

Project Title: HIV Emergency Relief Grant Program/Minneapolis-St. Paul Part A TGA
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ix. Project Abstract. The Minneapolis-St. Paul Transitional Grant Area (TGA) comprises eleven Minnesota counties and two western Wisconsin counties (Pierce and St. Croix). The population of the TGA is 3,296,046. Minneapolis in Hennepin County and St. Paul in Ramsey County are the TGA's two largest cities. These two counties comprise 32% of Minnesota's population of 5,290,447. The outer TGA counties are suburban or rural, and together with Hennepin and Ramsey County comprise 60% of Minnesota's population. The TGA's population is 72% White, 8% Black (including an estimated 63,982 African-born), 5.5% Latino, 6% Asian, 1% Native American, and fewer than 3% identifying as more than one race. Of people living with HIV (PLWH) in the TGA as of December 31, 2010, 51% are White, 23% are African American, 13% African-born, 8% Latino, 2% American Indian and 2% Asian. Fifty-eight percent are MSM. The epidemic in the TGA is evolving, with 23% of new AIDS diagnoses among African Americans, 15% African-born, and 44% White. HIV/AIDS prevalence by gender is 78% male and 22% female. Forty-seven percent of PLWH/A are aged 20-44; 51% are now older than 45.

State and federal immigration statistics, last updated as of December 31, 2009, show that Minnesota ranked 19th in the nation in number of resident immigrants (120,000) and new arrivals (18,020). The number of immigrants from African countries continues to increase—in 2009, 53% came from Africa. Minnesota ranked fifteenth in the number of refugee arrivals in 2009 with a total of 1,265. Primary Refugee and asylee arrivals to Minnesota through 2010 totaled 207 PLWH under the special medical waiver program, which ended in January 2010 with the lifting of the HIV travel ban. Language and cultural needs, particularly for the growing population of African-born immigrants, complicate the issues for communities of color facing HIV/AIDS.

The epidemic is concentrated in Minneapolis and St. Paul in Hennepin and Ramsey counties, where 83% of the TGA's 5,944 persons living with HIV or AIDS reside. Ninety-four percent of PLWH (5,592) reside in five counties: Hennepin, Ramsey, Anoka, Dakota and Washington. Thus, most Part A services are located in the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Part A service providers are required to serve the entire 13-County TGA; transportation services are available to Ryan White eligible clients through Part B. Minority populations served with MAI funds (African Americans, African-born and Latinos) are centered in the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Part A HIV funding priorities support services that enhance access to and maintenance of primary care. While the TGA has been fortunate in the extent of health insurance coverage provided through private plans and publicly funded insurance programs, in the past five years the number of clients served by Part A-funded Primary Care programs increased by 397%, as a result of rising healthcare costs while hospitals and clinics must decrease the amount of charitable care they provide. While most PLWH in the TGA can access primary care and medications, there is increasing pressure to fund these services at the expense of others that address barriers to accessing care. HIV primary care services are delivered in hospital-based clinics and community health centers. Funded programs have a principal goal to identify people who are out of care and help them connect to HIV care. Part A funds reduce barriers by funding retention in care and outreach efforts; primary care services for the uninsured; a culturally diverse provider network; and by making point-of-entry and coordination services, supportive services and medical case management the cornerstone of the Ryan White HIV care system. The Minneapolis-St. Paul TGA has received Part A funding for sixteen years and MAI funding for thirteen years.