

## Monitoring PrEP Adherence in a Hotspot Jurisdiction's Department of Health

### Issues:

Texas is home to the third most new HIV diagnoses per year,<sup>1</sup> and the Houston metropolitan area has the highest rate of new HIV infections in Texas<sup>2</sup>. People of color account for 80% of new HIV infections in Houston<sup>3</sup>.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is effective in preventing new HIV infections, but only when taken consistently. Studies demonstrate that adherence to PrEP is suboptimal – as low as 20% in certain studies – especially in populations at highest risk<sup>4</sup>.

### Description:

Since March 2017, the Houston Health Department (HHD) has initiated more than 300 patients on PrEP. HHD implemented UrSure's urine-based adherence test to identify individuals who have not taken a dose of PrEP in at least 48 hours. Providers share UrSure test results non-punitively and target support services to non-adherent individuals to improve adherence.

### Results:

#### Access

**300**

patients initiated  
on PrEP

#### Intervention

Adherence  
monitoring led to

**>80**

opportunities to  
intervene  
and improve  
adherence

#### Equity

Adherence rates are  
similar across races:

- White: 86%
- Black: 84%
- Latinx: 86%

#### Improvement

**80%**

of individuals who test  
non-adherent  
demonstrate recent  
adherence at  
their next visit

### Patient Quotes:

"UrSure is another one of those things that gives me more comfort in knowing that my providers really do care about me."

"Knowing that the medicine is working to protect me has definitely encouraged me to keep taking my medicine every day. I want to stay HIV negative!"

### Recommendations:

HHD's successful PrEP program is based on trust; providers forge relationships by discussing the patient's unique context and lifestyle. UrSure adherence testing facilitates open conversations on how to overcome barriers to adherence and enables monitoring of adherence trends across sub-populations. HHD's program suggests providers' ability to build trust with patients can generate large improvements in adherence, regardless of race and ethnicity.