

# Partner Services for Persons with HIV Infection

## What are HIV Partner Services (PS)?

HIV PS are *free, strictly confidential* services provided by specially trained state and local public health staff for:

- persons with HIV infection and
- sex and needle-sharing partners of persons with HIV infection.

Wisconsin law s. 252.12 requires the Department of Health Services (DHS) to offer PS to persons with HIV infection. The Wisconsin AIDS/HIV Program within DHS works with local health departments in providing PS.

## What services do PS staff provide?

Local health department staff meet privately with persons to discuss the benefits of PS and offer counseling, testing, and referral services. When providing these services, PS staff:

- assist persons with HIV infection in assessing their need for medical and other services.
- refer and link persons with HIV infection to medical care and other needed services.
- ask for identifying information about sex and needle-sharing partners.
- contact sex and needle-sharing partners about their possible exposure to HIV.
- offer HIV testing to partners and assist partners with HIV infection in linking to needed services.
- communicate with staff in the Wisconsin AIDS/HIV Program to ensure that PS services are documented and provided in a timely and high quality manner.

## How can partners be notified?

- PS staff can confidentially notify a partner without revealing the identity of the partner who has HIV infection.
- PS staff can coach persons on how to notify a partner and disclose their HIV status to the partner.
- PS staff can be present when a person notifies a partner that they may have been exposed to HIV.
- Medical providers can notify partners directly if the person with HIV infection so chooses.

## What are the benefits of PS?

### *For persons with HIV infection...*

- *Access to medical care and other services*

PS staff assist persons with HIV infection in linking to appropriate medical care, prevention services, and other needed services.

- *Prevention counseling*

PS staff provide basic prevention counseling and assistance in linking to more intensive counseling services.

- *Notifying partners*

If the person with HIV infection chooses, PS staff confidentially notify sex and needle-sharing partners of their possible exposure to HIV without disclosing the identity of the partner who has HIV infection.

### *For sex and needle-sharing partners of persons with HIV infection...*

- *HIV exposure notification*

PS staff confidentially inform sex and needle-sharing partners of their risk of HIV infection. PS staff discuss ways to avoid being infected with HIV and, for persons who are infected, ways to prevent passing HIV to others.

- *HIV testing services*

PS staff offer partners HIV testing at no cost and refer partners to HIV testing services in the community if a partner declines testing by PS staff.

- *Linking to care and prevention services*

PS staff assist partners in accessing services such as additional prevention counseling, reproductive health services, or substance abuse treatment.

## For additional information about HIV Partner Services in Wisconsin:

**Wisconsin AIDS/HIV Program,  
call the PS Coordinator at:  
608-266-3031**

**In Milwaukee, call PS staff at:  
414-286-5526**



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