Most Inmates Linked to HIV Care in Jail Drop Out Upon Release

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Only 38 percent of those linked to HIV care while in jail maintain steady checkups after release, according to a Yale University School of Medicine study reported by MedPage Today. Frederick Altice, MD, announced his preliminary findings, which have not yet been subject to peer review, at the IDWeek 2012 meeting in San Diego.

Altice and his colleagues studied 867 prisoners in 10 urban areas, following them for six months after their release from jail. Defining care retention as two quarterly clinic visits that included either a CD4 count or viral load test, the Yale team found that just 38 percent of those studied met this vital benchmark. Meanwhile, 34 percent had no visits throughout the six-month period; 19 percent had one visit in the first quarter; and 8 percent made just the second quarterly appointment. The study also found that those who had seen an HIV provider before entering jail were 67 percent more likely to remain in care; the care retention rate for women was half that of men; heroin users were 49 percent more likely to remain in care; and an HIV education session after release doubled retention rates, as did education on HIV management during imprisonment.

To read the MedPage Today article, click here.

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