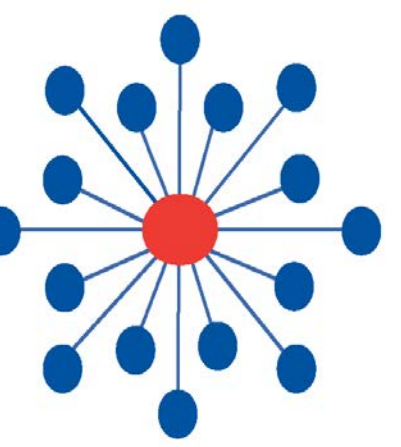
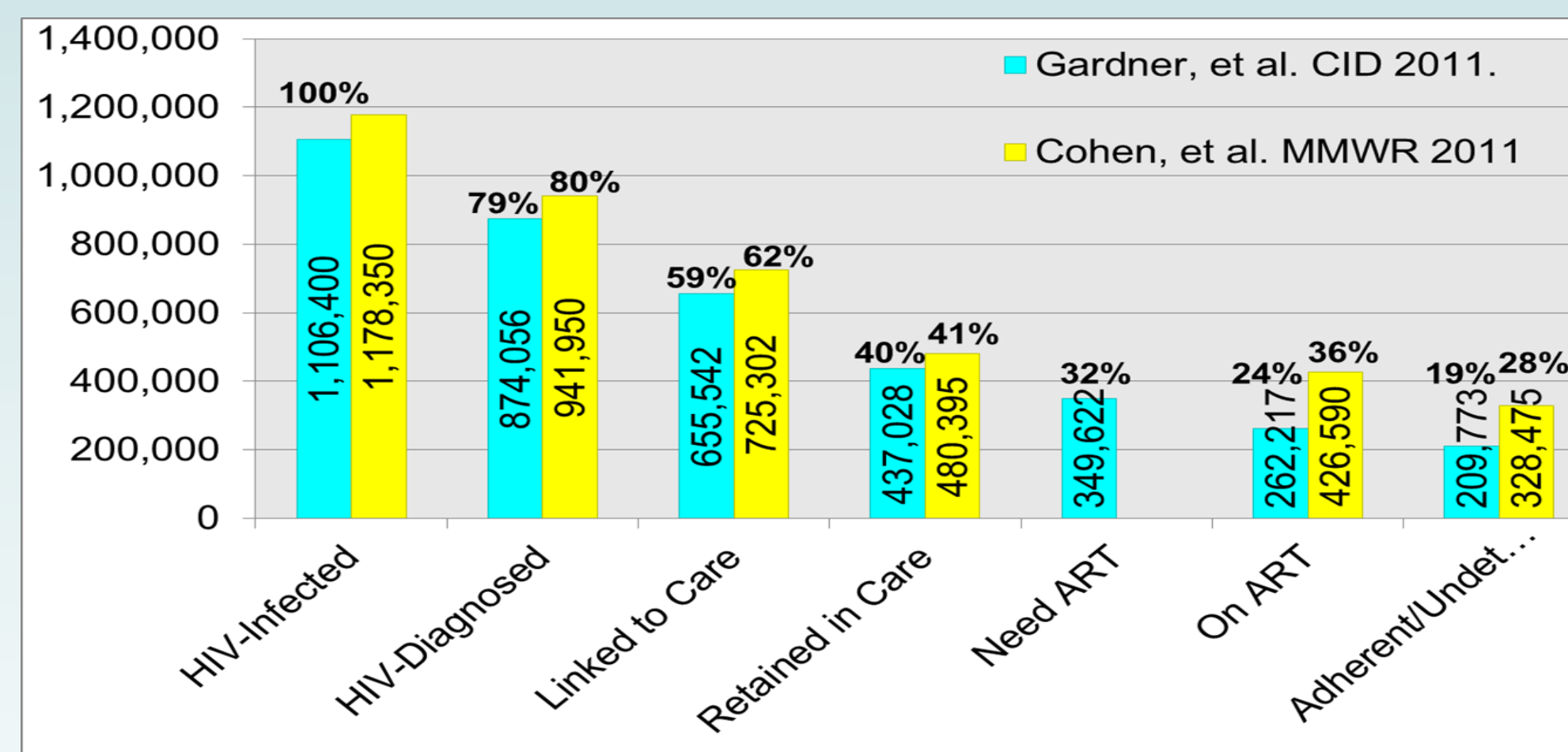




Background

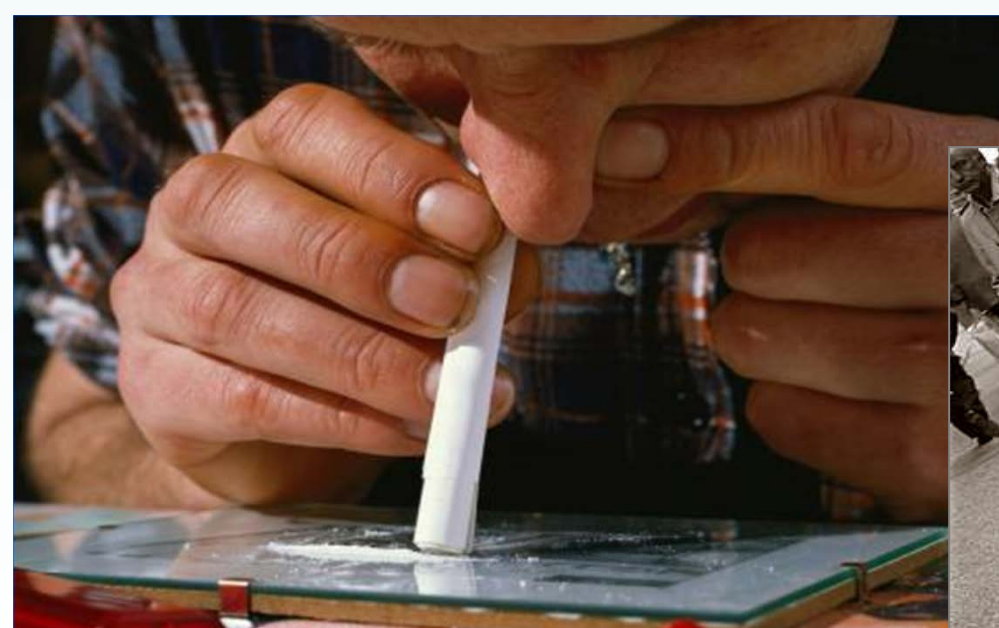
In the United States, approximately one-third of HIV-infected persons either delay seeking care or do not seek care until their disease has progressed to require acute treatment. These patients may cycle through emergency rooms and hospital inpatient wards. The majority of these individuals are from communities of color that traditionally have been medically underserved; many of them also are either active or former substance users. Beginning in 2012, Project HOPE, a multi-site randomized clinical trial designed to evaluate three strategies for linking and retaining HIV-infected substance users, recruited 801 participants from 11 hospital settings across the US. The baseline participant characteristics represent one of the largest cohorts, to date, of hospitalized, substance using, HIV-infected patients.

Major Gaps in the Treatment Cascade



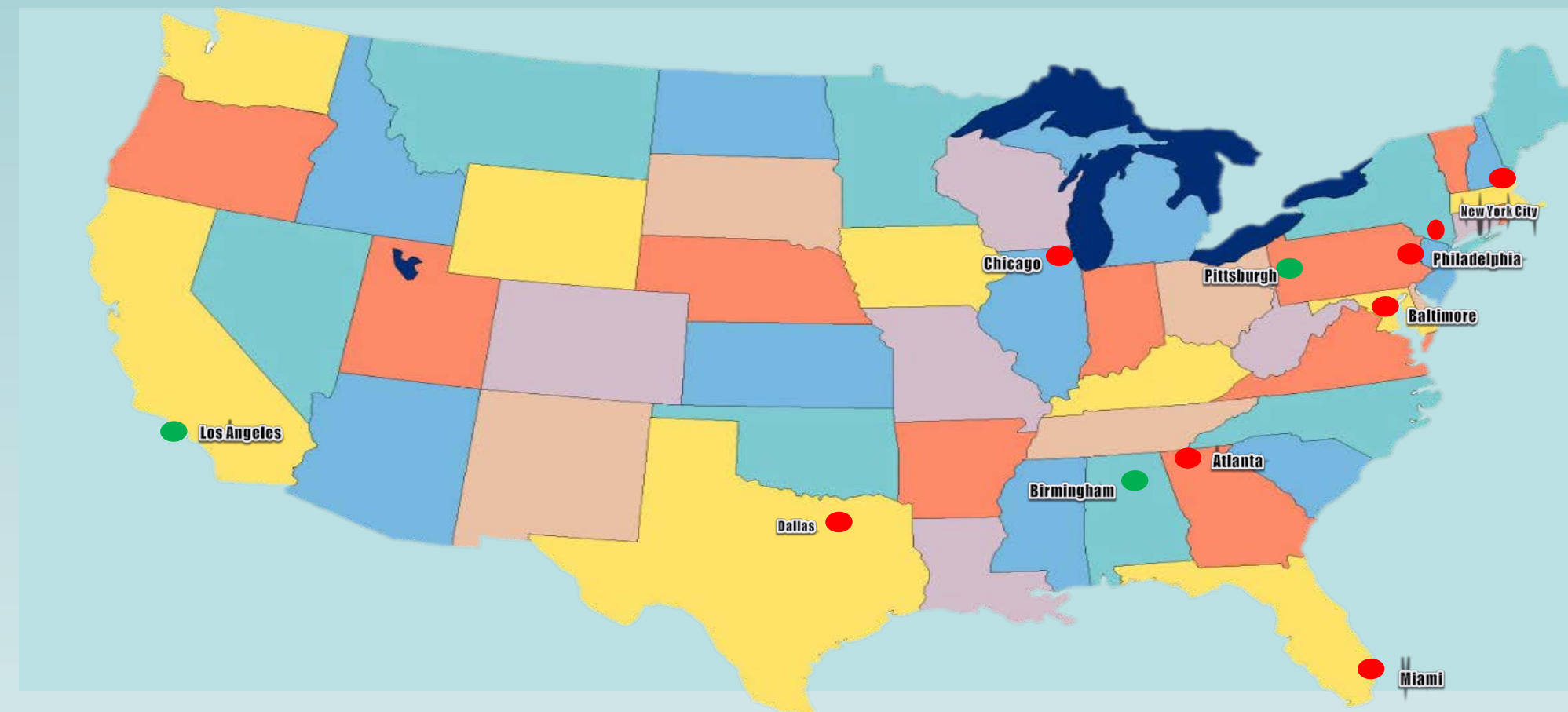
Contributing Factors

Drug Abuse, Homelessness and Mental Illness



HOPE Sites

Miami, Baltimore, Dallas, Atlanta, Birmingham, Pittsburg, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, New York City, Los Angeles



Study Rationale

Hospital setting is ideal to implement linkage to care interventions:

- Population includes substance users who often fail to follow-up with HIV primary care or substance abuse services
- Hospitalization may provide “teachable moment” when patients are more receptive to interventions
- Most inpatients are passively linked to HIV out patient care, substance abuse treatment and other preventive services

Inclusion Criteria

- Inpatient, HIV-infected adult
- Detectable viral load > 200
- CD4 < 350
- Opioid, stimulant or heavy alcohol use in last year
- English speaking

Baseline Alcohol and Drug Use

- 81% Any drug use in last 6 months
- 49% Alcohol problem on AUDIT
- 49% Marijuana use last 12 months
- 44% Crack Cocaine use last 12 months
- 29% Powder Cocaine use last 12 months
- 17% Heroin use last 12 months
- 68% Never injected

Other Baseline Characteristics

- 44 ± 10 Years of age
- 33% Female
- 74% ≤ High school education
- 75% Black, 11% Hispanic, 12% White
- 73% Income ≤ \$20K
- 32% Unstable housing
- 6% Married
- 67% Health insured
- 78% Ever jailed
- 20% Jailed in last 5 months
- Median HIV viral load 75308 copies
- Median years of known HIV Infection: 13
- 82% Ever in HIV care
- 56% Currently taking HIV medication
- 42% Depression

Conclusion

The baseline demographic data from Project Hope describe a marginalized population with multiple social and environmental problems. The recently published National HIV/AIDS Strategy 2020 emphasizes the challenge to address the nation’s “*stubbornly persistent—and in some cases, growing—HIV-related health disparities*”. The baseline data from Project Hope offer a comprehensive description of this difficult to reach and retain population.