

HIV in Bermuda



Summary of year ended 31 December 2021

HIV is a reportable condition in Bermuda (Public Health Act 1949). The data presented in this report is based on a retrospective analysis of information collected through Bermuda's confidential HIV/AIDS reporting system. HIV-positive persons reported through the system are interviewed by trained designated staff within the Ministry, either the Nurse Epidemiologist or a Public Health Nurse. During this interview, further information is obtained including social demographics and risk behaviours. In addition to provision of individual care and services, the information gathered through this follow-up is also used to direct and evaluate preventive and other HIV-related services.

Department of Health HIV/AIDS Services

1. HIV/AIDS information through health education/promotion, annual reports, etc.
2. Confidential HIV testing with pre- and post-test counseling available
3. Comprehensive nursing care and treatment for HIV positive individuals
4. Availability of appropriate medications for HIV+ individuals - Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy (HAART) and prenatal and antenatal treatment for prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT).
5. Identification of resources and supports available to HIV+ individuals and facilitation of these linkages
6. Epidemiological investigation and contact tracing

In this report, cumulative cases of HIV include persons diagnosed with a clinical diagnosis of AIDS prior to the availability of confirmatory HIV testing in 1984. It is recognized that there is undiagnosed and/or unreported infection in Bermuda and so it should be noted that this report can only provide information on the *diagnosed and reported* cases.

This report contains information received by the Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit from 1982 through 31 January 2022. The data is updated as more information becomes available and amendments made in subsequent reports. Where numbers are small, detailed information is not provided to avoid any inadvertent disclosure of confidential or personally identifying information.

The available data has been corrected for late notifications and cases are presented based on date of diagnosis or death, as opposed to date of notification. Except in tables and figures where annual data is presented, adjustments have been made where the date of diagnosis and/or death is not known. The data has been aggregated by gender (male or female), age-group, race (Black or White & Others), nationality (Bermudian or non-Bermudian) and risk category. Age-groups are based on the person's age at the time of diagnosis or death. For persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) the age-group is the person's age at 31 December 2021. Persons are considered to be living with HIV/AIDS if they have not been reported as deceased (from any cause) at any time from diagnosis through the end of the calendar year presented.

Risk category is used to classify the most likely mode of transmission. When a person identifies more than one risk category, the risk category most likely to have resulted in HIV transmission is presented. Risk categories include: MSM (men who have sex with men), Heterosexual Contact, IDU (injection drug use), MTCT (mother-to-child transmission), Blood/Blood Products (occupational or non-occupational exposure to blood and/or blood products) and Unspecified.

Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit
Office of the Chief Medical Officer
Ministry of Health
Continental Building, 25 Church Street, Hamilton HM 12
P.O. Box HM 1195, Hamilton HM EX, Bermuda

Trends

Since 1982, 790 persons have been diagnosed with HIV in Bermuda. Of these, 571 persons have had a diagnosis of AIDS and 486 have died either from or with HIV infection. As of 31 December 2021, it is estimated that there are 304 persons known to be living with HIV in Bermuda, giving an overall prevalence of 0.5%¹.

Figure 1 shows the cumulative numbers of persons diagnosed with HIV and AIDS and deaths among persons with HIV while **Figure 2** shows the annual number of persons diagnosed with HIV and AIDS and deaths among persons with HIV.

HIV incidence peaked from 1984-1987 followed by a steady decline over the next 15 years. There was then an increase in persons diagnosed from 2005-2008. This increase may be partly due to improved awareness of the availability of testing. Since then there has been a general decline with less than 10 new HIV diagnoses reported per year from 2011-2021. There were 5 new HIV diagnoses reported in 2021.

AIDS incidence peaked in 1995 with 49 persons reported as diagnosed with HIV in that year. This has declined since then with 10 or fewer persons reported with an AIDS diagnosis annually since 2004. There was one new AIDS diagnosis reported in 2021.

Deaths among persons with HIV continue to be low, likely due to advancement and availability of care, treatment and support. Additionally, the deaths are occurring among persons of older ages and the reported causes of death among persons with HIV may not be directly related to their HIV infection. There was two deaths among persons with a prior diagnosis of HIV reported in 2021.

Table 1 shows the cumulative characteristics of HIV/AIDS cases and deaths through 2021.

The majority of HIV/AIDS diagnoses and deaths have occurred among black males aged 25-44 years. For diagnosis of HIV, sexual contact is the main risk factor (heterosexual contact followed by men having sex with men). However, there have been slightly more AIDS diagnoses and deaths among persons with injection drug use as their main risk factor.

Table 2 shows the characteristics of persons diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and deaths among persons with HIV/AIDS in 2021. Additional information on these persons will not be provided, when numbers are small.

Table 2 also provides some information on persons living with HIV/AIDS as of 31 December 2021. The majority of persons living with HIV/AIDS are black, male, aged 45-64, Bermudian and have a reported risk of sexual contact.

¹ 2021 mid-year population from Bermuda's Population Projections 2016-2026, Department of Statistics (2018)

Figure 1. Reported cumulative number of persons who living with HIV, ever having had an AIDS diagnosis or who have died having had an HIV or AIDS diagnosis, Bermuda; 1982-2021

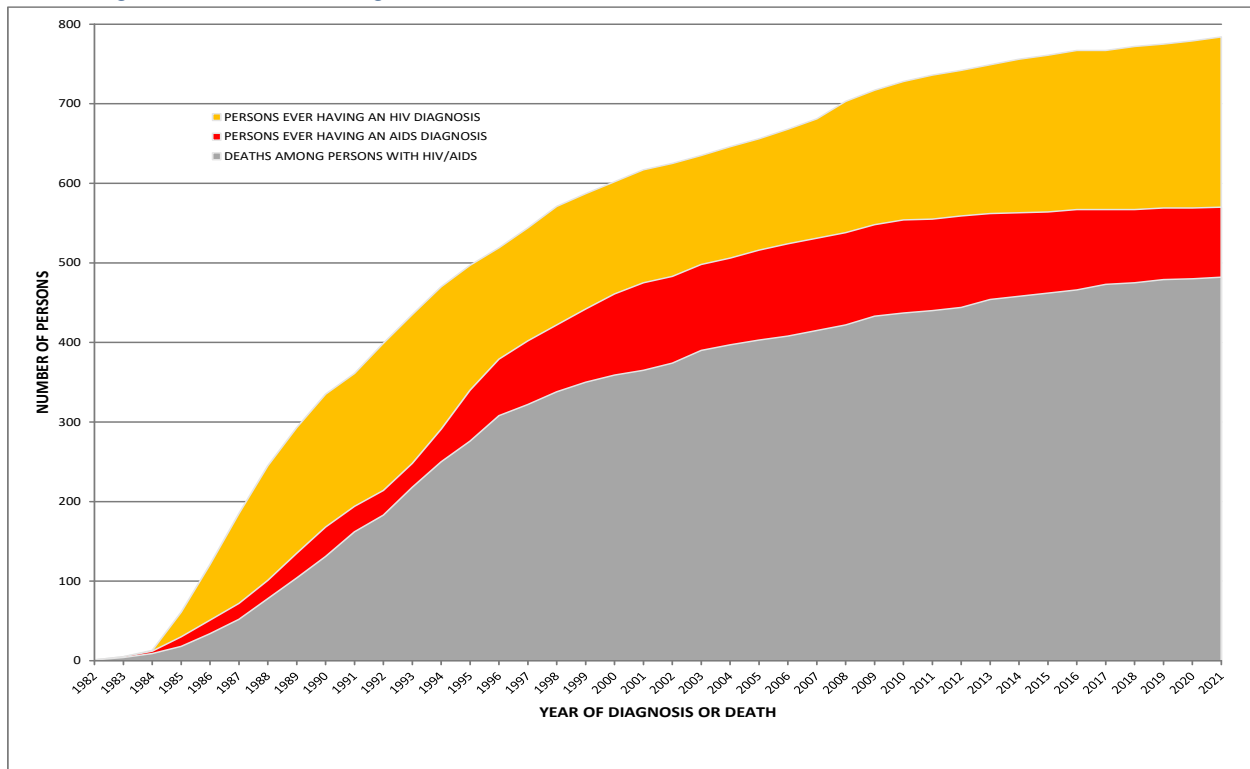


Figure 2. Reported annual number of persons diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and deaths among persons with HIV, Bermuda: 1982-2021 [does not include persons with unknown diagnosis or death dates]

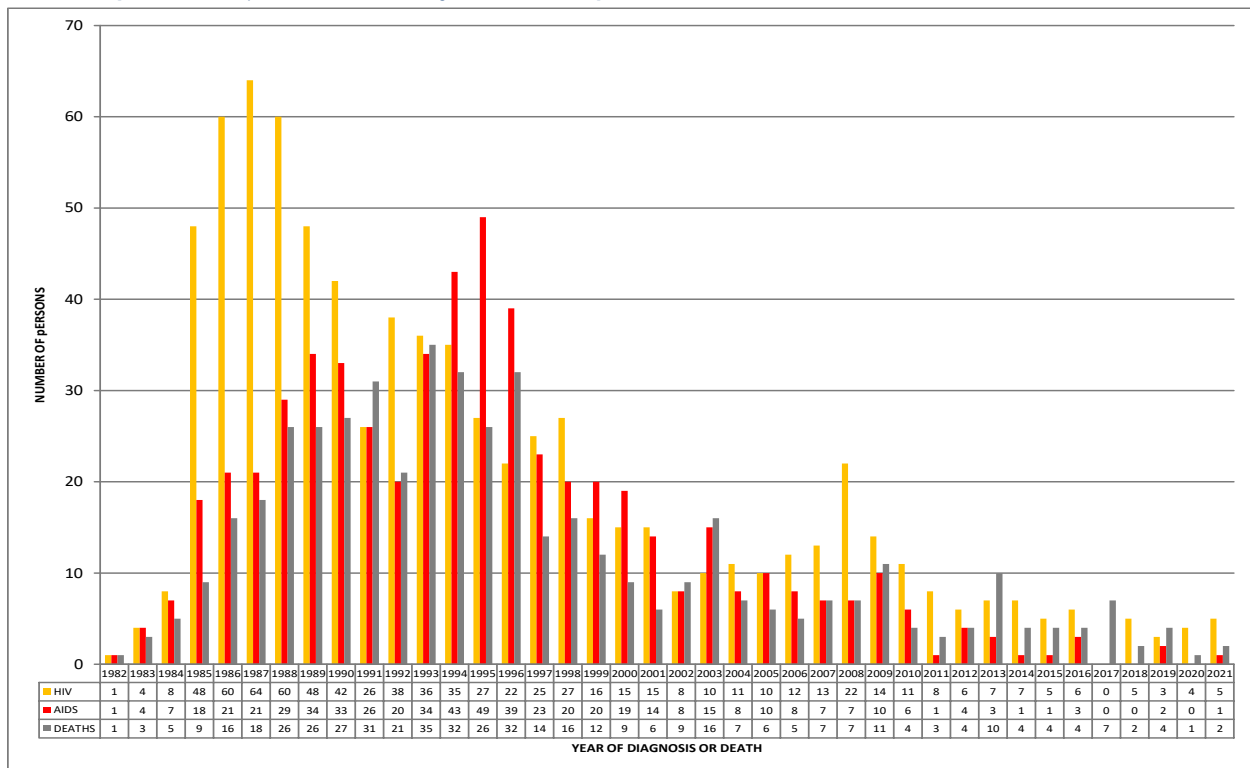


Table 1. Characteristics of persons reported as diagnosed with HIV and AIDS and deaths among persons with HIV, Bermuda: 1982-2021

	HIV		AIDS		DEATHS	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
TOTAL	790	100%	571	100%	486	100%
AGE GROUP						
0-14	7	1%	4	1%	1	<1%
15-24	54	7%	10	2%	6	1%
25-44	535	68%	386	68%	286	59%
45-64	159	20%	147	26%	153	31%
65+	16	2%	15	3%	30	6%
Unspecified	19	2%	9	2%	10	2%
GENDER						
Male	594	75%	440	77%	376	77%
Female	196	25%	131	23%	110	23%
RACE						
Black	689	87%	512	90%	443	91%
White & Others	101	13%	59	10%	43	9%
NATIONALITY						
Bermudian	703	89%	536	94%	472	97%
Non-Bermudian	87	11%	35	6%	14	3%
RISK						
MSM	242	31%	162	28%	133	27%
Heterosexual Contact	261	33%	170	30%	131	27%
IDU	230	29%	202	36%	189	39%
MTCT	8	1%	5	1%	4	1%
Blood/Blood products	12	2%	8	1%	9	2%
Unspecified	37	5%	24	4%	20	4%

* Percentages may sum to greater than 100% due to rounding.

Table 2. Characteristics of persons reported as diagnosed with HIV and AIDS, deaths among persons with HIV and persons living with HIV, Bermuda: 2021 [additional information not provided if there are less than 5 persons in a category]

	HIV		AIDS		DEATHS		PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
TOTAL	5	100%	1	100%	2	100%	304	100%
AGE GROUP								
0-14	0	1%					0	0%
15-24	0	7%					3	1%
25-44	1	20%					47	15%
45-64	4	80%					156	51%
65+	0	0%					94	31%
Unspecified	0	0%					4	1%
GENDER								
Male	3	60%					218	72%
Female	2	40%					86	28%
RACE								
Black	5	100%					246	81%
White & Others	0	0%					58	19%
NATIONALITY								
Bermudian	4	80%					231	76%
Non-Bermudian	1	20%					73	24%
RISK								
MSM	1	20%					109	36%
Heterosexual Contact	4	80%					130	43%
IDU	0	0%					41	13%
MTCT	0	0%					4	1%
Blood/Blood products	0	0%					3	1%
Unspecified	0	0%					17	6%