

RESEARCH SUMMARY (Confrance Abs

Non‐HIV‐related health care utilization, demographic, clinical and laboratory factors associated with time to initial retention in HIV care among HIV-positive individuals linked to HIV care



**St. Paul’s Hospital**

**608 - 1081 Burrard Street Vancouver, BC**

**V5Z 1Y6 TEL: 604.806.8477**

**FINDINGS**

* The median time-to-initial retention was nine months among those retained and 70% of individuals were retained within 12 months of being linked.
* Individuals who saw a specialist for non-HIV care had a shorter time-to-initial retention than those who did not, however, individuals who saw a general physician for non-HIV related health services and those admitted to the hospital for non-HIV related services compared to those who did not had longer times to initial retention.
* Females, individuals who have ever injected drugs, and individuals less than 40 years old had longer times to initial retention.

**INTRODUCTION**

HIV care is crucial for those diagnosed with HIV, as it leads to better health outcomes and longer life expectancy. Linking people to care after a positive HIV test does not guarantee that they will be retained in care. This study

explored non-HIV related healthcare service utilization in addition to demographic, clinical, and laboratory factors associated with timely initial retention in HIV care among people linked to HIV care in British Columbia (BC), Canada.

**METHODS**

We included HIV-positive individuals who were linked to HIV care between January 1st, 2000 and December 31st, 2010, and had a follow-up period of least one calendar year. Individuals who were not retained were followed until their last contact date, death, or the end of 2011.

**PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

Provided that a majority of not retained individuals used general physician non-HIV related health care services, general physician targeted interventions may be effective in improving time-to-initial retention in HIV care.

**Authors:** L Lourenço, A Nohpal, D Shopin, G Colley, B Nosyk, JSG Montaner, & VD Lima

