



Support for Rural Communities

They face unique challenges in accessing HIV care.

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If you live in a rural area, getting HIV care can feel like an uphill battle. This might mean driving long distances, not having many doctors or clinics to choose from or struggling to get to appointments. You might also worry about what others will think or say.

All of this can make it hard to get tested or to access the HIV prevention or treatment services that you need. But remember, you're not alone.

Here are tips for accessing HIV services in rural areas:

Get tested: You can search for testing options near you using the HIV.gov HIV Services Locator. You can also request a free HIV self-test from Together TakeMeHome, a program supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that mails self-tests to help make HIV testing more accessible across the United States.

Explore telehealth options: Ask whether your provider or an HIV clinic in your region or state offers virtual appointments for HIV care or PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis).

Find a provider who meets your needs: The HIV.gov HIV Services Locator can also help you connect with care providers and support services—even in surrounding counties or nearby cities. You can also check with your local health department.

Stay engaged in care: Consider setting reminders for appointments or enrolling in programs that offer care coordination or navigation services so you have someone you can reach out to with questions between appointments.

There are also related federal programs:

- The Indian Health Service offers HIV care and prevention for Indigenous communities, including those in rural regions, making sure care fits cultural needs.
- The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program helps people living with HIV, including those in rural areas, access medical care, medications and essential support services by working with clinics, providers and community programs.
- The Health Center Program supports local health centers all over the country. Many of these centers are located in rural areas. Health centers offer HIV testing, and many also provide prevention and treatment services.
- The CDC supports health departments and community- based organizations that provide HIV testing and prevention services, including in rural and high-need communities.