
This news release was sent out statewide to the media this afternoon. All of our news releases are available on the Indiana State Department of Health website at: www.statehealth.in.gov.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HIV CAMPAIGN EXPANDED TO REACH TRAVELERS AND TRUCK DRIVERS

INDIANAPOLIS—The HIV public awareness campaign, You Are Not Alone, is now being expanded to include messages aimed at reaching travelers and truck drivers along Interstate-65 between Louisville and Indianapolis. The messages encourage drivers to know their HIV status and to protect themselves by avoiding risky sexual behavior.

“While we know the majority of cases in the current HIV outbreak have been spread through intravenous drug use, we also know that HIV can easily be spread through sexual contact,” said State Health Commissioner Jerome Adams, M.D., M.P.H. “We have evidence that over-the-road truck drivers are particularly susceptible to HIV-infected persons. When you factor in that Interstate-65 passes right through the epicenter of the current outbreak, the risk is even greater. We are concerned about the health and safety of all travelers, including truck drivers, as well as the spread of HIV. Our hope is to continue to raise awareness about HIV prevention through these targeted messages.”

State health officials are reporting that 145 individuals have now tested positive for HIV in southeastern Indiana (143 confirmed/2 preliminary). Health officials are cautiously optimistic that the outbreak could be slowing down since the rate of new cases reported has recently been less than in weeks' past, but say it's too soon to tell.

The You Are Not Alone campaign, which focuses on knowing one's HIV status, getting tested, avoiding drugs/sharing drug paraphernalia, getting HIV treatment and practicing safe sex, is already running on radio, TV, online digital, social media and in some print publications. These messages include the phone numbers for the HIV Service Hotline and the National Addiction Hotline. The Indiana State Department of Health has invested approximately \$300,000 in reducing the spread of HIV through the You Are Not Alone campaign, which started in March and is currently set to run through June.

The new arm of the campaign encourages travelers and truck drivers to get tested for HIV, limit their number of sex partners, avoid hiring commercial sex workers, and practice safe sex by using condoms. It includes posters, door decals, flyers and digital Wi-Fi messages in areas where truck drivers spend time, such as in the restrooms, shower areas, and restaurants within southeastern Indiana travel plazas. The messages include the HIV Services Hotline.

State health officials are working to get the new messages placed with the support of the Indiana Motor Truck Association, the American Trucking Association, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and Hiron & Company, who created the radio and TV portion of the campaign. On April 22, Dr. Adams sent a letter to the owners of the 15

travel plazas along Interstate-65 between Louisville and Indianapolis asking them to support the Indiana State Department of Health and Governor Pence in ending the outbreak of HIV in Indiana by placing messaging where truck drivers will see it.

“INDOT is already using their electronic message signs to promote the HIV testing hotline and is planning to place signage at the rest stops near Henryville and Taylorsville,” said Dr. Adams. “We are grateful for their support and that of so many others. This truly has been and continues to be an all-hand-on-deck response.”

According to INDOT, Interstate-65 stretches from Mobile, Ala., to the Chicago area and is one of the Crossroads of America’s heaviest truck routes. In the rural areas between Indianapolis and Louisville, trucks make up a quarter of the traffic at last count.

Other response measures continue in Scott County, including the One-Stop Shop and needle exchange program, both at the Austin Community Outreach Center. The Scott County needle exchange program has now distributed 7,912 syringes and approximately 7,106 syringes have been brought in by program participants and community members. The One-Stop Shop Info Line is (317) 605-1480.

Visit the Indiana State Department of Health at www.StateHealth.in.gov. Follow the Indiana State Department of Health on Twitter at [@StateHealthIN](https://twitter.com/StateHealthIN) and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/isdh1. Use the hashtag #INstopHIV to follow the outbreak response on Twitter.

Hoosiers who do not have health care coverage or access to a doctor are encouraged to check availability for the new Healthy Indiana Plan—HIP 2.0—by visiting www.HIP.IN.gov or calling 1-877-GET-HIP-9.

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