



## Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS Report

Wednesday, August 06, 2008

### Across The Nation

#### **'NewsHour with Jim Lehrer' Examines HIV/AIDS Cases in Black Communities, Highlights Washington, D.C.**

PBS' "[NewsHour with Jim Lehrer](#)" on Tuesday reported on the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Washington, D.C., area. The segment focuses on HIV cases among blacks in the district. About 12,000 of the 600,000 district residents are HIV-positive, 81% of whom are black, according to the NewsHour. Phill Wilson, CEO of the [Black AIDS Institute](#), said that the federal government needs to focus more on the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic and that more resources are needed to fight the epidemic among blacks in the district and nationwide.

Pierre Vigilance, director of the Washington, D.C., [Department of Health](#), said that many residents are not using advice on safer-sex practices. "What drives [HIV/AIDS], as far as we're concerned, is the multiplicity of behaviors that go on out there and people just really feeling they don't need to do the things that they know to do." Theo Hodge, an infectious disease specialist in the district, said he often has a difficult time convincing people to use condoms. Hodge said that he is seeing new HIV cases among blacks in all demographic groups -- including people under age 30, women men who have sex with men. According to "NewsHour," some community leaders, including Terry Hawkins of the [Greater Mount Calvary Holy Church](#), are working to educate young residents about safer-sex practices, including condom use.

Shannon Hader, director of the district's HIV/AIDS Administration, is calling on every physician in the city to offer voluntary HIV tests to their patients, "NewsHour" reports. "Part of the reason most people aren't getting tested is it's not being offered," Hader said, adding that studies in the district have shown that 75% of newly diagnosed HIV cases are among people who have visited a physician within the past 12 months. Sabrina Heard, a volunteer of the [Women's Collective](#) who is HIV-positive, encourages people to get tested in one of the group's mobile units. According to Heard, many people do not take HIV/AIDS as seriously as they should because they do not believe they are at high risk (Bowser, "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," PBS, 8/5).

■ A kaisernetwork.org webcast of a briefing at the [XVII International AIDS Conference](#) in Mexico City on HIV/AIDS among blacks in the U.S. is available [online](#).