

Georgia responds to five HIV molecular clusters



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CATEGORY: Partnership and Innovation

By creating a cluster detection and response team with priority counties and partnering with CDC, Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) was able to use dashboards and machine learning algorithms to help respond to HIV clusters detected in their community.



The “What”

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) HIV molecular cluster detection program identified five HIV molecular clusters primarily centered among Hispanic and Latinos that reported male-to-male sexual contact. These clusters involved at least eight counties and displayed continued growth despite high rates of viral suppression among cluster members, highlighting the need to strengthen public health activities aimed at enhancing HIV testing and linking individuals to care.

The “So What”

Georgia DPH and priority jurisdictions (Fulton, Cobb, Gwinnett and DeKalb Counties) implemented a cluster detection and response team, which meets monthly and collaborates on response activities. They also partnered with CDC to leverage informatics tools in responding to clusters, including dashboards and machine learning algorithms, which helped with natural language processing tools to expedite the way responses are conducted.

Recently, DPH partnered with two community-based organizations that serve Hispanic and Latino communities – Latino Linq and Latino Community Fund Georgia – to implement a bilingual-bicultural navigator program that helps individuals from Hispanic and Latino communities access sexual health services across Metro-Atlanta.



More stories are available at stories.cste.org

SUBMITTED APRIL 2023

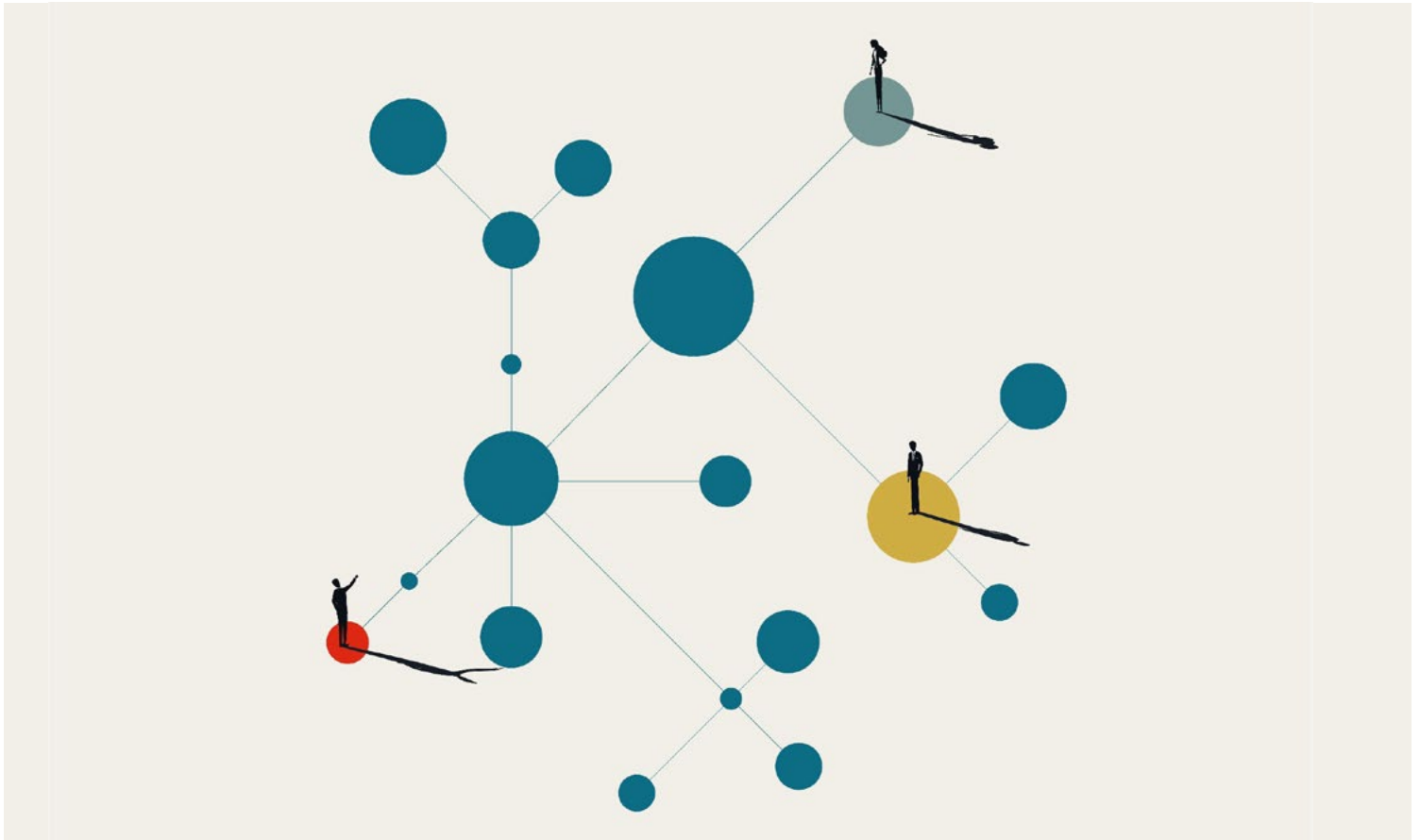
The “Now What”

DPH is working to establish a cross-jurisdictional cluster detection contact tracer and HIV linkage coordinator that collaborates with the state and local health departments interviewing and linking cluster members and their partners to needed medical and

social services. They will be developing community-informed cluster detection and response (CDR) best practices by partnering with ThriveSS, Latino Linq and Lady BurgAndy, community-based organizations serving minorities with or at risk of acquiring HIV.



For more information about this initiative visit: [cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7210a3.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7210a3.htm)



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Funding source: This work was supported in part by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cooperative agreement #NU38OT000297. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the CDC.