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National HIV Behavioral Surveillance System—among Transgender Women (NHBS-Trans) 2021-23872

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General Comment

Nearly 1 in every 250 adults or, almost 1 million Americans identify as transgendered. Non-cis-gendered adults are disproportionately marginalized in the US and experience unemployment, homelessness, and poverty at higher rates than their cis-gendered peers. Non-gender conforming adults are 8 times more likely to experience homelessness, unemployment, and poverty than their cisgender peers, and 71% of this group experience homelessness as adults.

Transgender persons are often rejected by their families and displaced from their homes in their teens. They are frequently not engaged in necessary mental health and medical care due to barriers arising from both their gender minority status and the barriers associated with homelessness. The stigma of being transgender increases the risks of unemployment, suicide (by 53%), and homelessness. Unfortunately, a disproportionate number of this population turn to prostitution and sex trade or survival where HIV rates are high.

Funding a study focused on the transgendered female population will eventually fund policies that will increase the protection of transgendered women and the larger population in general. Educational outreach and the reduced threat of stigma have been shown to improve outcomes with marginalized communities. The results in this study will help in the reduction of HIV spread among transgendered women and reduce healthcare costs among a larger public. More studies like these are needed to provide supportive services and promote better health, both mental and physical, for transgendered people.