

Expected Stigma and Self-Stigma among Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Recently Released from Incarceration

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INTRODUCTION

- Approximately 1.4% of persons in Illinois prisons and 0.5% of persons in Cook County Jail are known to be living with HIV.
- Once released, these individuals often face additional challenges, including the dual stigma of HIV and corrections involvement.

METHODS

- As a part of a HRSA/SPNS Initiative, AIDS Foundation Chicago (AFC) implemented the Safe and Sound Return Partnership, an intervention to connect recently released persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) to medical, housing, and employment services.
- Baseline surveys were conducted with 109 participants to assess care needs and examine barriers that can impede progress along the HIV treatment cascade.

Participants with undetectable viral loads reported lower levels of expected stigma

LESSONS LEARNED

Most participants reported some level of HIV stigma, and a significant relationship between stigma and viral suppression was documented. Service providers should be aware of the relationship between stigma and health.



Social and environmental factors have been shown to impact health-seeking behaviors



There is a relationship between viral suppression and stigma

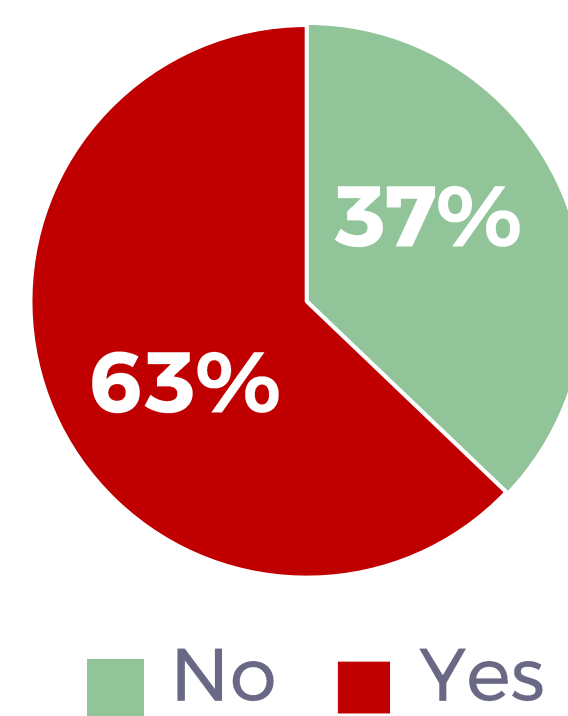


Service providers should consider incorporating stigma-reduction activities into care plans

RESULTS

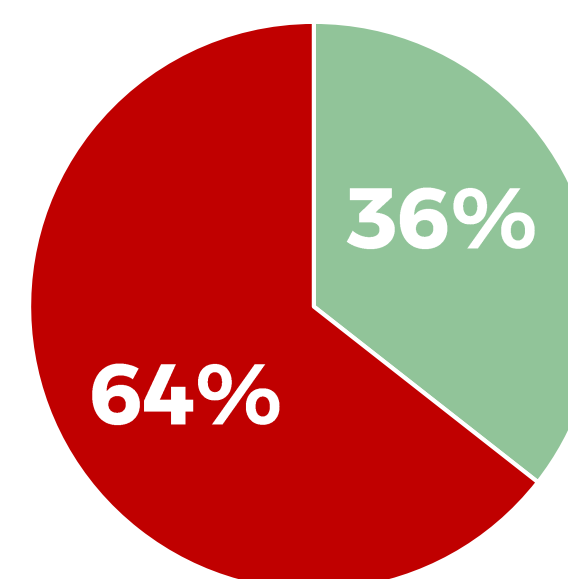
Self Stigma:

63% either agreed or strongly agreed with at least one of six statements related to self-stigma.



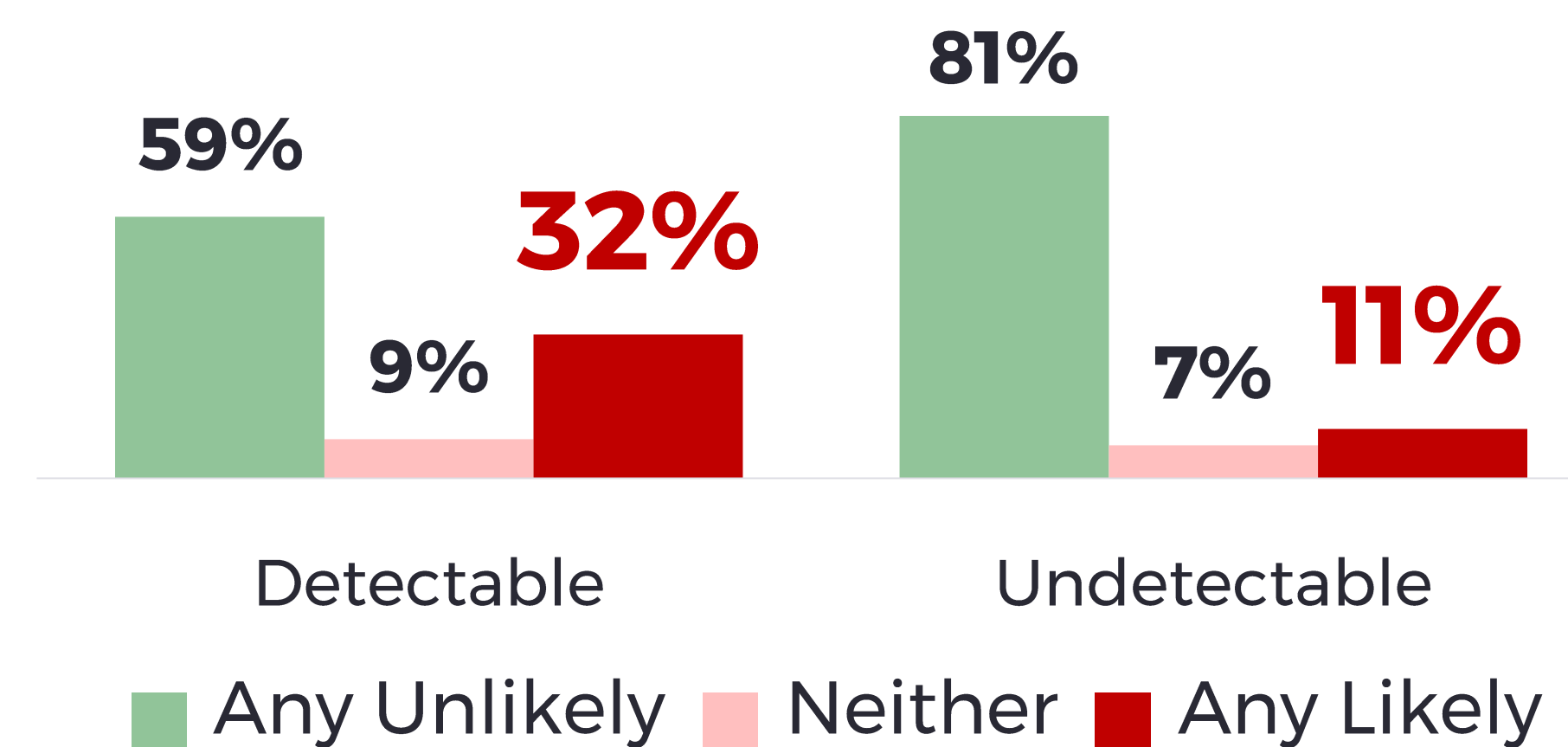
Expected Stigma

64% believed that social rejection or other scenarios related to HIV stigma were either likely or highly likely to occur.



Fear of stigma from service providers:

Participants with detectable viral loads were more likely to say that they expected to be refused service from social workers because of their status.



Viral suppression

Participants with undetectable viral loads had lower composite expected stigma scores, indicating lower levels of expected stigma.

Composite expected stigma score:

