



## **Highlights of Hawaii HIV/AIDS Epidemiology, 2017 and beyond Trends, Progress, and 2023 HIV Care Continuum**

### **Prepared for:**

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### **Acknowledgements**

HIV Surveillance Programs  
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HIV Case Management Programs

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The national Ending the HIV Epidemic initiative set the overarching goal of a 90% reduction in new HIV infections in the United States by 2030.<sup>1</sup> The following indicators are used to monitor progress in achieving the national goals: 1) increase the percentage of people with diagnosed HIV who are linked to HIV medical care within one month of HIV diagnosis to at least 95% by 2025 and remain at 95% by 2030; and 2) increase the percentage of persons living with diagnosed HIV who are virally suppressed to at least 95% by 2025 and remain at 95% by 2030.<sup>1</sup> To align with national goals, Hawaii published its local plan: Hawaii to Zero in 2021, which sets the following bold objectives for 2030: zero new infections, zero deaths from HIV illness, and zero HIV related stigma.<sup>2</sup>

In lieu of a full integrated epidemiological profile, this year's report presents key updates on select HIV care indicators, along with the 2023 HIV care continuum at both the state and county levels. Below are highlights from the analysis with details in the following pages:

1. **Percentages of viral suppression** increased significantly from 73.3% in 2017 to 82.3% in 2023, higher than the national average of 67.2%<sup>3</sup> and surpassing the national 2020 target of 80%<sup>4</sup>, but still below the national 2030 goal of at least 95%.
2. **Disparities were observed in viral suppression in 2023** with the following demographic groups not achieving the national 2020 benchmark of 80% in 2023: Blacks/African Americans (70.2%), persons 13-24 years old (56.3%), persons 25-34 years old (73.9%), males with HIV due to injection drug use (73.6%), persons with HIV due to perinatal transmission (58.3%), and persons whose HIV risk factors were not reported or identified (70.5%).
3. **HIV diagnosis:** after the largest drop in 2020, the total number of HIV diagnoses increased to 70 in 2021 and further increased to 87 in 2024. However, data for 2024 is preliminary and possibly incomplete because it is based on a 6-month reporting delay.
4. **Percentages of linkage to care** varied from year to year, e.g., 75.7% in 2021 and 81.9% in 2022, and 78.1% in 2023, not yet reaching the national 2030 target of at least 95%.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ending the HIV Epidemic. Accessed on October 8, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/ehe/php/about/goals.html>

<sup>2</sup> Hawaii to Zero: the Plan to End HIV in Hawaii. Accessed on October 8, 2024, and available at <https://health.hawaii.gov/harmreduction/files/2022/12/Hawaii-to-Zero-Plan-10.10.22.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data—United States and 6 territories and freely associated states, 2023. Published April 29, 2025. Accessed on October 8, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv-data/nhss/national-hiv-prevention-and-care-objectives-2025.html>

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention strategic plan 2017-2020. Accessed on October 9, 2025, and available at <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/48591>

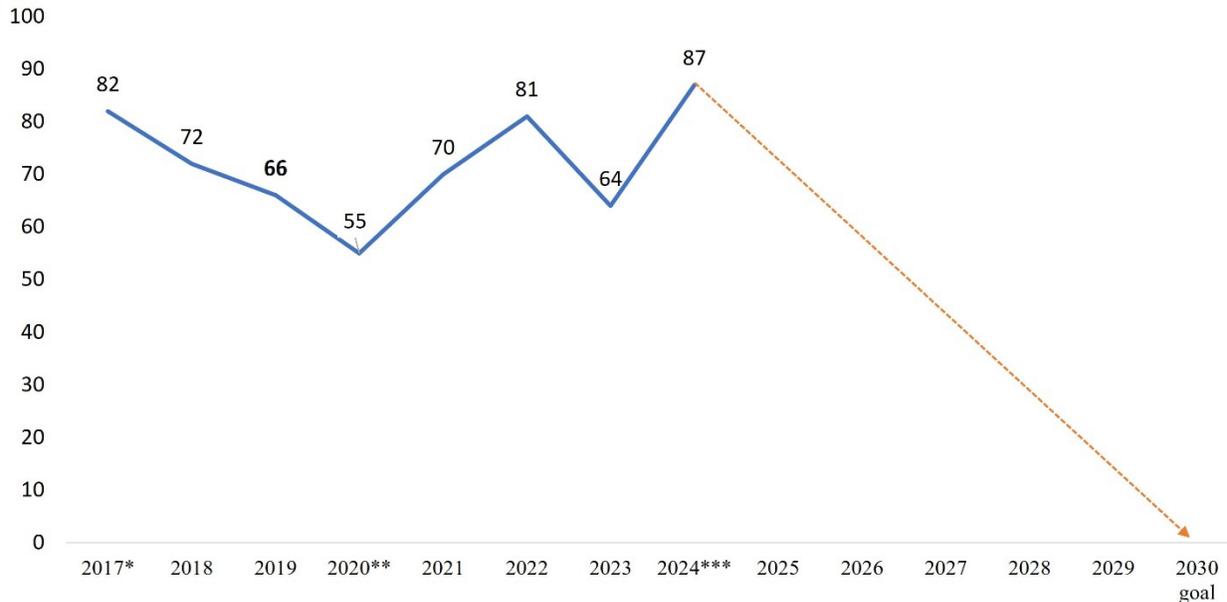
## The overall trend of HIV diagnosis

The total number of HIV diagnoses decreased from 82 in 2017 to 66 in 2019, equivalent to a 19.5% reduction. In 2020, the number of HIV diagnoses dropped to just 55, the lowest number since reporting of HIV diagnoses began in 2008, likely influenced by the COVID 19 pandemic. In 2021, the total number increased to 70 and further increased to 81 in 2022, followed by a decrease to 64 in 2023. In 2024, the total number of HIV diagnoses increased to 87. The increase in the number of HIV diagnoses post-pandemic may be due to the identification and reporting of HIV diagnoses missed in 2020 because of disruptions in clinical care services and patient hesitancy in accessing clinical services during the height of the pandemic.<sup>1</sup> The decrease observed in 2023 may be partly attributable to a malfunction in the Electronic Laboratory Reporting (ELR) system at one of Hawaii’s major healthcare facilities.

Note that only persons whose residence was in Hawaii at the time of HIV diagnosis were included in these counts. Data for 2024 is preliminary and possibly incomplete because it is based on a 6-month reporting delay, instead of the standard 12-month reporting delay. In addition, the total number of new diagnoses each year are subject to change due to reporting delays, ongoing national deduplication work, and ongoing data cleaning.

### HIV diagnosis by year among Hawaii residents

(Count)



\* 2017 serves as the baseline year.

\*\* Due to COVID-19 pandemic, data for 2020 should be interpreted with caution.

\*\*\* Data for 2024 is preliminary because it is based on a 6-month reporting delay.

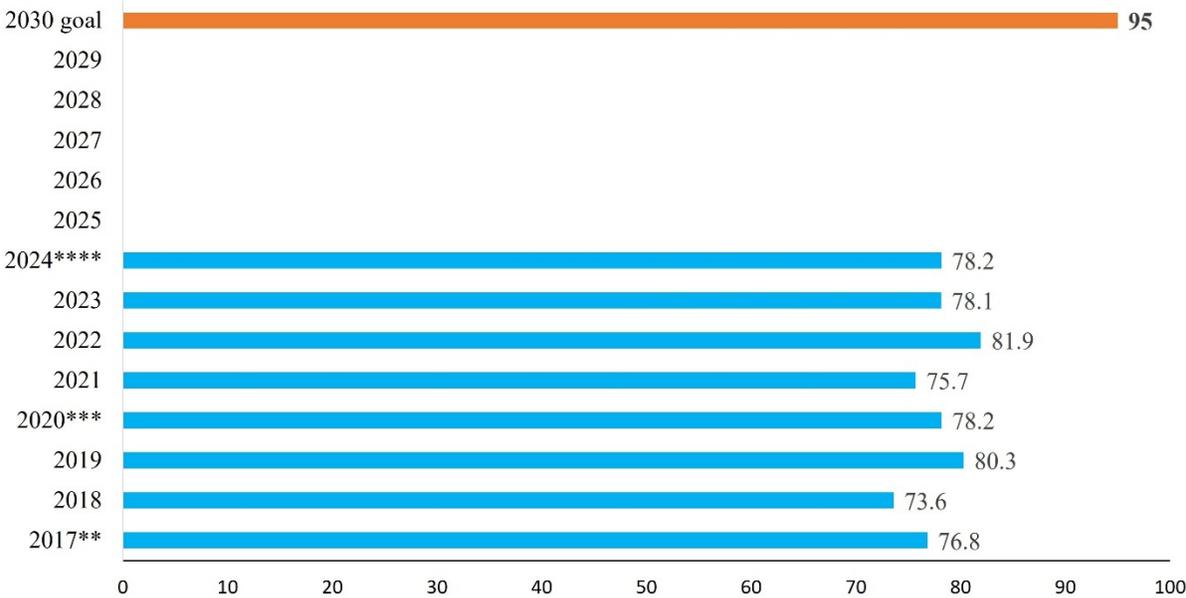
<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HIV Diagnoses, Deaths, and Prevalence. Published April 29, 2025. Accessed on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv-data/nhss/hiv-diagnoses-deaths-and-prevalence-2025.html>

**Linkage to HIV medical care within one month of HIV diagnosis**

Linkage to HIV medical care within one month of HIV diagnosis is defined as documentation of at least one CD4 or viral load test performed within one month after HIV diagnosis, including tests performed on the same date as the date of HIV diagnosis.<sup>1</sup> Only data for persons ≥13 years and residing in Hawaii at the time of HIV diagnosis were included in the analysis.

Percentages of persons linked to HIV medical care within one month of HIV diagnosis varied from year to year in Hawaii. The percentage in 2023 was 78.1% and in 2024, 78.2%, far below the national 2030 target of at least 95%. However, data for 2024 is preliminary and possibly incomplete because it is based on a 6-month reporting delay, instead of the standard 12-month reporting delay. As a state with a relatively small number of new cases each year, a few persons not linked to care can easily skew the percentage. Efforts should continue to quickly engage newly diagnosed people into HIV medical care to keep them healthy, achieve viral suppression, and limit the spread of HIV.<sup>2</sup>

**Percentage of linkage to HIV medical care within one month of HIV diagnosis, Hawaii \***



\* Linkage to HIV medical care is defined as documentation of at least one CD4 or viral load test within one month of HIV diagnosis. The Hawaii to Zero goal is to increase the percentage of people linked to HIV medical care within one month of HIV diagnosis to at least 95% by 2030, which aligns with the national 2030 goal.  
 \*\* 2017 serves as the baseline year.  
 \*\*\* Due to COVID-19 pandemic, data for 2020 should be interpreted with caution.  
 \*\*\*\* Data for 2024 is preliminary because it is based on a 6-month reporting delay.

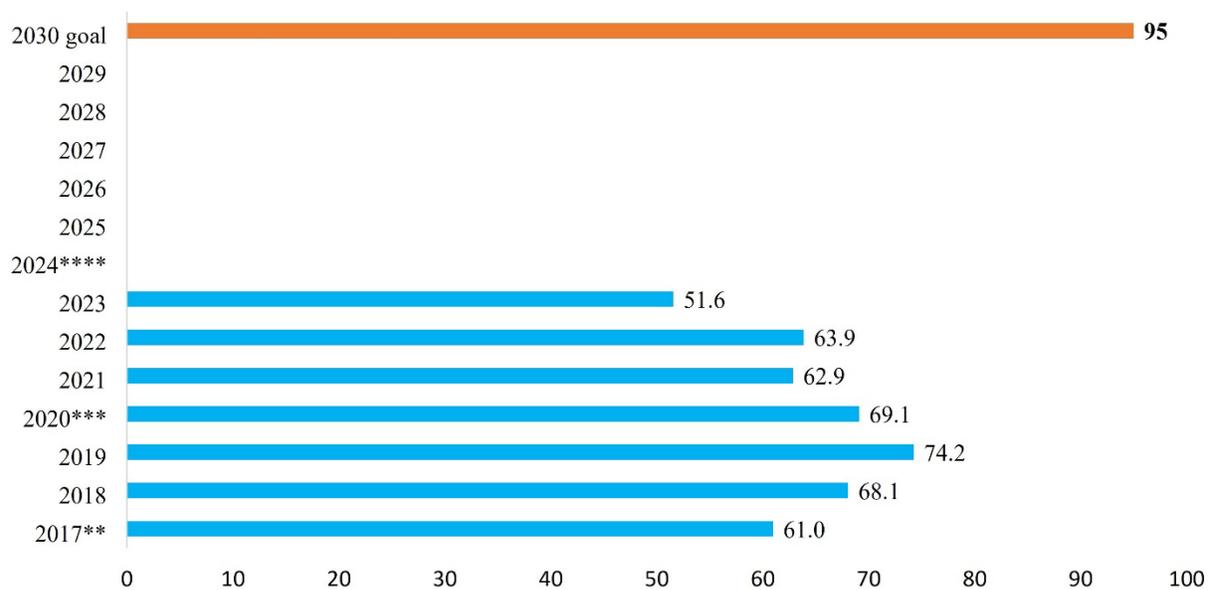
<sup>1</sup> CDC. Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data—United States and 6 dependent areas, 2023. Published April 29, 2025. Accessed on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv-data/nhss/national-hiv-prevention-and-care-objectives-2025.html>  
<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ending the HIV Epidemic. Accessed on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/ehe/php/about/goals.html>

## Viral suppression within 6 months of diagnosis

Viral suppression within 6 months of diagnosis is defined as a viral load result of < 200 copies/mL on any viral load test within 6 months of an HIV diagnosis.<sup>1</sup> Only data from persons ≥13 years and residing in Hawaii at the time of HIV diagnosis were included in the analysis.

Percentages of viral suppression ≤6 months of HIV diagnosis varied from year to year in Hawaii. In 2023, the percentage was 51.6%, lower than the national average of 68.7%<sup>1</sup> and well below the national 2030 target of at least 95%.<sup>2</sup> Data for 2024 is not reported because it is based on a 6-month reporting delay, instead of the standard 12-month reporting delay. This data will be presented with the 2026 update when data is more complete. Exact reasons for low rates of viral suppression within 6 months of diagnosis are unclear, however Hawaii's shortage of primary care and specialty medical providers may contribute. Efforts should continue to support people newly diagnosed with HIV to quickly initiate HIV treatment. Achieving viral suppression rapidly maintains the individual's health and prevents transmission of HIV.<sup>1</sup>

Percentage of viral suppression ≤ 6 months of HIV diagnosis \*



\* Viral suppression ≤6 months of HIV diagnosis is defined as a viral load result of <200 copies/mL at any viral load test within 6 months of an HIV diagnosis. The Hawaii to Zero goal is to increase the percentage of people achieving a suppressed viral load ≤6 months of HIV diagnosis to at least 95% by 2030, which aligns with the national 2030 goal.

\*\* 2017 serves as the baseline year.

\*\*\* Due to COVID-19 pandemic, data for 2020-2022 should be interpreted with caution.

\*\*\*\* Data for 2024 is not reported because it is based on a 6-month reporting delay.

<sup>1</sup> CDC. Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data—United States and 6 dependent areas, 2022. HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report 2024;29(2). Accessed on November 7, 2024, and available at <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/156511>

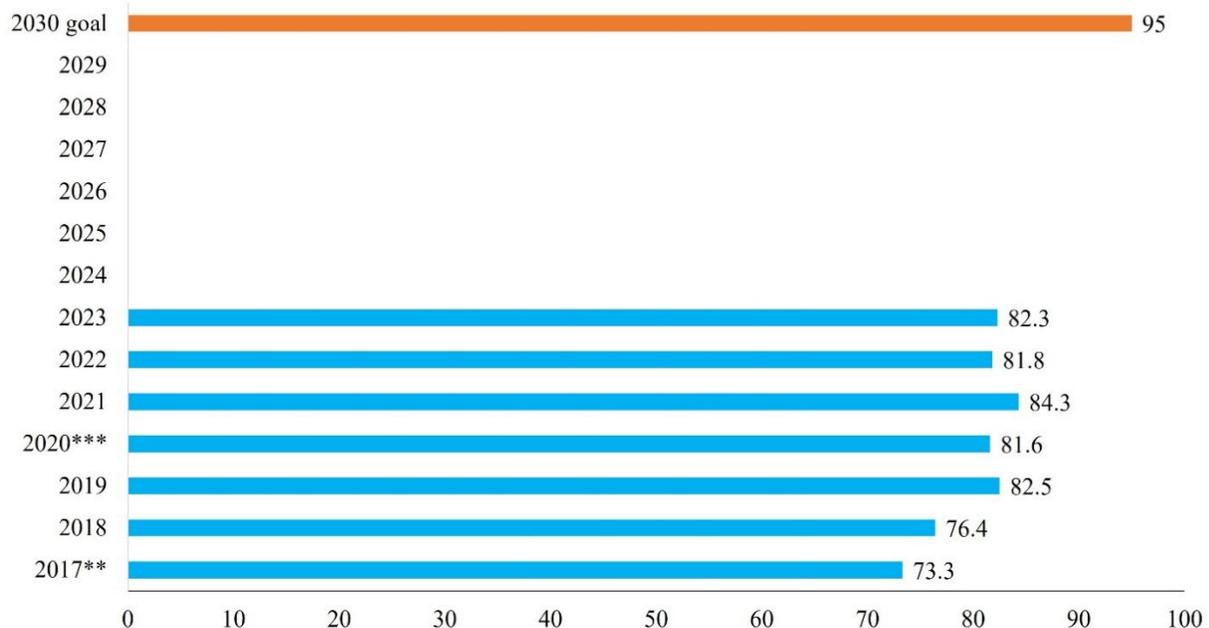
<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ending the HIV Epidemic. Accessed on October 15, 2024, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/ehe/php/about/goals.html>

## Overall viral suppression

Overall viral suppression in the population is expressed as the percentage of people who are virally suppressed (defined as a viral load result of < 200 copies/mL at the most recent viral load test in the year of measurement) among people who are at least 13 years old, with HIV infection diagnosed prior to the measurement year, and residing in Hawaii at the end of the measurement year. Increasing the percentage of people living with diagnosed HIV infection who are virally suppressed to at least 95% by 2030 is a goal set by the nation<sup>1</sup> and Hawaii to Zero.<sup>2</sup>

Statewide, the percentage of viral suppression increased significantly from 73.3% in 2017 to 82.3% in 2023 ( $P<.001$ ), much higher than the national average of 67.2%<sup>3</sup> but still far from the 2030 goal of at least 95%.

### Percentage of viral suppression by year, Hawaii \*



\* Viral suppression is defined as a viral load result of < 200 copies/mL at the most recent viral load test in the year of measurement. The Hawaii to Zero goal is to **increase** the percentage of viral suppression to **at least 95%** by 2030, which aligns with the national 2030 goal.

\*\* 2017 serves as the baseline year.

\*\*\* Due to COVID-19 pandemic, data for 2020 should be interpreted with caution.

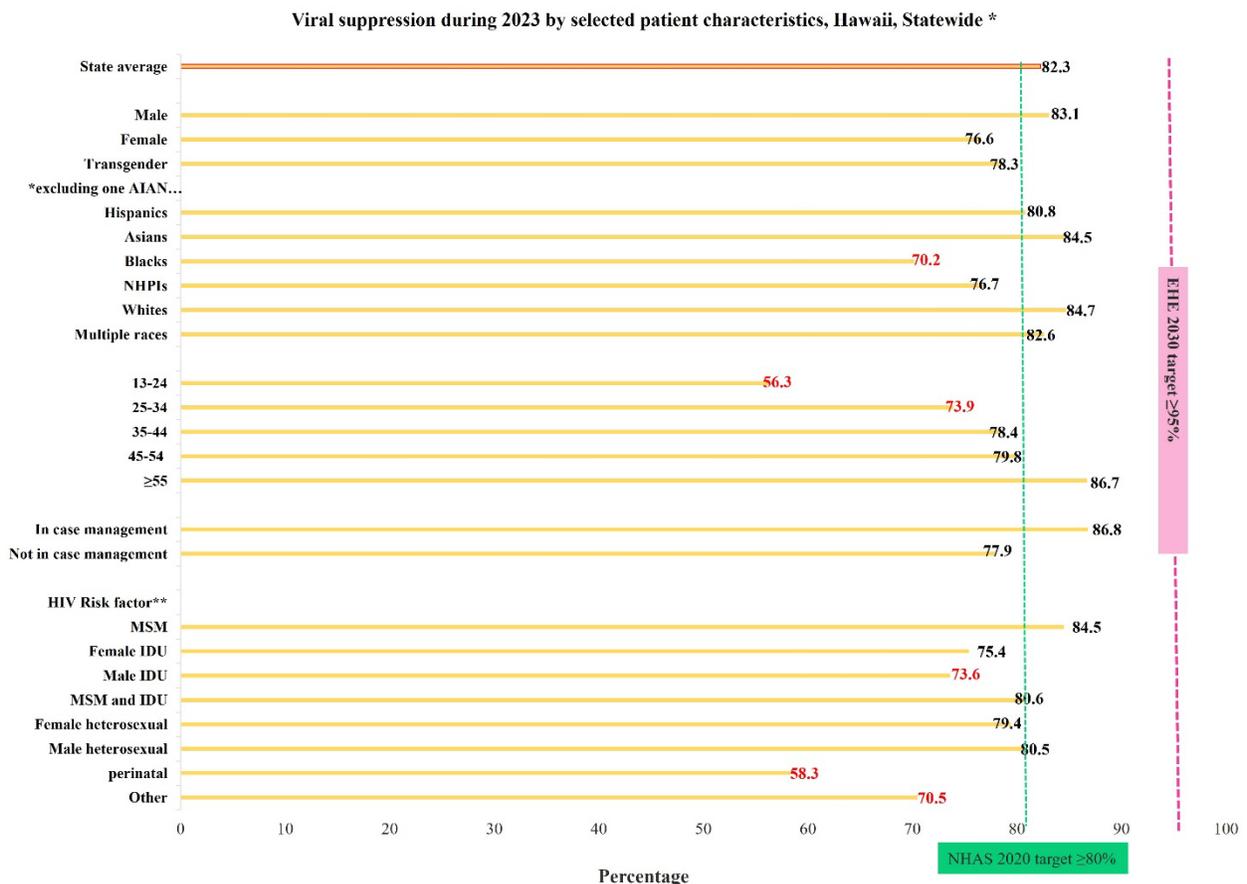
<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Ending the HIV Epidemic. Accessed on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/ehe/php/about/goals.html>

<sup>2</sup> Hawaii to Zero: the Plan to End HIV in Hawaii. Accessed on October 9, 2025, and available at <https://health.hawaii.gov/harmreduction/files/2022/12/Hawaii-to-Zero-Plan-10.10.22.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data—United States and 6 dependent areas, 2023. Published April 29, 2025. Accessed on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv-data/nhss/national-hiv-prevention-and-care-objectives-2025.html>

## Disparities in viral suppression

Statewide, Hawaii is doing very well in achieving overall viral suppression among people living with diagnosed HIV, with a percentage of 82.3% in 2023, much higher than the national average of 67.2%<sup>1</sup> and surpassing the national 2020 benchmark of 80%.<sup>2</sup> However, disparities were observed, with the following demographic groups not achieving the national 2020 benchmark of 80% in 2023 : Blacks/African Americans (70.2%), persons 13-24 years old (56.3%), persons 25-34 years old (73.9%), males with HIV due to injection drug use (73.6%), persons with HIV due to perinatal transmission (58.3%), and persons whose HIV risk factors were not reported or identified (70.5%).



\* Viral suppression is defined as a viral load result of < 200 copies/mL at the most recent viral load test in the year of measurement. It is based on persons who reside in Hawaii in the year measurement, who are ≤13 years old and with HIV diagnosed prior to the year of measurement. The Hawaii to Zero goal is to **increase** the percentage of viral suppression to **at least 95%** by 2030, which aligns with the national 2030 goal. EHE: Ending the HIV Epidemic; NHAS: National HIV/AIDS Strategy.

\*\* MSM: male-to-male sexual contact; IDU: injection drug use; Heterosexual contact: referring to heterosexual contact with a person known to have, or with a risk factor for, HIV infection; Other: referring to all other risk factors (e.g., blood transfusion, hemophilia) or risk factor not reported or not identified.

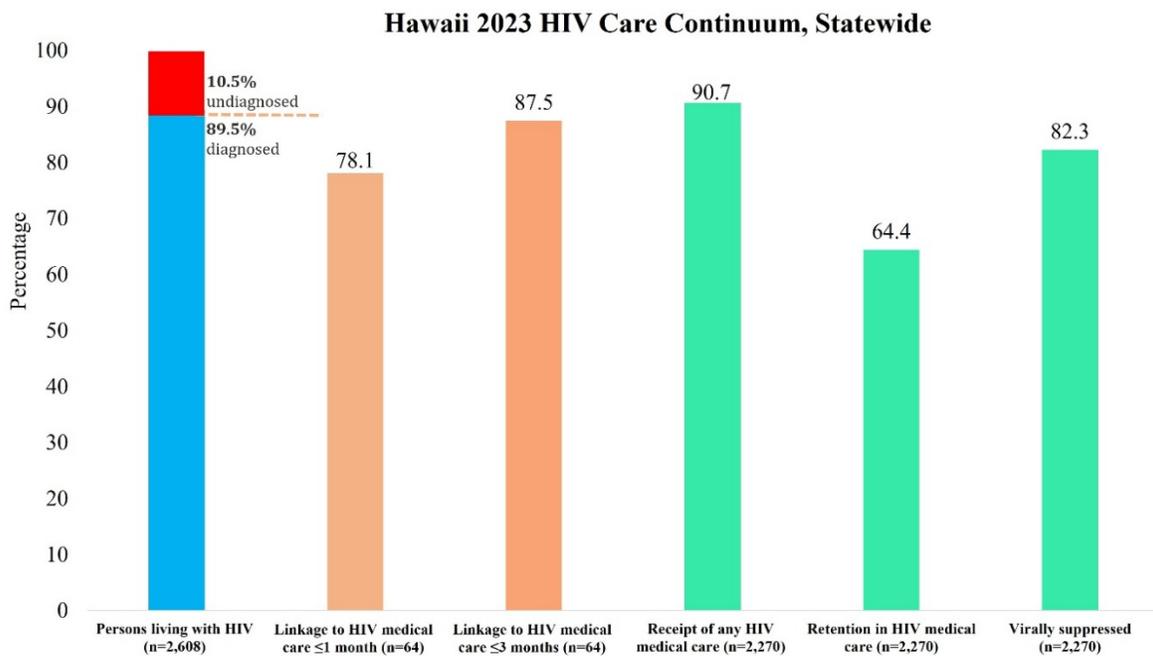
<sup>1</sup> Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data—United States and 6 dependent areas, 2023. Published April 29, 2025. Accessed on October 8, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv-data/nhss/national-hiv-prevention-and-care-objectives-2025.html>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention strategic plan 2017-2020. Accessed on October 9, 2025, and available at <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/48591>

## Hawaii 2023 HIV Care Continuum, Statewide

HIV care continuum is a public health model which outlines the steps people living with HIV go through from diagnosis to achieving viral suppression.<sup>1</sup> It presents data on six HIV care indicators based on three different populations as delineated in the following figure. Definitions for the six indicators and how each of those indicators is measured can be found in CDC’s “Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data — United States and six dependent areas, 2023”.<sup>1</sup>

Definitions for each indicator are also described in the footnotes to each of the HIV care continuum figures below. The data have been stratified by county to create an HIV care continuum for each county.



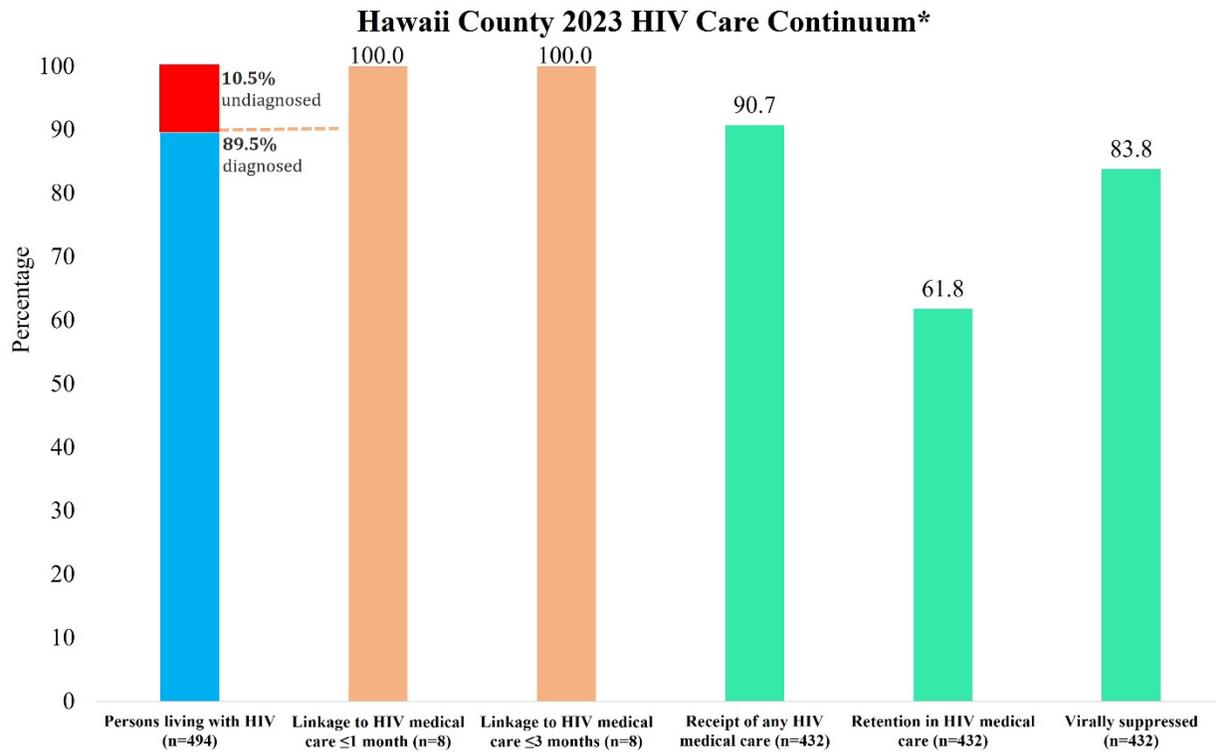
\* HIV care continuum is a public health model which outlines the steps people with HIV go through from diagnosis to achieving viral suppression. HIV care continuum presents data on a total of 6 HIV care indicators from three different populations as delineated in the following.

\*\* The first bar in blue, refers to the estimated number of persons living with HIV and the percentage of persons living with undiagnosed or diagnosed HIV. CDC estimated that in 2022 in Hawaii, the percentage of people living with undiagnosed HIV infection was 10.5%, about 1 in 9, slightly below the national average at 12.8%. Based on this percentage, we estimated there were a total of 2,608 persons living with HIV in Hawaii in 2023, of whom 2,334 (89.5%) were living with diagnosed HIV and another 274 (10.5%) were living with undiagnosed HIV.

\*\*\* The second and third bars in orange refer to linkage to HIV medical care among persons newly diagnosed with HIV. Linkage to HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test results within 1 month or 3 months of HIV diagnosis. In 2023, a total of 64 persons were diagnosed with HIV infection in Hawaii, of whom 78.1% were linked to HIV medical care within one month and 87.5% within three months of HIV diagnosis.

\*\*\*\* The last three bars in green refer to receipt of HIV medical care, retention in HIV medical care and viral suppression among persons with HIV diagnosed before 2023, aged 13 years or older before 2023 and resided in Hawaii at year-end 2023. Receipt of any HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test in the year of measurement. Retention of HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 2$  CD4 or viral load tests performed at least 3 months apart in the year of measurement. Viral suppression is defined as the latest viral load test in the year of measurement with a result of  $< 200$  copies/ml. In 2023, a total of 2,270 persons were included in Hawaii, of whom 90.7% received any HIV medical care, 64.4% were retained in HIV medical care, and 82.3% were virally suppressed.

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data—United States and 6 territories and freely associated states, 2023. Published April 29, 2025. Accessed on October 8, 2025, and available at <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv-data/nhss/national-hiv-prevention-and-care-objectives-2025.html>



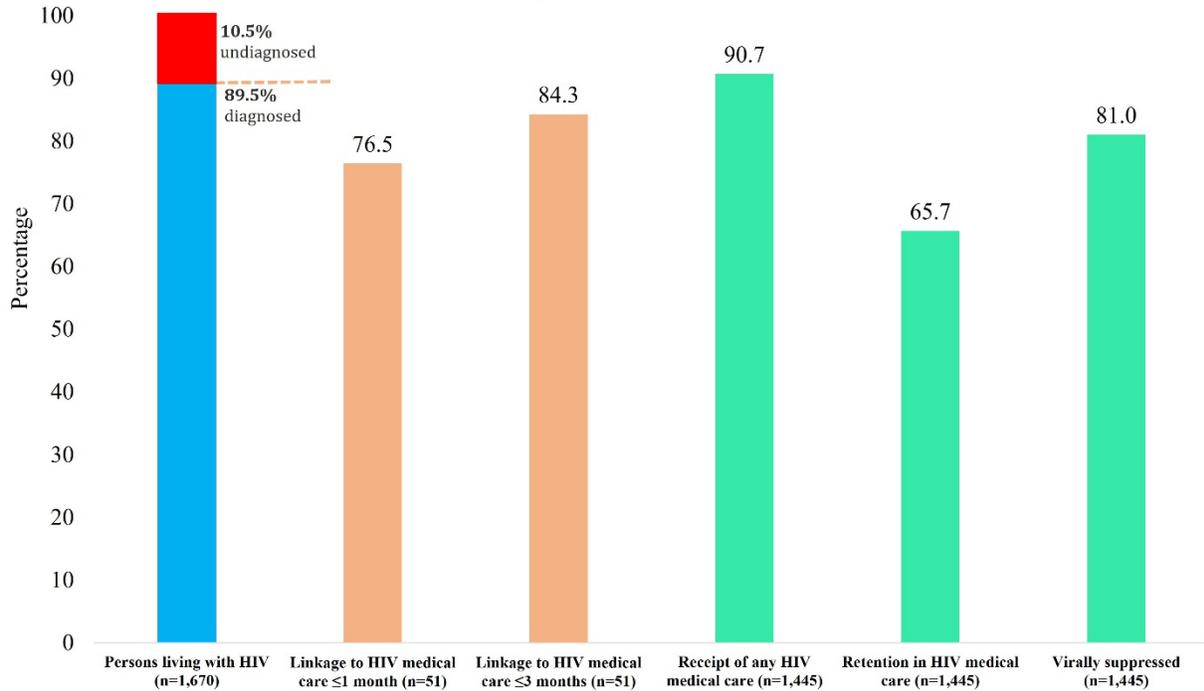
\* HIV care continuum is a public health model which outlines the steps people with HIV go through from diagnosis to achieving viral suppression. HIV care continuum presents data on a total of 6 HIV care indicators from three different populations as delineated in the following.

\*\* The first bar in blue, refers to the estimated number of persons living with HIV and the percentage of persons living with undiagnosed or diagnosed HIV. CDC estimated that in 2022 in Hawaii, the percentage of people living with undiagnosed HIV infection was 10.5%, about 1 in 9, slightly below the national average at 12.8%. Based on this percentage, we estimated there were a total of 494 persons living with HIV in Hawaii County in 2023, of whom 442 (89.5%) were living with diagnosed HIV and 52 (10.5%) were living with undiagnosed HIV.

\*\*\* The second and third bars in orange refer to linkage to HIV medical care among persons newly diagnosed with HIV. Linkage to HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test results within 1 month or 3 months of HIV diagnosis.<sup>3</sup> In 2023, a total of 8 persons were diagnosed with HIV infection in Hawaii County, of whom 100% were linked to HIV medical care within one month and within three months of HIV diagnosis.

\*\*\*\* The last three bars in green refer to receipt of HIV medical care, retention in HIV medical care and viral suppression among persons with HIV diagnosed before 2023, aged 13 years or older before 2023 and resided in Hawaii County at year-end 2023. Receipt of any HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test in the year of measurement. Retention of HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 2$  CD4 or viral load tests performed at least 3 months apart in the year of measurement. Viral suppression is defined as the latest viral load test in the year of measurement with a result of  $< 200$  copies/ml. In 2023, a total of 432 persons were included in Hawaii County, of whom 90.7% received any HIV medical care, 61.8% were retained in HIV medical care, and 83.8% were virally suppressed.

### Honolulu County 2023 HIV Care Continuum\*



\* HIV care continuum is a public health model which outlines the steps people with HIV go through from diagnosis to achieving viral suppression. HIV care continuum presents data on a total of 6 HIV care indicators from three different populations as delineated in the following.

\*\* The first bar in blue, refers to the estimated number of persons living with HIV and the percentage of persons living with undiagnosed or diagnosed HIV. CDC estimated that in 2022 in Hawaii, the percentage of people living with undiagnosed HIV infection was 10.5%, about 1 in 9, slightly below the national average at 12.8%. Based on this percentage, we estimated there were a total of 1,670 persons living with HIV in Honolulu County in 2023, of whom 1,495 (89.5%) were living with diagnosed HIV and 175 (10.5%) were living with undiagnosed HIV.

\*\*\* The second and third bars in orange refer to linkage to HIV medical care among persons newly diagnosed with HIV. Linkage to HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test results within 1 month or 3 months of HIV diagnosis. In 2023, a total of 51 persons were diagnosed with HIV infection in Honolulu County, of whom 76.5% were linked to HIV medical care within one month and 84.3% within three months of HIV diagnosis.

\*\*\*\* The last three bars in green refer to receipt of HIV medical care, retention in HIV medical care and viral suppression among persons with HIV diagnosed before 2023, aged 13 years or older before 2023 and resided in Honolulu County at year-end 2023. Receipt of any HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test in the year of measurement. Retention of HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 2$  CD4 or viral load tests performed at least 3 months apart in the year of measurement. Viral suppression is defined as the latest viral load test in the year of measurement with a result of  $< 200$  copies/ml. In 2023, a total of 1,445 persons were included in Honolulu County, of whom 90.7% received any HIV medical care, 65.7% were retained in HIV medical care, and 81.0% were virally suppressed.

### Kauai County 2023 HIV Care Continuum\*



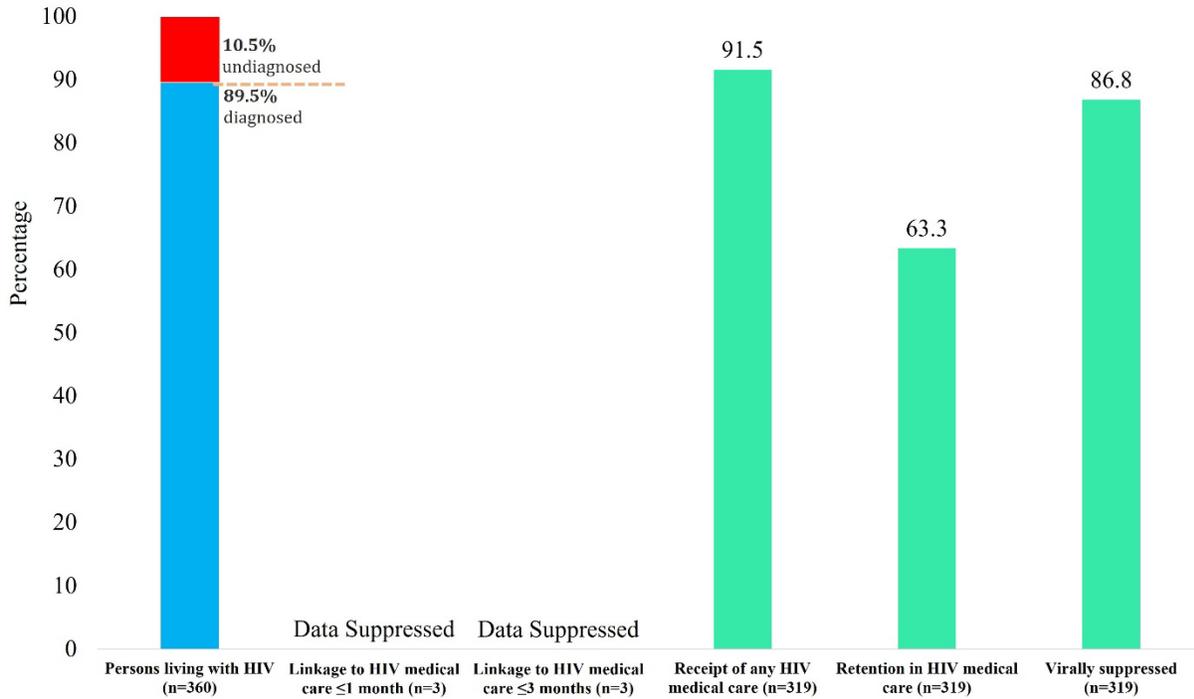
\* HIV care continuum is a public health model which outlines the steps people with HIV go through from diagnosis to achieving viral suppression. HIV care continuum presents data on a total of 6 HIV care indicators from three different populations as delineated in the following.

\*\* The first bar in blue, refers to the estimated number of persons living with HIV and the percentage of persons living with undiagnosed or diagnosed HIV. CDC estimated that in 2022 in Hawaii, the percentage of people living with undiagnosed HIV infection was 10.5%, about 1 in 9, slightly below the national average at 12.8%. Based on this percentage, we estimated there were a total of 84 persons living with HIV in Kauai County in 2023, of whom 75 (89.5%) were living with diagnosed HIV and 9 (10.5%) were living with undiagnosed HIV.

\*\*\* The second and third bars in orange refer to linkage to HIV medical care among persons newly diagnosed with HIV. Linkage to HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test results within 1 month or 3 months of HIV diagnosis.<sup>3</sup> In 2023, a total of two persons were diagnosed with HIV infection in Kauai County. Data on linkage to HIV medical care were suppressed because the total number of persons diagnosed with HIV is less than five.

\*\*\*\* The last three bars in green refer to receipt of HIV medical care, retention in HIV medical care and viral suppression among persons with HIV diagnosed before 2023, aged 13 years or older before 2023 and resided in Hawaii County at year-end 2023. Receipt of any HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test in the year of measurement. Retention of HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 2$  CD4 or viral load tests performed at least 3 months apart in the year of measurement. Viral suppression is defined as the latest viral load test in the year of measurement with a result of  $< 200$  copies/ml. In 2023, a total of 74 persons were included in Hawaii County, of whom 85.1% received any HIV medical care, 60.8% were retained in HIV medical care, and 78.4% were virally suppressed.

### Maui County 2023 HIV Care Continuum\*



\* HIV care continuum is a public health model which outlines the steps people with HIV go through from diagnosis to achieving viral suppression. HIV care continuum presents data on a total of 6 HIV care indicators from three different populations as delineated in the following.

\*\* The first bar in blue, refers to the estimated number of persons living with HIV and the percentage of persons living with undiagnosed or diagnosed HIV. CDC estimated that in 2022 in Hawaii, the percentage of people living with undiagnosed HIV infection was 10.5%, about 1 in 9, slightly below the national average at 12.8%. Based on this percentage, we estimated there were a total of 360 persons living with HIV in Maui County in 2023, of whom 322 (89.5%) were living with diagnosed HIV and 38 (10.5%) were living with undiagnosed HIV.

\*\*\* The second and third bars in orange refer to linkage to HIV medical care among persons newly diagnosed with HIV. Linkage to HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test results within 1 month or 3 months of HIV diagnosis. In 2023, a total of 3 persons were diagnosed with HIV infection in Maui County. Data for linkage to HIV medical care were suppressed because the total number of persons diagnosed with HIV was less than 5.

\*\*\*\* The last three bars in green refer to receipt of HIV medical care, retention in HIV medical care and viral suppression among persons with HIV diagnosed before 2023, aged 13 years or older before 2023 and resided in Maui County at year-end 2023. Receipt of any HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 1$  CD4 or viral load test in the year of measurement. Retention of HIV medical care is defined as documentation of  $\geq 2$  CD4 or viral load tests performed at least 3 months apart in the year of measurement. Viral suppression is defined as the latest viral load test in the year of measurement with a result of  $< 200$  copies/ml. In 2023, a total of 319 persons were included in Maui County, of whom 91.5% received any HIV medical care, 63.3% were retained in HIV medical care, and 86.8% were virally suppressed.