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## Understanding the Epidemic of HIV/AIDS in New York City at Street Level.

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**Background:** In New York City (NYC), epicenter of the US HIV/AIDS epidemic, statistics show that 36.7% of cases are late diagnoses, defined as receiving an AIDS diagnosis within one year of an initial positive HIV/AIDS test. . Without knowledge of their infection, people may transmit HIV. HIV is the third leading cause of death for persons below age 65 in NYC. In a joint effort with community members, including people living with HIV/AIDS the Prevention Planning Group (PPG) will have the opportunity to educate themselves on state-of-the-art prevention/intervention programming. This will occur during the April 2008 PPG meeting in NYC.

**Methods:** The PPG membership will attend programs at agencies scattered through the neighborhoods most affected. For example, the criminal justice committee will join staff at Osborne, a 77 year-old association serving newly released inmates while the substance use committee will go to St Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction. Data on late diagnoses by gender, race and transmission risk will be provided along with epidemiologic materials.

**Results/Outcomes:** A map of New York City has been marked with the agency and neighborhood locations. Combined with the data, variation is evident. For example, late diagnoses account for 31.7% of all HIV initial diagnoses in Hunts Point as compared to 21.6% in Fordham.

**Conclusion:** The PPG membership, through such site visits, is assured of input from and personal experience of the diverse communities. To bring about timely testing and early diagnoses, the PPG must understand the dynamics in neighborhoods most impacted by HIV/AIDS.