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Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS Report

Across The Nation | Iowa Health Department Reports Decreasing Number of Newly Recorded HIV Cases, AIDS-Related Deaths [Jan 23, 2009]

The Iowa Department of Public Health recently reported that 10 fewer HIV cases were newly recorded in the first half of 2008 than in the same period in 2007, the Associated Press reports (Associated Press, 1/20). In addition, the number of Iowans dying from AIDS-related causes is decreasing, the AP/Sioux City Journal reports. According to the AP/Journal, 49 new HIV cases were reported in the first half of 2008 -- the latest reporting period -- and 59 were reported during the same period in 2007. A total of 127 newly recorded cases occurred in 2007, an increase from the two previous years. Health department estimates show that an additional 566 people are unknowingly living with HIV in the state.

Randy Mayer, a public health spokesperson, said there is a decline in the number of AIDS-related deaths in Iowa, with 32 in 2008 compared with 102 in 1995. Mayer said that improved medications are helping people with HIV/AIDS live longer and that the virus is beginning to be viewed as "more of a chronic disease." He added, "With good treatment and early diagnosis, we wouldn't expect [HIV/AIDS] to significantly change your life expectancy."

According to the health department, 1,567 Iowans were living with HIV/AIDS in 2008. Mayer said that unprotected sex is the primary mode of transmission and that most people living with AIDS are men (AP/Sioux City Journal, 1/20).

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