



## From the Director Dr. Jonathan Mermin



The national opioid epidemic is driving increases in reported cases of HIV and hepatitis C, especially among persons who inject drugs (PWID). In October, Dr. Don Wright, Acting Assistant Secretary for Health; Dr. Jerome Adams, U.S. Surgeon General; a panel of other distinguished public health leaders and I [presented on the interconnected epidemics of opioid misuse, HIV, and viral hepatitis](#). We have the infrastructure and nationwide networks that can be used to improve access to treatment and recovery services,

improve surveillance, and support new research on opioids and infectious diseases. Federal and local governments, community organizations, businesses, clinical care providers, faith based organizations, and the education, justice, and housing sectors all need to work together to produce an integrated, effective strategy against this crisis. I look forward to working with a broad group of stakeholders to produce comprehensive, patient-centered, public health programs that address opioid abuse and advance the practice of pain management programs. Together we can prevent infections, reduce drug use, save lives, and save money.

## Hepatitis National Progress Report

On October 27, CDC published [Progress Toward Viral Hepatitis Elimination in the United States](#). This report highlights recent challenges and progress made in reducing the burden of hepatitis A, B, and C virus infections and highlights the strategies for improving prevention of transmission and mortality. The report reflects progress toward accomplishing the activities outlined in the [2017-2020 HHS National Viral Hepatitis Action Plan](#) and the [Division of Viral Hepatitis Strategic Plan, 2016-2020](#). It provides information to monitor goals released in March 2017 by the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in [A National Strategy for the Elimination of Hepatitis B and C](#). This year's Progress Report provides measures of the Nation's success in meeting these goals using data from 2015, the most recent data available.

## HIV Infection, Risk, Prevention, and Testing Behaviors among Persons Who Inject Drugs

Last month, CDC published "[HIV Infection, Risk, Prevention, and Testing Behaviors among Persons Who Inject Drugs](#)." The report summarizes findings from the 2015 National HIV Behavioral Surveillance's data collection cycle among persons who inject drugs (PWID). Of the 10,485 PWID who participated, 7% were living with HIV. Approximately 1 in 3 PWID reported using a syringe that had been used by someone else; 41% gave someone a syringe after they used it; and 18% reported always disposing of their used syringes safely. Fifty-two percent of participants reported receiving syringes from syringe services programs (SSPs) during the past 12 months. However, the percentage of HIV-negative PWID who received syringes from SSPs varied greatly by city, ranging from 2% to 90%. The data from this report can help guide public health strategies that focus on preventing HIV among PWID. SSPs and other strategies that reduce HIV infections and syringe sharing among PWID can be a valuable component of a comprehensive prevention approach for PWID and their partners.

## New from CDC

[Advancing PrEP in Practice: Practical Strategies for Everyday Challenges](#)

[2016 School Health Profiles](#)

[2017 School Health Index: Self-Assessment & Planning Guide](#)

[STD Program Evaluation Tools & Trainings](#)

## Upcoming Events

December 1 – [World AIDS Day](#)

January 27 – [Call for Papers: Monitoring Disparities in Prevention and Treatment of HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STDs and TB](#)

April – [2018 Freezer Challenge](#)

## On the Web

[2018 STD Prevention Conference - Call for Abstracts](#)

