



Employing Status-Neutral Approaches to End the HIV Epidemic:  
Addressing Social Determinants of Health through a Status-Neutral Lens  
Tuesday, February 8, 2022

## PARTICIPANT QUESTIONS

The following questions were posed by participants during the “Addressing Social Determinants of Health through a Status-Neutral Lens” webinar hosted on February 8, 2022.

**Q: *Where can your clients get the In-Home HIV testing kits? From an online site or from a Health Department?***

**A:** South Carolina In-Home HIV Testing Kits can be ordered online by visiting our webpage and completing a survey: <https://scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/hiv-std-viral-hepatitis/in-home-hiv-testing-program>

South Carolina residents can also order HIV In-Home Testing Kits through our CBOs serving their area either by going in-person to request for test kits or through our mobile units serving the respective area. To qualify to order a Home Testing Kit, an individual must meet the following conditions:

- Be a South Carolina resident
- Be 17 years of age or older
- Have not ordered a Home Testing Kit in the past 90 days.
- The In-Home HIV Testing Program is mailing-based, and so individuals are required to include their name, mailing address, email, and phone number for a test kit to be successfully mailed to them.
- For any questions related to our In-Home HIV Testing Program, call 1-800-322-2437 or email [schometestingprogram@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:schometestingprogram@dhec.sc.gov)

**Q: *How was South Carolina Department of Health able to do pharmacy testing?***

**A:** The CDC has set out clear guidelines on how to conduct “point-of-care” testing in non-clinical settings, and that is the template that our health department is using for the Retail Pharmacy HIV Testing Program. Modalities have been put in place by our public health department and the Walgreens Pharmacy on how to proceed with the Retail Pharmacy HIV Testing Program, including data sharing agreements (DSAs), policies and procedures, staff training, and data reporting.



Instructions for specimen collection, preparation, and performance of rapid HIV tests are provided by the manufacture in the OraQuick test kits. The test utilizes oral fluid as the specimen for testing, and the test results are usually available within 20 minutes.

Preliminary positive test results are reported to the health department using Form 1129 and our Disease Intervention Specialists follow-up with the client to refer them to do a confirmatory HIV test as well as offer Partner Services and ART linkage. An excel spreadsheet of all tests conducted is sent to public health monthly.

Our public health is currently training Walgreens's pharmacists at select sites that will act as a pilot on how to perform the HIV tests, including client counseling and consent, specimen collection (oral fluid) approach for the OraQuick test kit, interpreting and reporting test results.

***Q: Please talk more about Walgreens testing in South Carolina. Will you use Walgreens staff and get a report from them or you'll have your own staff go to Walgreens and have a stand for testing? Please expand on this.***

**A:** As mentioned above, our health department will use Walgreens staff (pharmacists) to conduct counseling, collect client consent, specimen collection, conduct the rapid HIV testing, interpret and report results to patient and to public health (using Form 1129 for reporting Reportable Conditions), refer high risk negative clients for PrEP services, counsel client on the need for a confirmatory test (if preliminary positive).

Upon receiving Form 1129 from Walgreens, our health department will dispatch our Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) to establish contact with the client (per information provided by the pharmacists) and begin the process of referral for a confirmatory HIV test and other services as described above.

Public health will not have a stand at Walgreens manned by our staff to conduct the testing.

***Q: What strategies are you using to reach the youth to increase PrEP uptake?***

**A:** South Carolina is using various approaches to increase PrEP uptake among youths:

- Educating providers on asking the right questions about sex and high-risk behaviors, and initiating conversation around PrEP use among youths, PrEP prescription, and PrEP education.
- Increasing social marketing and PrEP messaging through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Google digital.



- Targeting LGBT dating sites such as Grindr to increase PrEP education and awareness.
- Using telephone apps such as Skype and Facetime.
- PrEP Awareness Week: Sept. 27- Oct 1, 2021 (HIV/STD testing, Webinars with free CEUs, social media LIVE sessions, Digital advertising, outdoor advertising, In-person college sessions).
- Funded CBOs supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in South Carolina- HIV/STI testing, PrEP education and referral.
- South Carolina Latinx Commission supporting migrant youth, Latinx, and young LGBT in HIV education, testing, PrEP education, eligibility and referral.
- South Carolina TelePrEP program supported by the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC TelePrEP).
- Addressing challenges of funding.

**A:** Chicago uses several program areas in our status-neutral HIV Services Portfolio to reach youth and increase PrEP uptake in this (and other) populations. Examples include:

- HIV Resource Coordination Hub provides connection to PrEP providers, other supportive services, and financial assistance to existing and potential PrEP users, many of whom are youth.
- Population Centered Health Homes (PCHH) provides medical care and supportive services, including PrEP navigation/coordination, prescription, and primary care. Many PCHH clients are youth.
- Housing for HIV Vulnerable individuals provides short-term housing to PrEP users, ~50% of which are 18-24 year olds.
- Community Responsive Screening and Linkage provides screening for HIV, STI, and HCV and linkage to appropriate post-screening services, including PrEP. Priority populations for this program include cisgender Black and Latino gay/bi men and Black and Latina women of transgender experience, many of whom are youth.

**A:** DC Health: Based on our surveillance data, youth, particularly youth of color, remain one of our focus populations for HIV. Currently, our Ryan White Part A Program supports status neutral Regional Early Intervention Services. This service is not specifically youth focused; however, several of our successful applicants have chosen to focus their efforts on youth. For this program, all persons determined to be behaviorally vulnerable to HIV are connected to PrEP resources within seven (7) days of testing. Additionally, our new Ryan White Part B solicitation is status neutral and includes youth in the populations of focus. This effort is still in the competitive review process, but the successful applicants will offer comprehensive, status neutral programs that move customers along the continuum of care. The program begins after targeted HIV testing



and links customers to care, PrEP or ART- based on serostatus, supports treatment adherence, and re-engages individuals that have lapsed in care.

**Q: *Who did Chicago's HD partner with, in order to obtain housing for people vulnerable to HIV?***

**A:** Chicago released a competitive funding opportunity to create our housing program for PrEP users. The successful applicant – Chicago House and Social Service Agency – is a long-time HIV housing provider for persons living with HIV and long-time HIV prevention provider. I can share the RFP is helpful.

