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CONTACT: Amy Reel
(317) 431-3792

areel@isdh.in.gov

HIV OUTBREAK IN SOUTHEASTERN INDIANA

INDIANAPOLIS—State health officials announced today a quickly spreading outbreak of HIV in the southeastern portion of the state. There have been 26 confirmed and four preliminary HIV positive cases since mid-December. The large majority of cases are linked through injection drug abuse of the prescription drug, opana, in addition to a small number of cases linked through sexual transmission. Opana is a powerful opioid painkiller containing oxymorphone. It is more potent, per milligram, than Oxycontin.

“It’s very concerning to me that most of the individuals who have tested HIV positive have only recently contracted the virus,” said State Health Commissioner Jerome Adams, M.D., M.P.H. “Because prescription drug abuse is at the heart of this outbreak, we are not only working to identify, contact and test individuals who may have been exposed, but also to connect community members to resources for substance abuse treatment and recovery.”

State health officials are working closely with local health departments, health care providers and others to contain the spread of HIV in southeastern Indiana. Disease intervention specialists are in the area, interviewing each newly identified HIV positive individual to obtain information about needle sharing and sex partners, as well as recommending care coordination services, medical care and HIV prevention information.

State health officials recommend that all Hoosiers know their HIV status through testing at a health care facility. Hoosiers in the southeastern portion of the state, especially individuals who have engaged in high-risk behavior such as needle sharing and unprotected sex, are advised to get tested and then re-tested after about two to three months because HIV can take up to three months to appear in a person’s system.

To help reduce risk of HIV infection, avoid:

- injection drug use;
- sharing or re-using needles;
- engaging in unprotected sex; and,

- engaging in sex with commercial sex workers.

For HIV testing locations and information about HIV Care Coordination, individuals are encouraged to call the ISDH HIV Services Hotline at (866) 588-4948.

Individuals seeking help with substance abuse should call the national 24-hour addiction hotline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357). This hotline provides confidential, free, 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year, information service, in English and Spanish, for individuals and family members facing mental health and/or substance use disorders. This service provides referrals to local treatment facilities, support groups, and community-based organizations. Callers can also order free publications and other information.

Visit the Indiana State Department of Health at www.StateHealth.in.gov. Follow the Indiana State Department of Health on Twitter at [@StateHealthIN](https://twitter.com/StateHealthIN) and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/isdh1.

Hoosiers who do not have health care coverage or access to a doctor are encouraged to check availability for the new Healthy Indiana Plan—HIP 2.0—by visiting www.HIP.IN.gov or calling 1-877-GET-HIP-9.

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