year-Old Female : STI Clinic

Previous positive

Couldn't be seen

Took test kit and administered it at health department

Reactive → DIS → re-treatment

29-Year-Old Female : Hotel Outreach

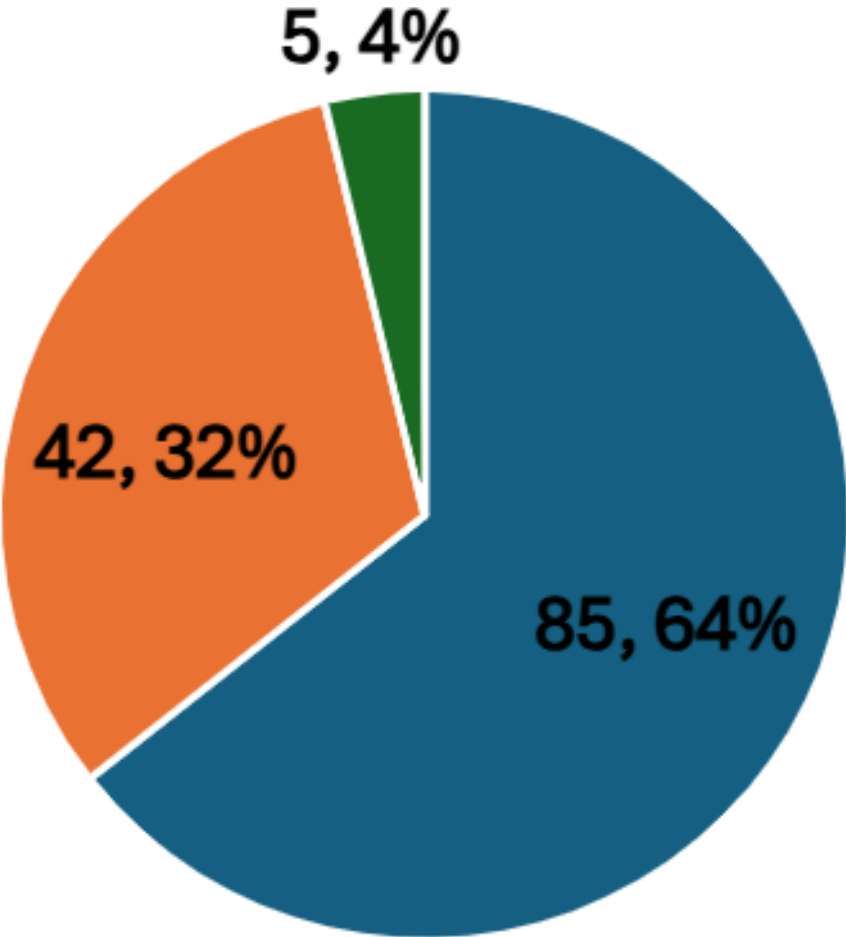
Prior diagnosis identified during incarceration

Released before treatment completion

Delivered congenital case out of state

Re-tested and provided education upon re-engagement

Women Who Received Kits



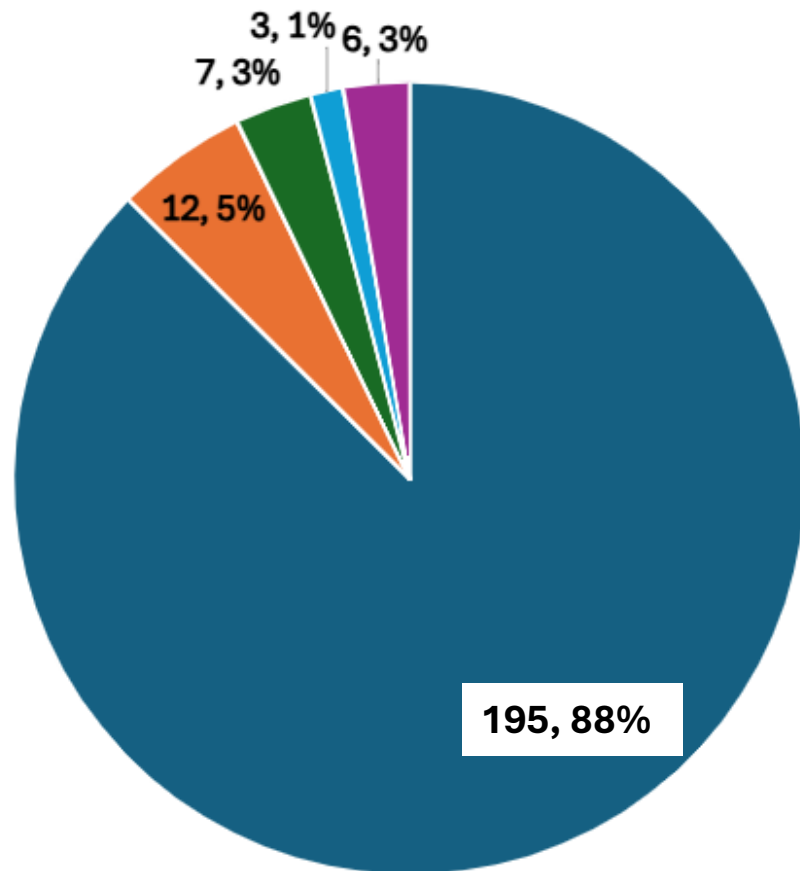
■ 15-44 Years of Age ■ 44+ Years of Age ■ Null

Increased Risk of Congenital Syphilis

Demographics

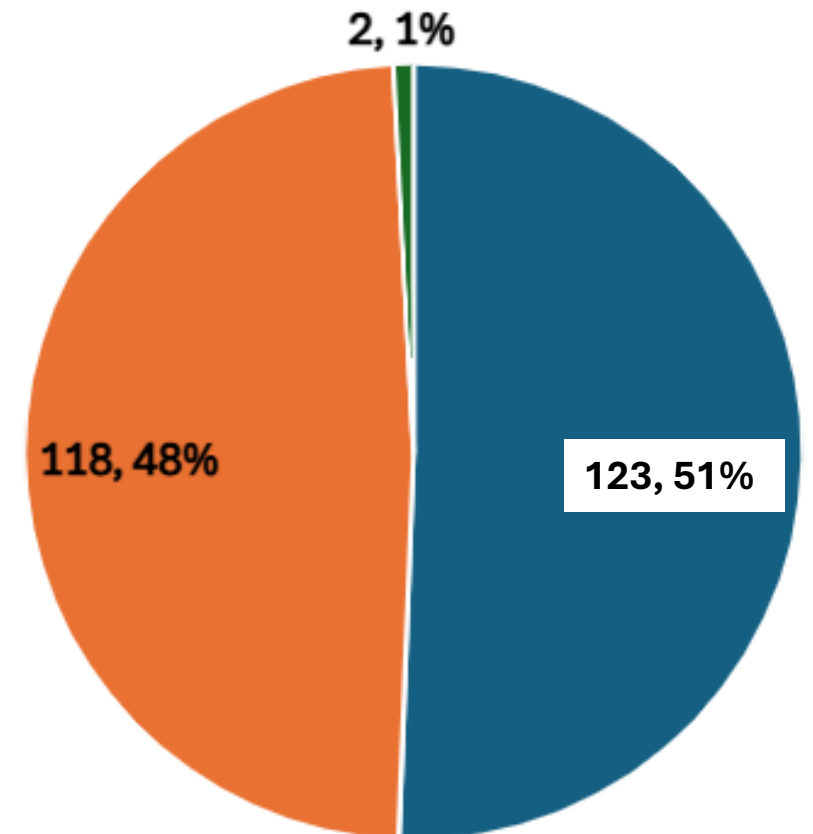
Race/Ethnicity

■ Black or African American ■ White ■ Hispanic or Latino ■ Asian ■ Other



Sex

■ Female ■ Male ■ Transgender Female



Why This Matters

Petersburg, Virginia has an estimated population of approximately 34,000, ranking around 36th among cities in the state in population size, yet it faces disproportionately high syphilis rates compared with much larger jurisdictions

Addresses loss-to-follow-up

Congenital prevention awareness

Reduces barriers to care by eliminating transportation, cost, and other access challenges

Allows for internal and external collaboration

What's Next



Provider Education

Additional Requests for Outreach

Education in Petersburg Public School

Focused Partnerships with other STI focused organization

Increase Collaboration with corrections

Hopewell



Acknowledgments & Appreciation

- Alton Hart, Jr., MD, MPH, Mdiv, Director, Crater District Health Departments
- Katrina Saphrey, MPH, CIC, Crater Health District Epidemiologist Sr.
- Epidemiology Program
- Overdose Prevention Team
- Population Health Program
- Richard Bland College
- Petersburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Volunteers
- Community partners and outreach collaborators

Questions

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