A respondent must have a medical diagnosis of HIV infection that was laboratory confirmed at some time in the past and be currently living in Florida. This is not a verification process since the survey is anonymous. However, respondents are limited to people with HIV and so some method of asking the respondent about their HIV status should be integrated.

**Purpose**

- The primary focus of the needs assessment client survey is to determine met and unmet service needs in Florida for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). It is intended to be as generic as possible in order to meet the needs of everyone throughout the state.
- The survey is also intended to identify met and unmet service needs for those in care as well as those currently not in care.
- This survey should not be limited to only individuals currently served by the Ryan White CARE Act.

**Background**

- The Florida Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS (Now referred to as the HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis Section, HAHS) recognized the need for consistent reporting within the state and collaborated with the Institute for Health, Policy & Evaluation Research in 2004 to create a standardized data collection protocol and needs assessment survey for PLWHA.
- In 2005, the bureau piloted the standardized client needs survey in the spring.
- In 2007, a workgroup formed by bureau staff worked collaboratively with lead agency representatives to revise the needs survey, which was implemented throughout that same year.
- In 2009, the bureau, in conjunction with the Florida Comprehensive Planning Network’s Patient Care Planning Group’s (PCPG) Co-Chair David Brakebill, put together a Needs Assessment workgroup, comprised of cross section PCPG members: providers and consumers, representation of Part A, as well as geographic coverage.
- The survey and implementation guide was updated by the Needs Assessment workgroup again in 2013.

**Survey Tool**

- A standardized statewide survey tool has been distributed which has been reviewed and accepted by the PCPG Needs Assessment workgroup.
- Local areas may customize the standardized tool by:
  - Changing the formatting of the survey including adding logos, adding local contact information or adding introduction or closing text.
• Changing the order of questions
• Adding additional questions which are relevant to their local areas
• Areas may **not** change the standardize tool by:
  • Omitting standardized questions
  • Adding or removing answer choices
  • Rewording question language or answer choices
    (the exception to this is if you decide to include clarifying language defining terms or services which is in addition to the standardized language)
• Areas must let HAHS know in writing if it elects to re-order questions, add clarifying language, etc., and must include a final version of the re-formatted tool. Data collection and local implementation plans with further detail regarding survey administration methods must be submitted by the project manager to Stacey_Lynn@doh.state.fl.us.

**Sampling**

• Sampling methods that ensure representation of the communities of concern are critical for the results to be most meaningful.
• To generalize results, areas will need to achieve adequate response rates. For example, if the desired number of completed surveys is 30, areas should plan to distribute at least 65 surveys.
• To encourage participation, incentives may be offered upon return of the completed survey.
• While agencies receiving Ryan White Part B funding are required to survey 10% of the clients served, the sample sizes recommended by HAHS are significantly higher.
• Additionally, PLWHA who are not currently in care are also to be surveyed.
• Based on guidance from the Institute for Health, Policy & Evaluation Research, HAHS recommends each area survey 20% of PLWHA (based on 2011 Epi data). This sample size will increase the reliability of the data. It may be necessary to consider over sampling a specific sub-population to ensure appropriate representation of unique views and for analysis purposes.
### Recommended Sample Size by Gender and Race/Ethnicity
Based on 20% of 2011 PLWHA Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>White Males</th>
<th>Non-White Males</th>
<th>White Females</th>
<th>Non-White Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/13</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6/14</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>869</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>664</td>
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<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
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<td>675</td>
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<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<td>1292</td>
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<tr>
<td>11a</td>
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<td>3029</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td>9*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>86</td>
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</tr>
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<td>36</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Total</td>
<td>4696</td>
<td>8162</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>4839</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Interpretation of data based on less than 12 observations is generally unstable. Over sampling in these situations may be indicated.

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**Data Collection**

The needs assessment survey will be available as an electronic survey, as an electronic file, and on paper.

- Via the internet in English and Spanish
  - Individual surveys
    - English
      - Link: [SurveyMonkey Individual Entry_English version](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/IndividualEnglishSurvey)
    - Spanish
      - Link: [SurveyMonkey Individual Entry_Spanish version](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/IndividualSpanishSurvey)
    - Creole
      - Link: [SurveyMonkey Individual Entry_Creole version](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/IndividualCreoleSurvey)
  - Individual survey links may be distributed via email to any relevant listservs in your area and posted on any advertisement materials distributed. These links are intended for PLWHA to have the option to reply to the survey at their convenience through the internet.
• Paper surveys in English, Spanish and Creole
  o HAHS will provide printed copies of the standardized survey tool to each area if requested.
  o Requests for printed copies must be received by HAHS by March 8, 2013.
  o Requests should be sent directly to Stacey_Lynn@doh.state.fl.us and must include: name and mailing address of your agency, the name, phone number and email address of your local contact person, the number of copies in English, and the number of copies in Spanish.
  o HAHS expects that the paper copies of the survey will be distributed to the areas by the middle of March.
  o Electronic copies of the paper survey will be posted on the HAHS website in order to facilitate the formatting changes or additional questions completed by the areas. Areas will also be able to print the electronic surveys if they do not want to wait for HAHS to mail copies.

Data Entry

• All surveys must be entered into the electronic data collection tool.
• Each area is responsible for entering any surveys they receive on paper into the data collection tool.
• Data entry must be completed no later than May 10, 2013.
  o Data entry of multiple survey responses
    - English
      ▪ Link: SurveyMonkey Data Entry_English version
      ▪ Web address: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DataEntryEnglishSurveys
    - Spanish
      ▪ Link: SurveyMonkey Data Entry_Spanish version
      ▪ Web address: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DataEntrySpanishSurveys
    - Creole
      ▪ Link: SurveyMonkey Data Entry_Creole version
      ▪ Web address: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DataEntryCreoleSurveys

Methodology

Regardless of which format(s) of the survey tool an area utilizes, the following steps should be followed in order to increase reliability of the survey findings.
• Designate a project manager to be responsible for overseeing the needs assessment process, recruiting participants, and providing guidance to others involved in the process.
• Use the table entitled “Recommended Sample Size by Race and Gender Based on 2011 Epi Data” to determine the sample size (number of clients)
your area should recruit to achieve the state’s overall response rate.

• Develop a standardized process to administer the survey.
  o Determine eligibility criteria for participants.
  o Determine target populations.
  o Determine which methods you will use for data collection (internet only, paper only, etc.)
  o Develop a process for contacting the population.
    ➢ Face-to-face
      ▪ Will you recruit in your clinic? Will you recruit at public events?
      ▪ Use language from a standardized script to approach each potential respondent.
        □ Example – “We are conducting an anonymous Statewide Needs Assessment survey. This is your chance to tell us about your need for services. Have you completed a Needs Assessment survey in the last year?” If the client says no, say, “You can complete the survey on-line, or on paper. It takes about 15 minutes to complete. Would you like to complete the survey on-line (give them the URL above for entering individual surveys) or take a paper copy?”
    ▪ Have a plan for on site survey collection via paper and/or the internet. This process should maintain confidentiality and privacy.
    ▪ Staff recruiting participants should not fill out the survey for them. This is especially true if the person recruiting participants is involved in the individual’s care such as a case manager or clinician.
    ▪ In the case where a participant is not able to read, or not able to read at the level of the survey, the survey may be administered orally, but this should 1) ensure that confidentiality is maintained and, 2) that the person administering the survey is not involved in any aspect of the individual’s care.
  ➢ Mass mailings
  ➢ Please see details below in the section titled Paper Surveys for additional details about how to ensure proper distribution.
    o Regardless of the method of distribution, you need to thank respondents for helping with this effort and provide contact information for your area’s project manager in case they have any questions.

• Write down all procedures to be used at your site for the implementation of the statewide needs assessment survey.

• A copy of these written plans should be sent to Stacey_Lynn@doh.state.fl.us no later than March 8, 2013.

• Identify and train staff and/or volunteers who will conduct the survey.

• General trainings will be conducted by the state office between March 1 and March 31, 2013. However, areas may have site-specific information
that they need their staff to have and should plan on doing in-house training to cover that material.

Via Internet

The on-line surveys will be open in SurveyMonkey from April 1 through April 30, 2013.
- The link to the online survey can be emailed out, posted on webpages or discussion boards, or included on hard-copy advertising materials.
- If mailing the link to the survey
  - Requests to have clients complete the on-line survey should be mailed to potential participants in an envelope without the words HIV or AIDS or other words or symbols that might identify the nature of the correspondence.
  - Supply a complete-by date.
- If recruiting on-line respondents in person
  - Determine venue(s) best suited for administration of the on-line survey.
  - Recruit potential respondents using face-to-face contact.
  - If they have already completed a needs assessment survey in the past year, do not have them complete the on-line survey. This is meant to be an anonymous survey so we are not asking that people verify whether a person has already filled out a survey, but rather simply ask the person if they have completed one in the past year.
  - Take each participant who voluntarily agrees to self-administer the on-line survey to a computer with complete or semi-privacy.
  - If they are not able to complete the survey at that time, provide them with a hard copy of the link.

Paper Surveys

- Areas are responsible for data entry into the SurveyMonkey database for all surveys received on paper (see data entry section).
- If mailing the surveys
  - Surveys should be mailed to potential participants in an envelope without the words HIV or AIDS or other words or symbols that might identify the nature of the correspondence.
  - A stamped, self-addressed envelope of a similar bare nature should be provided to return the completed survey instrument.
  - Supply a return-by date.
  - Use a non-obtrusive method of keeping track of the surveys. For example, put a number in the middle of the second page.
- If distributing the surveys in person
  - Determine venue(s) best suited for distribution and/or administration.
  - Recruit potential respondents using face-to-face contact.
  - If they have already completed a needs assessment survey in the past year, do not have them complete a survey. This is meant to be an anonymous survey so we are not asking that people verify
whether a person has already filled out a survey, but rather simply ask the person if they have completed one in the past year.

- Give each participant who voluntarily agrees to self-administer the survey complete or semi-privacy. Do not administer the survey to clients on the “fly,” (in transit to a service or moving through a high traffic area).

- Attach a privacy envelope to the blank survey and remind clients to secure the completed survey in the envelope before depositing it in the drop box.

- Use a locked drop-box to collect completed surveys.

- Locate the drop box where it is accessible to clients and well-secured.

- Providers should open the drop-box whenever it is full and deliver or mail the surveys to the location designated by your area’s project manager for data entry.

- If response rates are inadequate, follow up reminder letters can help.

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**Data Analysis**

The HAHS will:

- Complete an analysis of the needs assessment survey for each area and the state as a whole using the standardized survey tool.

- Provide a simple quantitative analysis of the survey responses (i.e. frequencies, percentages, etc.) for each question.

- Provide more complex cross-tabulations of the responses when analyzing the results of special needs populations. Anticipated cross-tabulations include the following: met and unmet needs of males vs. females; met and unmet needs of each racial/ethnic group; in-care vs. out-of care by race and gender; barriers to service by race and gender; etc.

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**Results**

- HAHS staff will provide reports to project managers by electronic mail in June 2013 for use in the Comprehensive Planning process.

- Part As who participate in the statewide survey process will be prioritized for data analysis so that results are available to them prior to their May 31st deadline.

- Each local area will retain responsibility for interpreting the data in a manner that is consistent with prior knowledge of the population and history of service needs.

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**Follow up**

- Local areas will take the survey results and use them in conjunction with their other data (epidemiological profile, provider surveys, interviews, focus groups, resource inventory, etc) to complete the Needs Assessment process and apply for grants.