



# Me, ST&I: Conducting Effective STI Prevention Outreach In Minority/Underserved Communities

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## Background

**Between 2015 and 2020, Tallahassee, FL, Leon County recorded some of the highest STI (Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, Syphilis) rates in the State of Florida.**

**During the same time frame, Leon County had an average rate of 24.6 for HIV cases with an average state ranking of 7th.**

**AIDS cases Leon County had an average rate of 10.9 with an average state ranking of 11th.**

**Leon County has an average population of 293,582 which is ranked 22nd in the State of Florida.**

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## Background

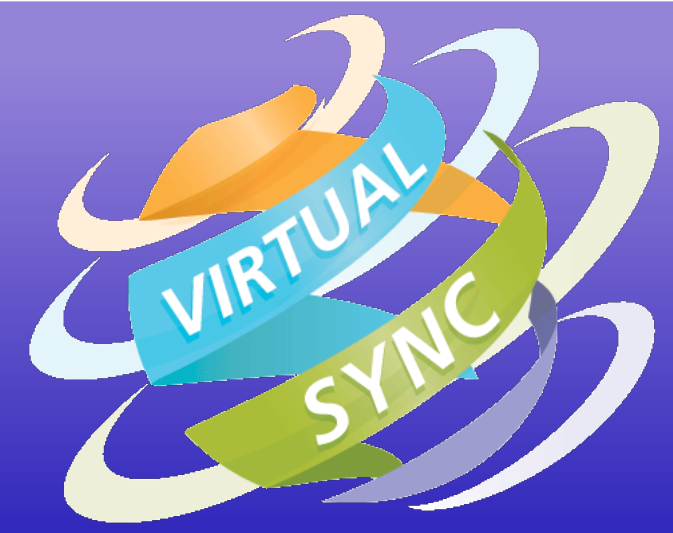
### Leon County STI Numbers & Rates 2015-2019

In 2015, Leon County was ranked 1st in FL for gonorrhea (865 cases, 303.3 rate), 1st in FL for chlamydia (2,987 cases, 1,047.2 rate), 12th in FL for syphilis (78 cases, 27.3 rate).

In 2016, Leon County was ranked 1st in FL for Gonorrhea (1,289 cases, 446.8 rate), 1st in FL for chlamydia (3,302 cases, 1,144.6 rate), 14th in FL for syphilis (81 cases, 28.1 rate).

In 2017, Leon County was ranked 1st in FL for Gonorrhea (1,031 cases, 352.2 rate), 1st in FL for chlamydia (3,341 cases, 1,144.7 rate), 24th in FL for syphilis (64 cases, 21.9 rate).

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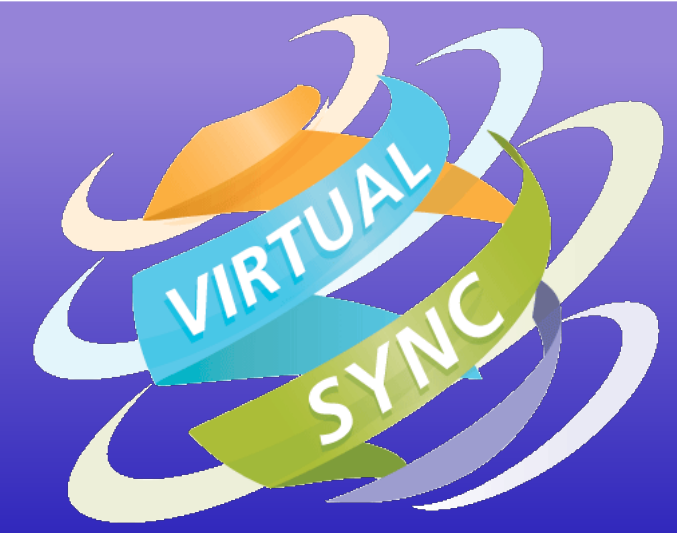


## Background

In 2018, Leon County was ranked 1st in FL for gonorrhea (1,095 cases, 377.3 rate), 1st in FL for chlamydia (3,350 cases, 1,154.3 rate), 8th in FL for syphilis (188 cases, 64.8 rate).

In 2019, Leon County was ranked 3rd in FL for gonorrhea (1,098 cases, 370.0 rate), 1st in FL for chlamydia (3,403 cases, 154.3 rate), 6th in FL for syphilis (248 cases, 83.6 rate).

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## Background

### Leon County HIV Numbers & Rates 2016-2018

**In 2016, Leon County was ranked 11th in FL for HIV with 61 total cases and 21.1 rate.**

**In 2017, Leon County was ranked 8th in FL for HIV with 64 total cases and 21.9 rate.**

**In 2018, Leon County was ranked 6th in FL for HIV with 81 total cases and 27.9 rate.**

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Background

## Leon County AIDS Numbers & Rates 2016-2018

**In 2016, Leon County was ranked 12th in FL for AIDS with 30 total cases and 10.4 rate.**

**In 2017, Leon County was ranked 13th in FL for AIDS with 27 total cases and 9.3 rate.**

**In 2018, Leon County was ranked 17th FL for AIDS with 25 total cases and 8.6 rate.**



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Background

## NMC's 3-Tier Outreach Strategy

**Community Outreach/Education:** Our Ryan White Program Manager and Outreach Specialist use data to provide targeted outreach/education (evidence-based strategies) to populations who are identified as high-risk.

**Medical Case Management:** Provides services under the direction of or by referral from a clinical provider and include client-centered services that implement the clinical treatment plan, including linking clients with health care, psychological, and other services. The coordination and follow-up of medical treatments are key components of medical case management.

**Patient Care:** Our Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner and Medical Assistant provide primary care services to patients who contracted STI's and/or are living with HIV/AIDS. They provide holistic health care to a diverse population of patients in a primary care clinic setting

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Background

## Outreach Examples

Prep First Drag Weekend for NGHAAD  
Night Out With Bae  
Healthy Happy Hour  
Annual Youth Health Summit  
Tallahassee Pride  
The Business of Pleasure: The Ultimate Passion Party  
World AIDS Day Candlelight Vigil  
Tallahassee AIDS Walk  
Set Friday's (Florida A&M University)  
Condoms & Candy  
Market Wednesday's (Florida State University)

HIV Testing In Low-Income Housing Projects  
Unmasked: Preventing Intimate Partner Violence  
Project Alpha  
What's Love Got To Do With It?  
Neighborhood Movie Night  
Soccer Sunday  
Homeless Veterans Stand-Down  
FAMU/FSU Community Nursing Programs  
Ryan White: More Than Just A Name  
Bud's Liquor HIV Testing



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Background

## Education Examples

Healthy Happy Hour  
Sisters/Mothers in Sobriety  
Juvenile Assessment Center  
HIV/STD 101 Florida A&M University  
HIV/STD 101 Florida State University  
HIV/STD 101 Tallahassee Community College

Wrap It Up 101  
STD 101's In Public Housing Settings  
Black Women In Medicine Seminar  
Leon/Gadsden County Fish Fry  
Women Empowering Women  
A Healthier You Educational Event  
Prep First Couch Talk

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## Results

### HIV Tests and Number of Patients in Care

**2016: 1,162 HIV test were conducted, 85 positive patients identified & enrolled in care**

**2017: 2,764 HIV test were conducted, 173 positive patients identified & enrolled in care**

**2018: 3,421 HIV test were conducted, 220 positive patients identified & enrolled in care**

**2019: 3,944 HIV test were conducted, 230 positive patients identified & enrolled in care**



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## Results

### Number of PLWA Enrolled In Care In Leon County

**2016: 20 PLWA are enrolled in care with NMC**

**2017: 25 PLWA are enrolled in care with NMC**

**2018: 32 PLWA are enrolled in care with NMC**

**2019: 40 PLWA are enrolled in care with NMC**

**2020: 50 PLWA are enrolled in care with NMC**

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## Results

### Number of Chlamydia Test Between 2017 – 2020

**2017: 1,497 test were conducted 116 patients were identified and treated.**

**2018: 1,897 test were conducted 113 patients were identified and treated.**

**2019: 2,940 test were conducted 166 patients were identified and treated.**

**2020: 1,299 test were conducted 89 patients were identified and treated.**



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## Results

### Number of Syphilis Test Between 2017 – 2020

**2017: 1,395 test were conducted 45 patients identified & treated**

**2018: 1,750 test were conducted 50 patients identified & treated**

**2019: 2,334 test were conducted 204 patients identified & treated**

**2020: 970 test were conducted 137 patients identified & treated**

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## Results

### Number of Gonorrhoea Test Between 2017 – 2020

**2017: 1,490 test were conducted 50 patients identified & treated**

**2018: 1,892 test were conducted 39 patients identified & treated**

**2019: 2,911 test were conducted 73 patients identified & treated**

**2020: 1,286 test were conducted 27 patients identified & treated**



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## Conclusion

Between 2016 and 2020 NMC conducted 11,291 HIV test, identified & enrolled 938 patients into care.

167 PLWA were enrolled and remained in care

7,635 chlamydia test were conducted, 484 patients identified & treated

6,449 syphilis tested were conducted, 436 patients identified and treated

7,579 gonorrhoea test were conducted, 189 patients identified and treated

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## Conclusion

Neighborhood Medical Center's use of their three tiered approach of outreach/education, medical case management and patient care, led to an average increase of 570 HIV test every year between 2016 – 2020.

Between the same time frame The NMC Ryan White Program has either hosted or were a part of 120 HIV/STD prevention events.

The NMC Ryan White Team has conducted over 150 educational classes during this time frame.

All HIV/ outreach/ education is performed mainly by the Outreach Specialist/Health Educator, Ryan White Program Director, and Medical Case Management.



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## Rationale

### NMC Evaluated the Following Areas

- Increasing HIV/STI rates within Leon County
- The type of outreach/testing/education that was currently being conducted
- The quality of the outreach being conducted
- The frequency of outreach/testing/education
- The quality of the relationship between the community and health care providers
- The satisfaction of the community members receiving services

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## Rationale

From our evaluations, a high volume of testing was being conducted but rapport between outreach providers and community members was not properly established throughout Leon County.

Because of a lack of rapport, there was no consistency in reaching the community members to help link them to resources and health care.

If we were going to truly combat the rising HIV/STI rates we would first have to build a solid relationship with our community.

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## Rationale

NMC testing numbers showed that our outreach efforts helped to increase the number of people being tested in Leon County for HIV & STI's.

We helped to increase the number of people in Leon County receiving treatment for HIV or STI's.

We helped to increase the number of people with HIV/AIDS being enrolled into health care.

We helped increased the number of positive patients that remained in health care and is adhering to treatment recommendations.



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## Discussion

Tallahassee, Leon County, is Florida's capital city and county which also sits within the Bible Belt of the United States. Being a southern conservative city and county the subject of sex is still seen as taboo and unimportant.

Tallahassee is a college town which holds the populations of Florida State University, Florida A&M University and, Tallahassee Community College students. The influx of college students increases the population of Tallahassee by 100,000 people.

A large number of the students who attend college in Tallahassee come from households that may not provide safe sex education.

Annually 40 to 60 thousand freshmen come to Tallahassee for school along with returning students who are interacting with the native population, the interactions between college students, high school students, middle school students, and the native population usually leads an increase in the number of STI's being transmitted between the ages of 16 – 24.

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## Discussion

Between 2016 and 2019, Tallahassee, FL, Leon County had some of the highest STI ( 1<sup>st</sup> for Chlamydia, 1<sup>st</sup> for Gonorrhea, 6<sup>th</sup> for Syphilis) rates in the State of Florida.

During the same time frame, Leon County had an average rate of 24.6 for HIV cases and an average state ranking of 7<sup>th</sup> for HIV.

For AIDS cases Leon County had an average rate of 10.9 and an average state ranking of 11<sup>th</sup>.

Leon County has an average population of 293,582 which is ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> in the State of Florida

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## Discussion

NMC's outreach efforts needed to be dynamic, effective and sustainable.

If we did not create a strategic and aggressive plan of action, the HIV/STI rates in Leon County would remain among the highest in the state, and even among the highest nationally.

The research we conducted before implementing outreach efforts allowed us to identify target populations to serve.

Partnering with the Leon County Health Department and local CBO's helped to enhance the number of resources we offer our community and helped to strengthen our rapport with community members and patients.



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## Discussion

Using our three tier outreach efforts (Outreach/Education, Medical Case Management, Patient Care) our testing numbers show that we have made a significant impact within Leon County.

We helped to reduce the number of new infections by increasing the number of HIV/STI test we provide, increasing access to care and safe sex resources, increasing safe sex education/outreach events, and increasing our rapport/visibility within the communities we serve.

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## Discussion

### NMC's Seven Steps To Effective Prevention Outreach

1. **Community Assessment:** Assess your community to determine what their needs are.
2. **Build Community Relationships:** Align yourself with people and resources within your community.
3. **Analyse Your Data:** After you assess your community, what is your data telling you about the community you serve?
4. **Create A Plan Of Action:** Use your data to provide outreach targeting populations identified by your assessment.
5. **Provide Targeted Outreach:** Meeting your patients in their environments to provide information and resources.
6. **Educate Clients/Link to Care:** Teaching HIV/STI prevention information and linking patients to health care.
7. **Accessing Care/Adhering To Care:** Using outreach, case management and primary care to access care and maintain adherence.

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## Next Steps

After analysing the outreach efforts we've implemented over the past 5 years, our goals moving forward are to sustain efforts that are successful, eliminate or reconstruct efforts that did not work, and add new events and new ways to hold events providing services to our community.

## Example:

Implementing the use of virtual spaces to access a portion of our community (NMC Podcast, Virtual Healthy Happy Hour).

Incorporating CVOID-19 testing and food distribution within our HIV/STD testing efforts

Attending trainings and conferences to increase capacity building

Including virtual/in-person support groups

Upgrading and using a second larger mobile unit to increase the number of patients being tested and linked to care

Hosting national conferences in-person/virtually

Educating fellow CBO's and health educators on effective outreach methods through webinars

Collaborating with and learning from CBO's, agencies and health departments outside of our area to learn new strategies to implement during outreach.



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## Rationale

Because of the presence of COVID-19, HIV/STI outreach and education is evolving.

Since March the number of HIV test we would provide has significantly dropped (from around 300 a month to around 20 a month) because we cannot conduct outreach in the same manner we would before COVID-19.

Patients are in their homes more than ever which also affects the number of people we would reach conducting outreach.

We needed to find a way to be as effective or even more effective serving our patients through our outreach efforts.

Because people are in their homes more we understand it could lead to an increase in HIV and STI transmissions.

Our patients still need safe sex information and resources.

Patients still need access to resources whether they are outreach resources or clinical resources.

Health disparities are being exacerbated in patients who have contracted COVID-19

The continued reduction of the number of new HIV/STI cases is still our monthly goal.

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## Lessons Learned

Outreach should always start with a comprehensive community assessment. We cannot assume we know the needs of the community.

Effective outreach is a collective effort between service providers and those reserving the services. If there is no connection between the community and providers it will be difficult to help the community we are targeting.

The needs of the patients we serve within our target populations will vary so we must use a client centred approach.

Community Based Organizations, Health Departments, State Agencies, Community Members, etc must work as a unit and have the patients best interest in mind when providing outreach within their communities.

We are here to empower our patients through information, resources, access to care, access to support groups and showing empathy.

Building rapport with the communities we serve leads to successful outreach efforts in terms of how many clients are served, the quality of care the clients receive, the ease in the access to care and, how many clients remain in care.

The Rapport we build with the communities we serve helps us to find areas within our community that may be forgotten or underserved.

A consistent presence within our targeted communities will lead to an increase in education which leads to a decrease in new HIV/STI infections.

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## Lessons Learned

Properly funded agencies equipped with the proper personnel and resources can help reduce new HIV/STI infections.

Being complacent, egotistical and working within a silo as an agency can lead to an increase in HIV/STI cases and distrust within the community being served.

Linking patients to peer advocates that will help navigation through the process of being diagnosed with an HIV, accessing health care, taking medications and, remaining in care.

Our agency must be organized and working as a unit to put the patients in a position to take full responsibility for their health care.



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