COVID-19 & HIV Prevention and Care Services

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COVID-19 & HIV Clinical Care: Challenges

• Telehealth
  - Access to reliable phone/internet service
  - Widens disparities for some patients
  - Restrictions on Medication Assisted Treatment
  - Clinic resources & infrastructure

• HIV workforce and team issues
  - ID/HIV providers also leading local COVID-19 responses

• Caring for individuals experiencing homelessness & released from correctional settings
COVID-19 & HIV Clinical Care: Opportunities

• Telehealth
  – Reduces access barriers for some patients (lower no show rates)
  – Reduces stigma
• Improved medication access
  – Home delivery
  – Early refill, higher quantity limits
• Streamlined Ryan White ADAP certification/recertification
COVID-19 & HIV Prevention

• Disruptions in PrEP access
  – Staffing, client challenges, shift to telehealth (AIDS and Behavior, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-020-02893-3)

• Limited HIV and STI screening
  – For STIs – mainly treating symptomatic patients

• Syringe exchange access
  – Survey found 43% reported decreasing services (AIDS and Behavior, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-020-02886-2)
COVID-19: Patient Needs

As reported by Ryan White providers regarding the use of CARES Act funding

- Food and housing
- Transportation
- PPE and COVID-19 testing
- Co-pay and premium support
- Mental health treatment
- Substance use treatment, incl overdose prevention, harm reduction
- Case management services
- Temporary shelter for patients quarantining
The Way Forward: Supporting HIV Prevention & Care Post-COVID-19

- Maintain telehealth (video & phone) reimbursement policies
- Resources for patients to participate in telehealth, eg, Lifeline (phone) Program, expanded broadband Internet access
- Incentivize state ADAPs to streamline certification/recertification processes
- Address HIV workforce shortages
  - Increase reimbursement for cognitive services
  - Leverage telehealth, incl allowing across state lines
  - Loan forgiveness for HIV clinicians and dentists (HR 5806, HIV Epidemic Loan-Repayment Program, HELP Act)
- Invest in safety-net providers: Ryan White Program, Community Health Centers, STI & HIV Prevention, incl syringe services programs