

Part F: Special Projects of National Significance

HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program



Program Fact Sheet | September 2023

The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) provides a comprehensive system of HIV primary medical care, medications, and essential support services for low-income people with HIV. Over half the people with diagnosed HIV in the United States—more than 576,000 people in 2021—receive services through RWHAP each year. First authorized in 1990, RWHAP funds grants to states, cities, counties, and local community-based organizations to provide care and treatment services to people with HIV to improve health outcomes and reduce HIV transmission. In 2021, 89.7 percent of RWHAP clients receiving HIV medical care were virally suppressed, which means they cannot sexually transmit HIV to their partners and can live longer and healthier lives. For more than three decades, RWHAP has worked to stop HIV stigma and reduce health disparities by caring for the whole person and addressing their social determinants of health.



The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Part F Special Projects of National Significance (SPNS) Program supports the development of innovative models of HIV care and treatment to quickly respond to emerging needs of RWHAP clients. Through its demonstration, implementation, and health information technology projects, SPNS uses implementation science to evaluate the design, implementation, utilization, cost, and health-related outcomes of treatment strategies while promoting the dissemination and replication of successful interventions. This unique program advances knowledge and skills in the delivery of health care, support services, and data integration to serve RWHAP priority populations. Through these special projects, RWHAP SPNS recipients implement a variety of interventions that advance public health knowledge and help to achieve the goal of ending the HIV epidemic in the United States.

Recipients

Of the 47 fiscal year (FY) 2023 RWHAP SPNS grant recipients currently funded, 21 percent are community-based/AIDS service organizations; 6 percent are state/county/local departments of health; 34 percent are community health centers/hospitals; 21 percent are academic-based clinics; 11 percent are public health research/training institutes; and 6 percent are universities/evaluation and technical assistance providers. In FY 2022, the SPNS Program served more than 7,000 clients with HIV.

Current Initiatives

Supporting Replication (SURE) of Housing Interventions in the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (FY 2022–FY 2025)

This initiative has two separate, coordinated recipients: the Implementation and Technical Assistance Provider (ITAP) and an Evaluation Provider (EP). The ITAP supports and provides technical assistance to 10 sites that are implementing and adapting housing-related evidence-based interventions, evidence-informed interventions, and emerging strategies—collectively known as “intervention strategies”—for three key populations of people with HIV experiencing unstable housing: LGBTQ+ people; youth and young adults (aged 13–24 years); and people who have been justice involved (defined as any person who is engaged at any point along the continuum of the criminal justice system as a defendant, including arrest, incarceration, and community supervision). The ITAP funds implementation sites under individual subawards, provides implementation-related technical assistance to the sites, and develops a communication strategy and replication tools for

widespread adoption of these housing-related intervention strategies for the three key populations. The EP develops and implements a multisite evaluation of these intervention strategies and provides evaluation-related technical assistance using an implementation science framework.

Emerging Strategies to Improve Health Outcomes for People Aging With HIV (FY 2022–FY 2024)

This initiative funds three components: one capacity-building provider, 10 demonstration sites, and one evaluation provider. All three components of the initiative work together using HRSA's HIV/AIDS Bureau's (HAB) implementation science framework to conduct the following activities simultaneously: implement emerging interventions that comprehensively screen and manage comorbidities, geriatric conditions, behavioral health, and psychosocial needs of people with HIV aged 50 years and older; assess the uptake and integration of emerging strategies; understand and assess the implementation processes; recognize and document broader factors affecting implementation; evaluate the impact of the emerging strategies; and disseminate effective strategies.

Telehealth Strategies to Maximize HIV Care (FY 2022–FY 2024)

This initiative identifies and maximizes the use of telehealth strategies most effective in improving linkage to care, retention in care, and health outcomes, including viral suppression, for people with HIV who receive services through RWHAP. This initiative builds on existing programs, and HRSA HAB is coordinating the initiative activities in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The initiative is funding one recipient that is selecting promising telehealth strategies that can be used to maximize HIV care in RWHAP. The recipient is funding, coordinating, monitoring, and providing technical and capacity-building assistance to five RWHAP recipients and subrecipients; creating an inventory of project strategies and tools; evaluating the project using an implementation science framework; and disseminating the project's products through various outlets, ultimately for uptake and replication by RWHAP recipients and subrecipients.

Using Innovative Intervention Strategies to Improve Health Outcomes Among People With HIV (FY 2021–FY 2024)

This initiative uses an implementation science framework to identify and evaluate innovative intervention strategies in four focus areas to improve health outcomes among people with HIV. The initiative funds the Innovative Intervention Strategies (2iS) Coordinating Center for Technical Assistance, which solicited and issued subawards to 20 RWHAP-funded recipients to serve as sites for implementing and evaluating intervention strategies. The intervention strategies focus on three priority populations and one area of opportunity for improving service delivery. Combined, these four focus areas are as follows:

1. Improving HIV health outcomes for people with substance use disorder
2. Improving HIV health outcomes for LGBTQ+ youth
3. Improving HIV health outcomes for people who are or have been incarcerated
4. Improving HIV health outcomes by using telehealth services

The initiative also funds the 2iS Evaluation Center to evaluate the implementation of these intervention strategies using an implementation science approach.

Building Capacity to Improve Collecting and Reporting Viral Suppression Data to the Medicaid Adult Core Set (FY 2021–FY 2024)

This initiative develops strategies for building capacity among HIV surveillance and Medicaid programs for reporting high-quality HIV viral suppression data to comply with HIV Viral Load Suppression measure reporting on the Medicaid Adult Core Set. HRSA awarded one System Coordination Provider (SCP) to select, fund, and work with nine RWHAP Part B recipients and collaborate with HIV surveillance and Medicaid programs to build capacity to report high-quality HIV viral suppression data to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services as part of the annual state Medicaid Adult Core Set reporting. The SCP is working with state

RWHAP, HIV surveillance, and Medicaid programs to develop, implement, and evaluate strategies for improving the collection and reporting of HIV viral suppression data to the Medicaid Adult Core Set. In addition, the SCP will promote the dissemination and replication of effective strategies and lessons learned for adoption across other states.

Building Capacity to Implement Rapid Antiretroviral Therapy Start for Improved Care Engagement in the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (FY 2020–FY 2023)

This initiative supports the implementation and evaluation of “rapid start,” or the accelerated entry into HIV medical care and rapid initiation of antiretroviral therapy for people with HIV who are newly diagnosed, new to care, or out of care. The program funds 15 implementation sites that have the capacity and infrastructure to support rapid start initiation, but have not yet been able to, with the goal of replicating and expanding successful rapid start models.

Improving Care and Treatment Coordination Focusing on Black Women With HIV (FY 2020–FY 2023)

This initiative supports 12 cooperative agreements for up to three years to design, implement, and evaluate the use of bundled interventions for Black women with HIV. Bundled interventions address sociocultural health determinants, expand the delivery and utilization of comprehensive HIV care and treatment services, support continuous engagement in care, and improve health outcomes for Black women with HIV in a culturally sensitive and responsive manner. All demonstration sites funded under this initiative collaborate with the Evaluation and Technical Assistance Provider.

Funding Considerations

Congress appropriated approximately \$25 million for RWHAP Part F SPNS in FY 2023.

