

DC Searches for Solutions to Slow the HIV Epidemic

Washington DC, July 2012

Washington DC is trying some new methods to help fight the AID epidemic. DC has long had one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the United States, but there is hope that these new technique might chance that fact.

Safety Goal Impacted
 DC has one of the highest rates of HIV infections in US

The focus of DC's fight against HIV is treatment, which seems to be the key to controlling the HIV infection rate. While researchers are still searching for a cure, simply treating people infected with HIV has the potential to dramatically slow down the epidemic. HIV positive patients who consistently take their drugs lower their chances of infecting others by 96% because the amount of virus in their bloodstream is significantly lower.

The first step in treating infected people is to identify who is infected. Testing is also important because the earlier patients can be identified; the more effective treatment is typically. Washington DC has increased testing efforts in order to identify the estimated 5,000 people who live in the DC area and are unaware that they are infected. People are now being paid to get tested and HIV tests are being offered in a number of new locations such as grocery stores, high schools, on corners where addicts gather, and at the DMV. There are also efforts to focus testing on the highest risk populations by paying for referrals and social network tracing.

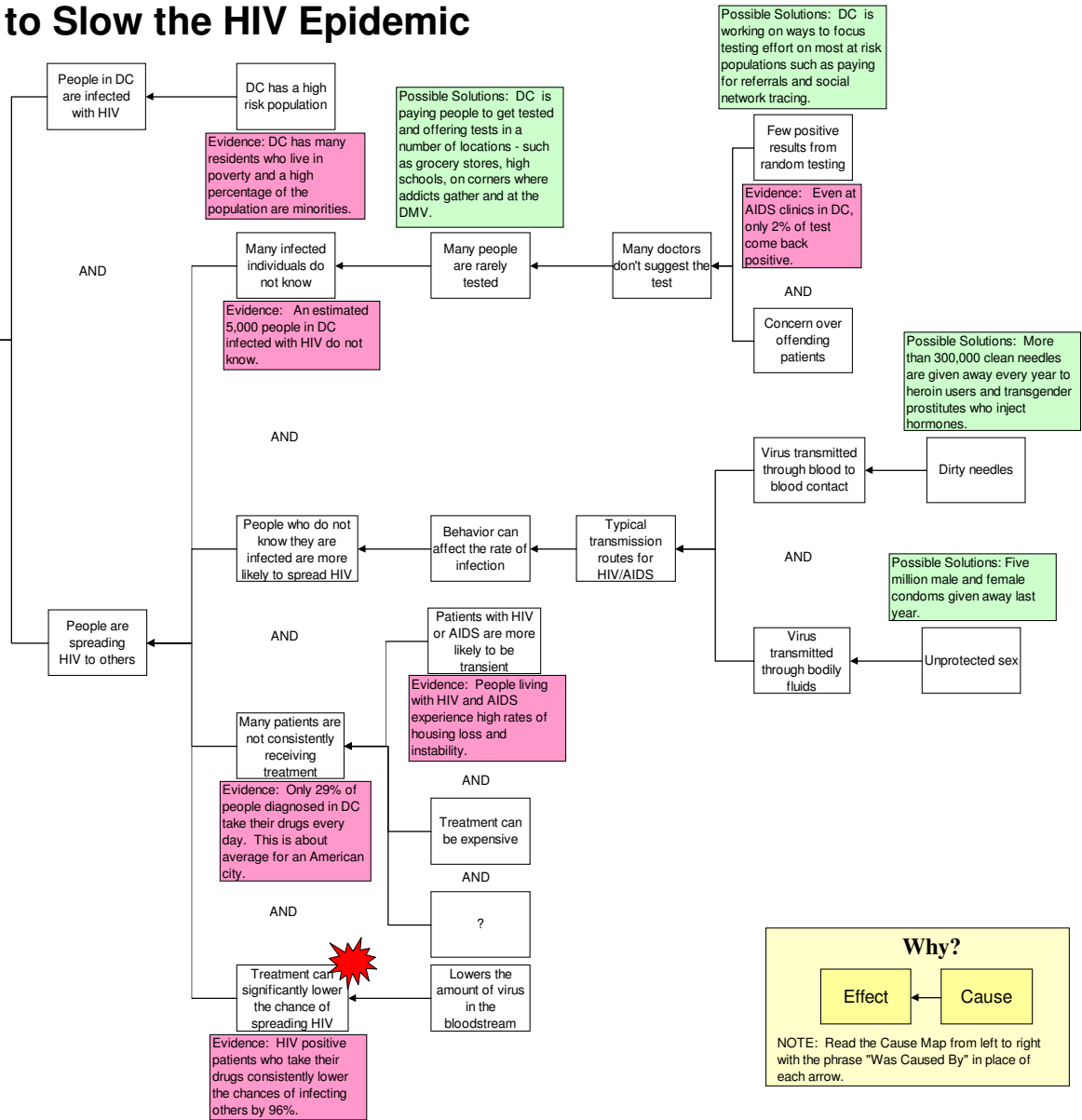
The next area of difficulty is getting patients consistent treatment. Only 29% of people diagnosed in DC take their drugs every day, which is about average for an American city. Washington DC is working to track HIV patients, who are typically more transient than the rest of the population and to help get treatment to as many people as possible.

These innovative new programs seem to be having a positive impact on the epidemic. New cases have fallen to 835 from 1,103 in 2006. The number of AIDS test administrated has greatly increased. Only time will tell how effective these solutions have been at slowing now the HIV epidemic in the nation's capital.

Cause Map High Level

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Why?

Effect ← Cause

NOTE: Read the Cause Map from left to right with the phrase "Was Caused By" in place of each arrow.