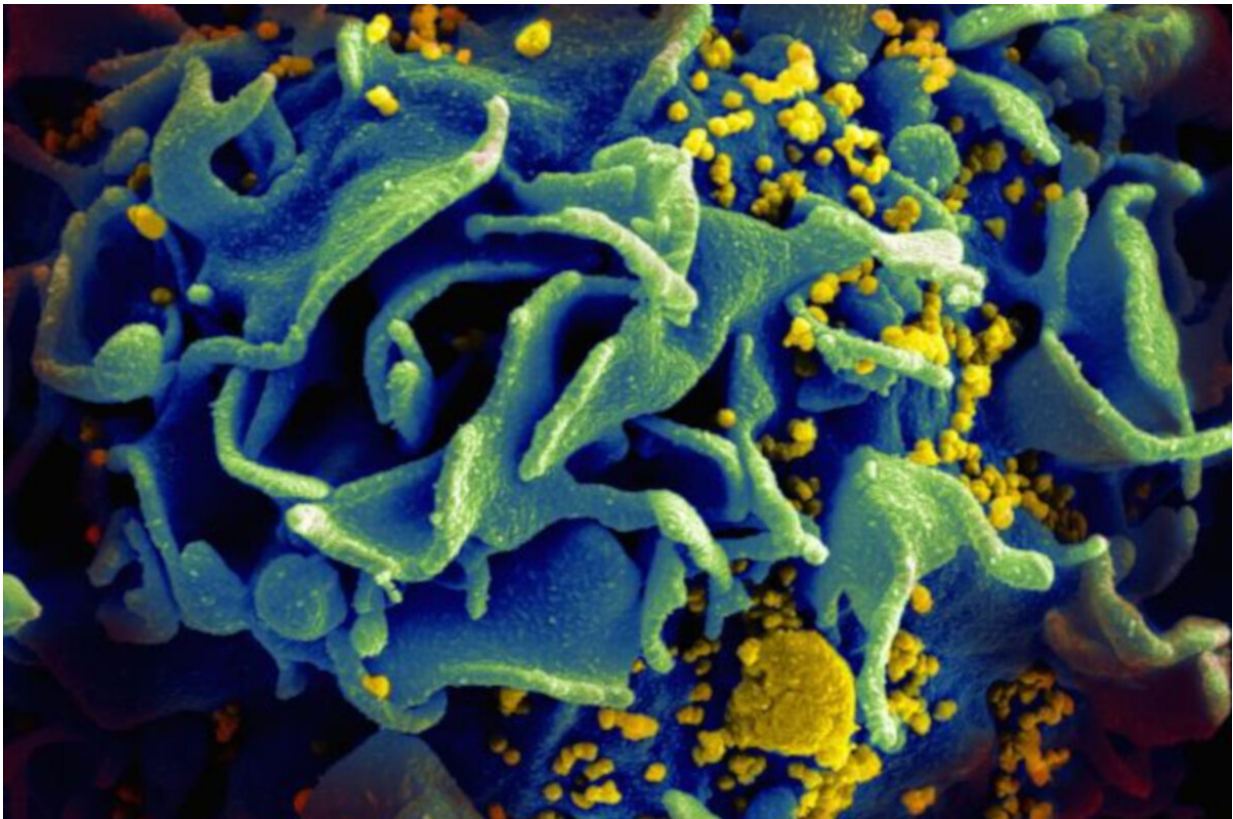


Nurses more likely to test for HIV when practice setting supports routine screening

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Microscopic image of an HIV-infected T cell. Credit: NIAID

Nurse practitioners are more likely to conduct HIV screenings if they feel that their colleagues support routine screenings, according to new research from Binghamton University, State University of New York.

This comes in advance of National HIV Testing Day, taking place June 27.

Despite 40 years of efforts to end the throes of the HIV crisis and now the epidemic, the infection continues to affect gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men of all races and ethnicities; Black and Latino men and women; people who inject drugs; youth ages 25—34; and people in the Southern U.S. disproportionately.

"Research data suggests that the social norm expectation in practice settings where many nurse practitioners work do not support routine [HIV screening](#)," said Jodi Sutherland, clinical assistant professor at Binghamton University's Decker School of Nursing. "This is a disappointing finding given that patients often trust and look to providers to make clinical decisions and judgments that best support their health according to recommendations and practice guidelines."

Sutherland, along with the Decker School's Gale A. Spencer, asked 141 [nurse practitioners](#) about their attitudinal, social normative and perceived behavioral control beliefs toward HIV screening and their HIV screening behaviors. The researchers found that the strongest predictor of [nurse practitioner](#) HIV screening behavior was social normative expectations, followed by their attitudinal beliefs toward routine HIV screening. The findings revealed that the belief that "my office staff supports routine HIV screening with my patients" predicted HIV screening, whereas the belief that "consent from a parent/guardian should be obtained before screening for HIV in a person younger than 18 years" predicted less HIV screening.

"Nurses provide the essential link between the people of the community and the complex healthcare system," said Sutherland. "Nurse practitioners have an important role to increase HIV screening rates and could help put an end to HIV. This would require the support of the

office staff even when HIV testing requires additional time."

Sutherland said that health care organizations and leaders of organizations need to advocate translation of HIV screening recommendations into practice to meet the needs of the individuals, families and communities served. She also stressed a need for research efforts and practice recommendations to address screening in a person younger than 18 years. Recommendations that address procedures for health care providers to perform HIV screening for this age group are also needed.

The paper, "U.S. Nurse Practitioner Beliefs About Routine HIV Screening: Predicting Behaviors," was published in the *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care*.

More information: Jodi L. Sutherland et al, U.S. Nurse Practitioner Beliefs About Routine HIV Screening, *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care* (2019). [DOI: 10.1097/JNC.000000000000014](https://doi.org/10.1097/JNC.000000000000014)

Provided by Binghamton University

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