

# TREATMENT OUTCOMES IN UNDOCUMENTED HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS WITH HIV INFECTION

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# Why We Did this Study

- HIV infection disproportionately affects Hispanics in the US.
  - Hispanics are 16% of the population, but are 20% of persons with HIV
- Within the Hispanic population, the undocumented population may be vulnerable to barriers to regular HIV care.
  - Interviews done by Harris County's Ryan White Grants Administration planning office found that some undocumented Hispanic immigrants fear accessing publicly funded clinics due to deportation concerns or have difficulty finding their way in the health care system due to language barriers
- Little is known about the treatment outcomes of undocumented Hispanic immigrants with HIV infection.
- We sought to compare the outcomes of undocumented and documented patients 12-months after entering HIV care.

# What We Did

- We examined medical records of 1,620 HIV-infected patients new to Thomas Street Health Center between January 2003 and June 2008
- We called Hispanics “undocumented” if their SSN were invalid or were missing
- We looked at only patients who had never before used antiretroviral medicine
- We examined their first CD4 cell count to see how advanced their disease was when they came to care
- We looked at their records over the next year to see if they stayed in care and if they got their HIV viral load down to “undetectable”

# What We Found

Table 1. Entry CD4 cell count, and retention in care and VL at one year

	Total	Undoc. Hispanic	Doc. Hispanic	Black	White	P value
Entry CD4 cell count	N=1620	n=186	n=280	n=984	n=170	<0.01
Median CD4 cells/mm <sup>3</sup> (IQR)	201 (48-413)	132 (37-308)	166 (47-383)	226 (49-439)	264 (84-504)	
Retention in care	N=1620	n=186	n=280	n=984	n=170	<0.01
Best: 4 quarters with visit	31%	38%	39%	27%	31%	
1-3 quarters with visit	61%	56%	57%	63%	59%	
Worst: 0 quarters w/ visit	8%	7%	4%	10%	9%	
Viral Load	N=671	n=85	n=147	n=387	n=52	
Suppressed (<400)	67%	82%	78%	59%	81%	<0.01

# What Our Results Mean and Why this Matters

- Undocumented Hispanic persons with HIV infection enter care with more advanced disease than documented persons
  - Testing and/or linkage to care efforts for this difficult-to-reach population need intensification.
- Once diagnosed, undocumented Hispanics in our study have outcomes as good as or better than other racial/ethnic groups.
  - Publicly funded health care clinics, like TSHC, are effective safety net providers for undocumented Hispanics with HIV infection
  - These providers and services for the undocumented are vital for maintaining individual and public health

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