

# **HIV Testing Rates in VHA 2009**

**Public Health Strategic Health Care Group  
Office of Public Health and Environmental Hazards  
Department of Veteran Affairs  
May 2010**



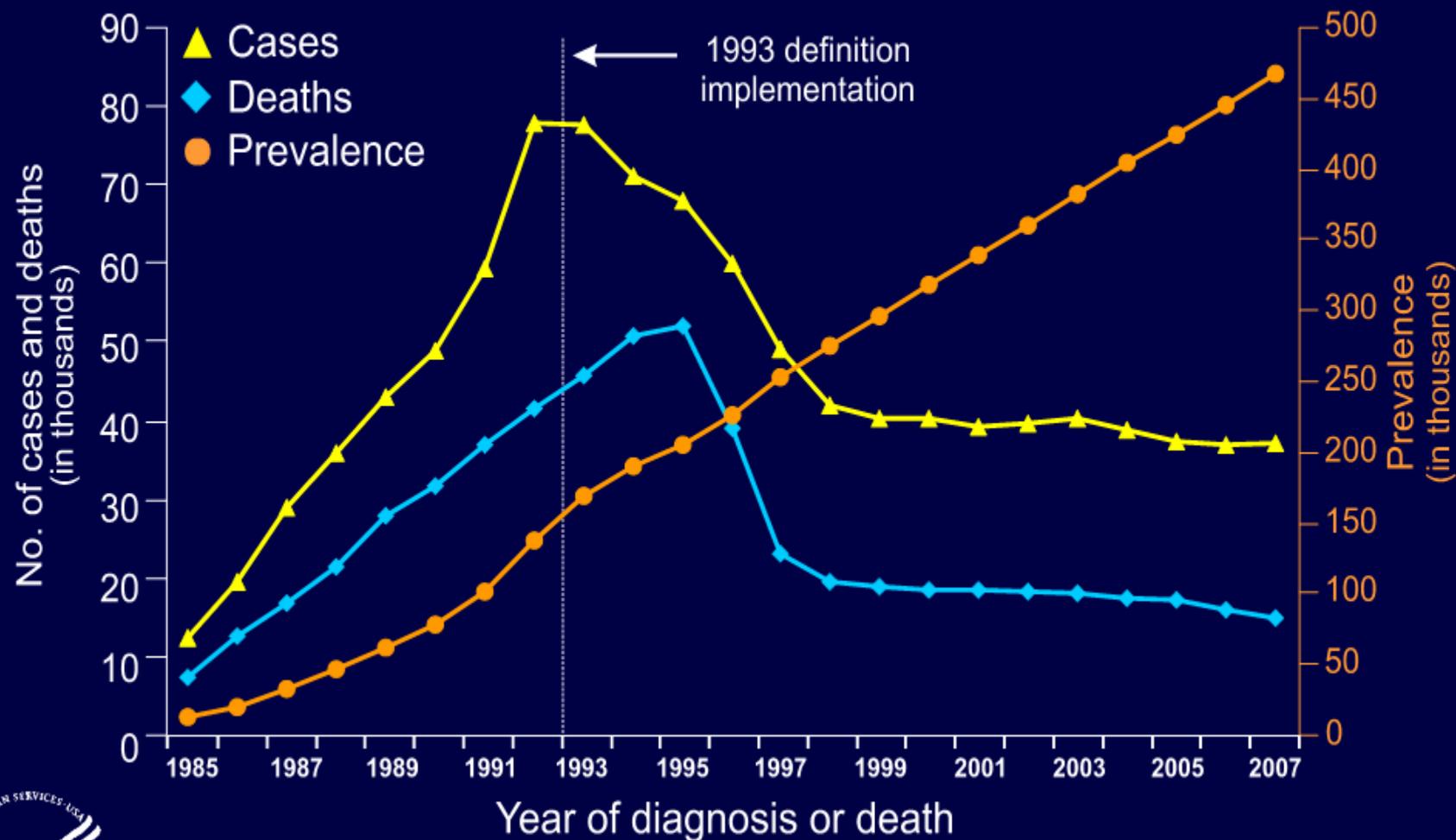
# Background

- **HIV/AIDS is a major public health concern in the U.S.**
- **1.1 million HIV-infected persons live in the U.S.**
- **21% are unaware of their HIV infection.**
- **HIV transmission rates are higher among people who do not know they are HIV infected.**

# Background

- **Antiretroviral therapy reduces HIV-related morbidity and mortality, and reduces perinatal transmission, but:**
  - **Persons unaware of their infection are unable to benefit from care**
  - **HIV testing often is not done until late in the disease process: 36% of people were diagnosed with AIDS within 1 year of testing positive for HIV**
- **Routine testing can help reduce stigma associated with HIV infection**

# Estimated Numbers of AIDS Cases, Deaths, and Persons Living with AIDS, 1985–2007—United States and Dependent Areas



Note. Data have been adjusted for reporting delays.



# American College of Physicians

- HIV screening should not be contingent on an assessment of patients' behavioral risk
- More patients accept HIV testing when it is offered routinely, without a risk assessment
- Early diagnosis of HIV has been shown to reduce morbidity and mortality
- Patients aware of their HIV infection substantially reduce behaviors that put them at risk of transmitting HIV
- HIV screening is cost-effective even in health-care settings with low HIV prevalence

# **VHA Informed Consent Handbook**

## **1004.01: August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

- **Written informed consent and prescribed pre- and post-test counseling are no longer required**
- **Verbal consent must be obtained and documented in the medical record**
- **Written educational materials about HIV testing must be provided to patients.**

# VHA Directive – HIV Screening

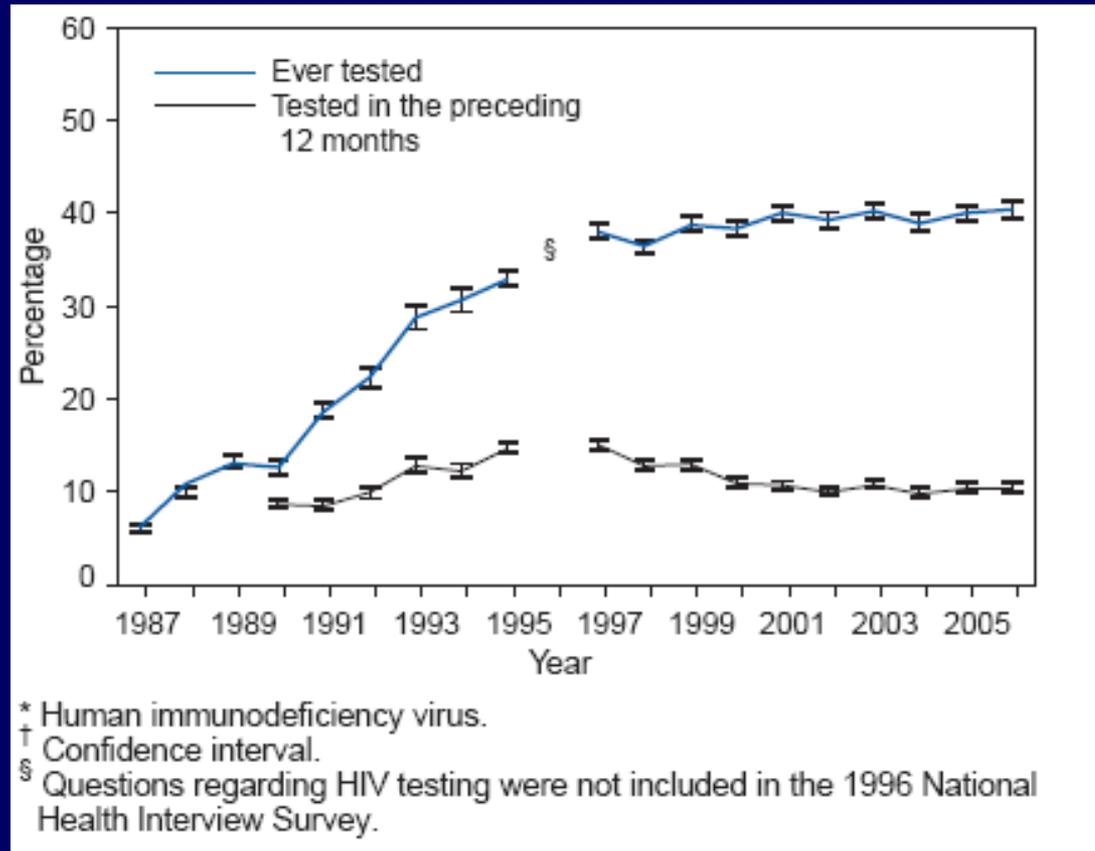
- **Current VHA policy: HIV testing is a part of routine medical care.**
- **Providers routinely provide HIV testing to all Veterans who give verbal consent.**
- **Veterans who test positive for HIV infection are referred for state-of-the-art HIV treatment as soon as possible after diagnosis.**

VHA Directive 2009-036, August 17, 2009

# HIV Care in VHA

- **VHA is the largest single provider of HIV care in the United States**
  - **As of 2008 almost 64,000 veterans have received HIV care through VHA**
  - **In 2008, VHA clinicians saw 23,463 HIV+ Veterans**
  - **All VISNs provide care to Veterans with HIV**

# Percentage of persons 18-64 who reported ever being tested for HIV and those who were tested in preceding 12 months



National Health Interview Survey, US 1987-2006



# **Who gets tested in VHA?**

# HIV Testing in VHA - 2009

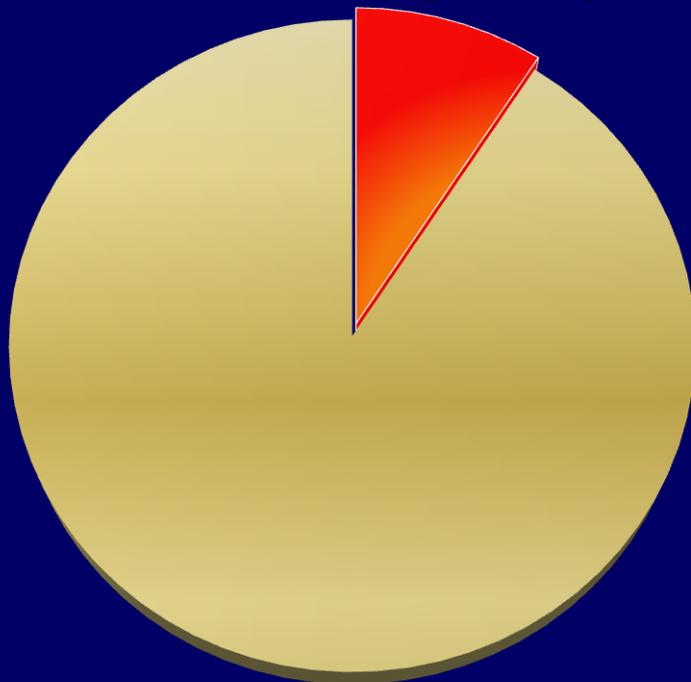
- **Data Extract routine distributed and installed at all facilities to generate HIV test reports for a calendar year.**
- **All 129\* stations provided first annual HIV test report in January 2010.**
- **Data collected on all patients with an inpatient or outpatient visit in CY 2009**
  - **Number with HIV test ever done**
  - **Number with HIV test done in CY 09**
  - **Number with Positive result on CY 2009 test**

**\*represents all VHA facilities; integrated stations have multiple facilities**

# VHA CY 2009 HIV Testing

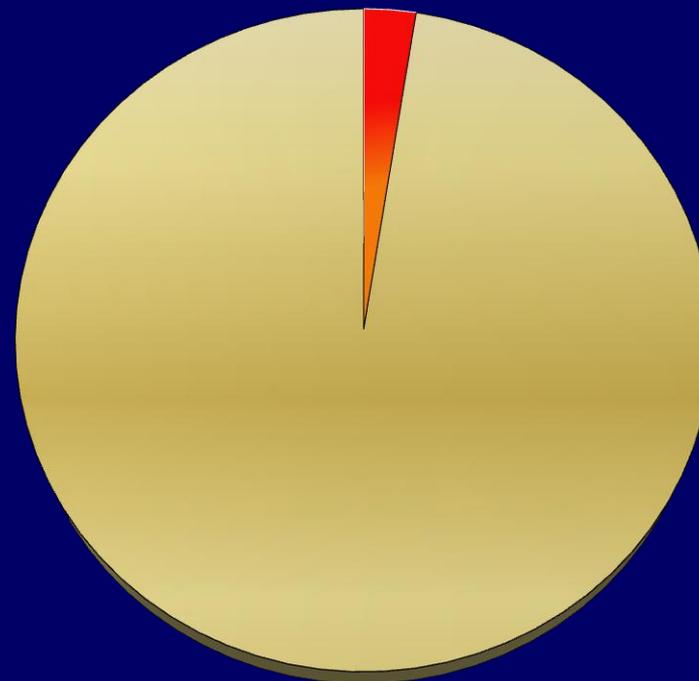
n= 5,713,265 Veterans w/ OP visit

524,735  
(9.2%)



Patients ever tested

141,337  
(2.5%)

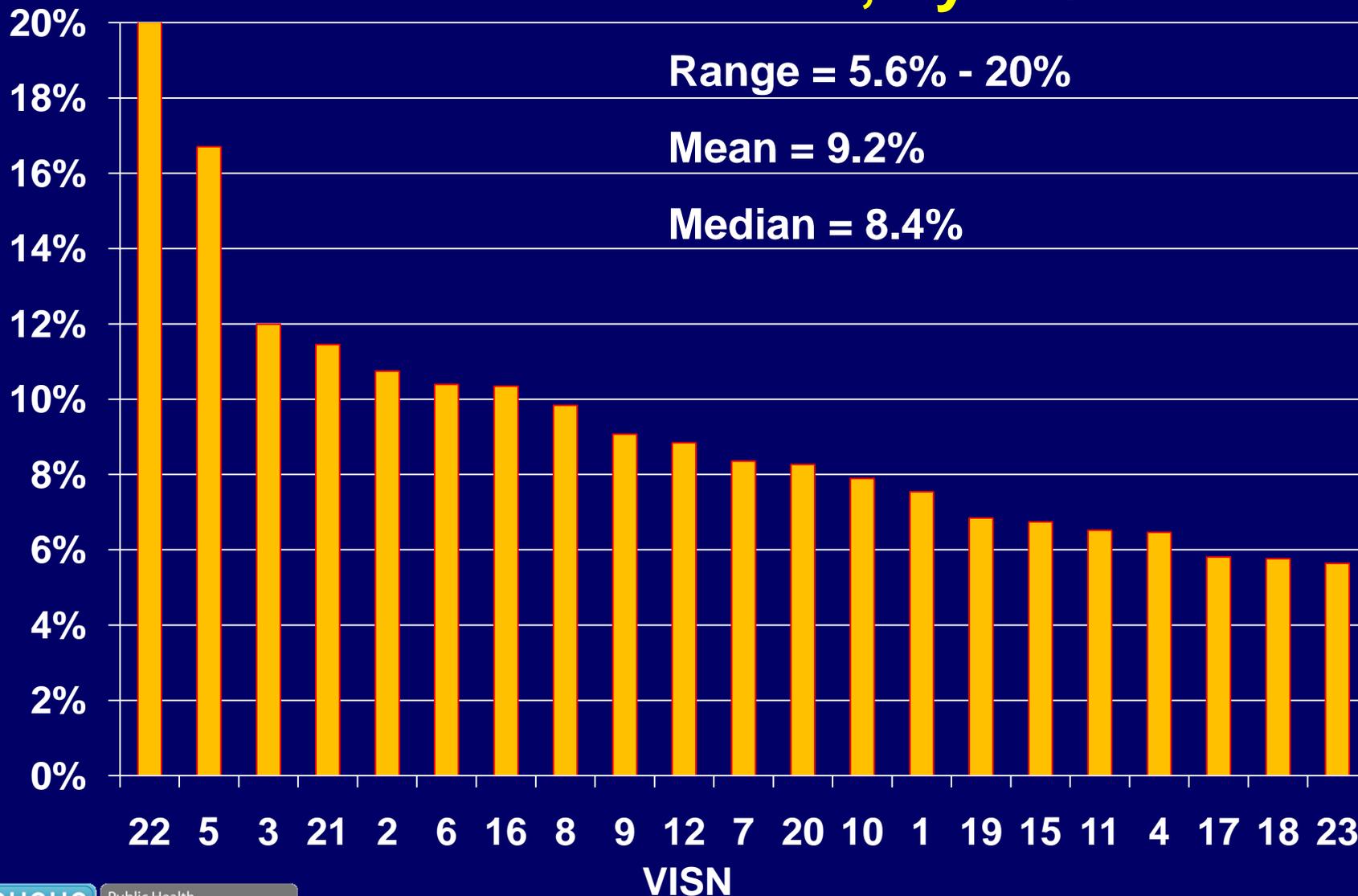


Patients tested in 2009

# Percent Veterans in Care in 2009 Ever Tested For HIV, by VISN



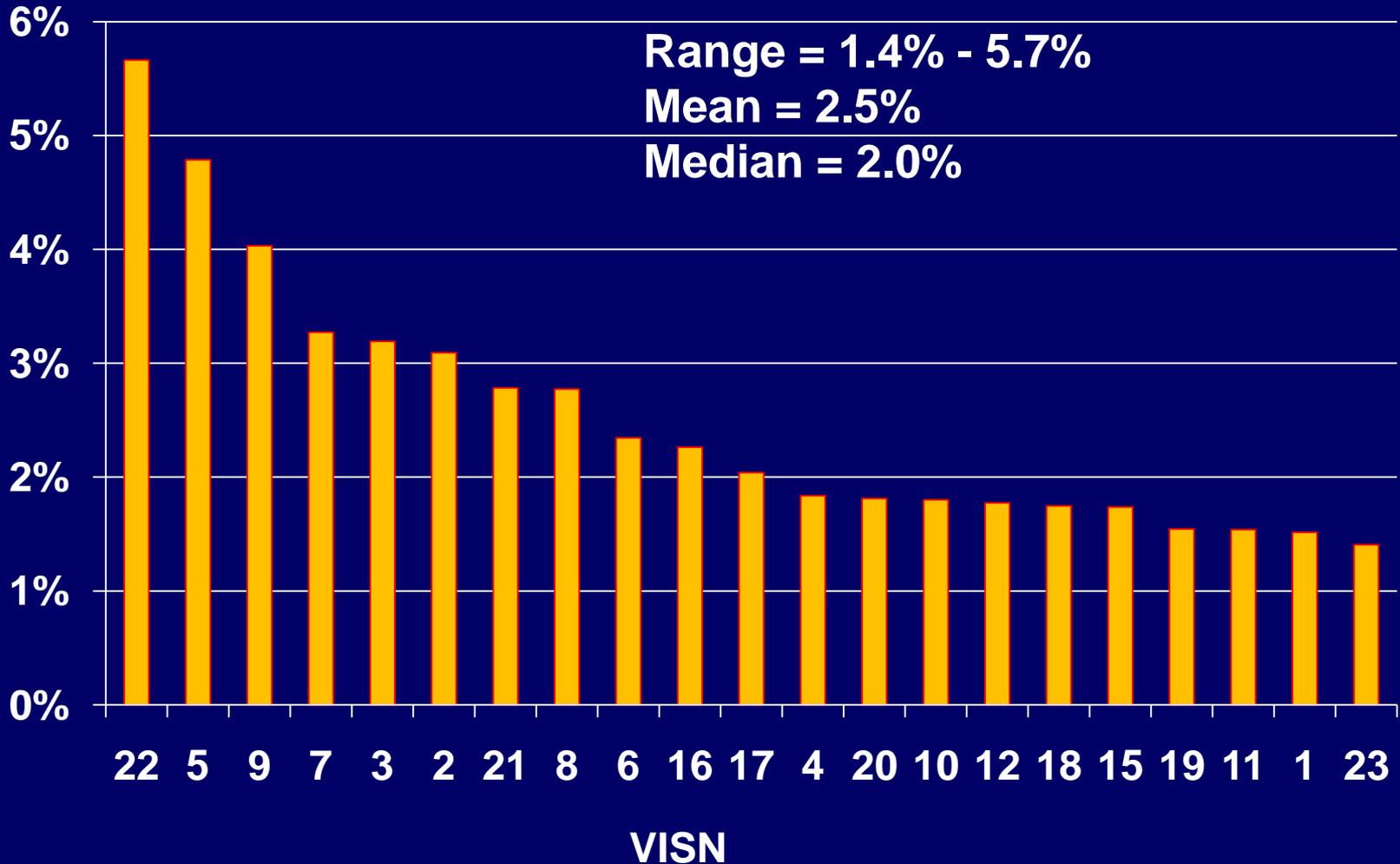
# Percentage of Veterans in Care in CY 2009 EVER tested for HIV, by VISN



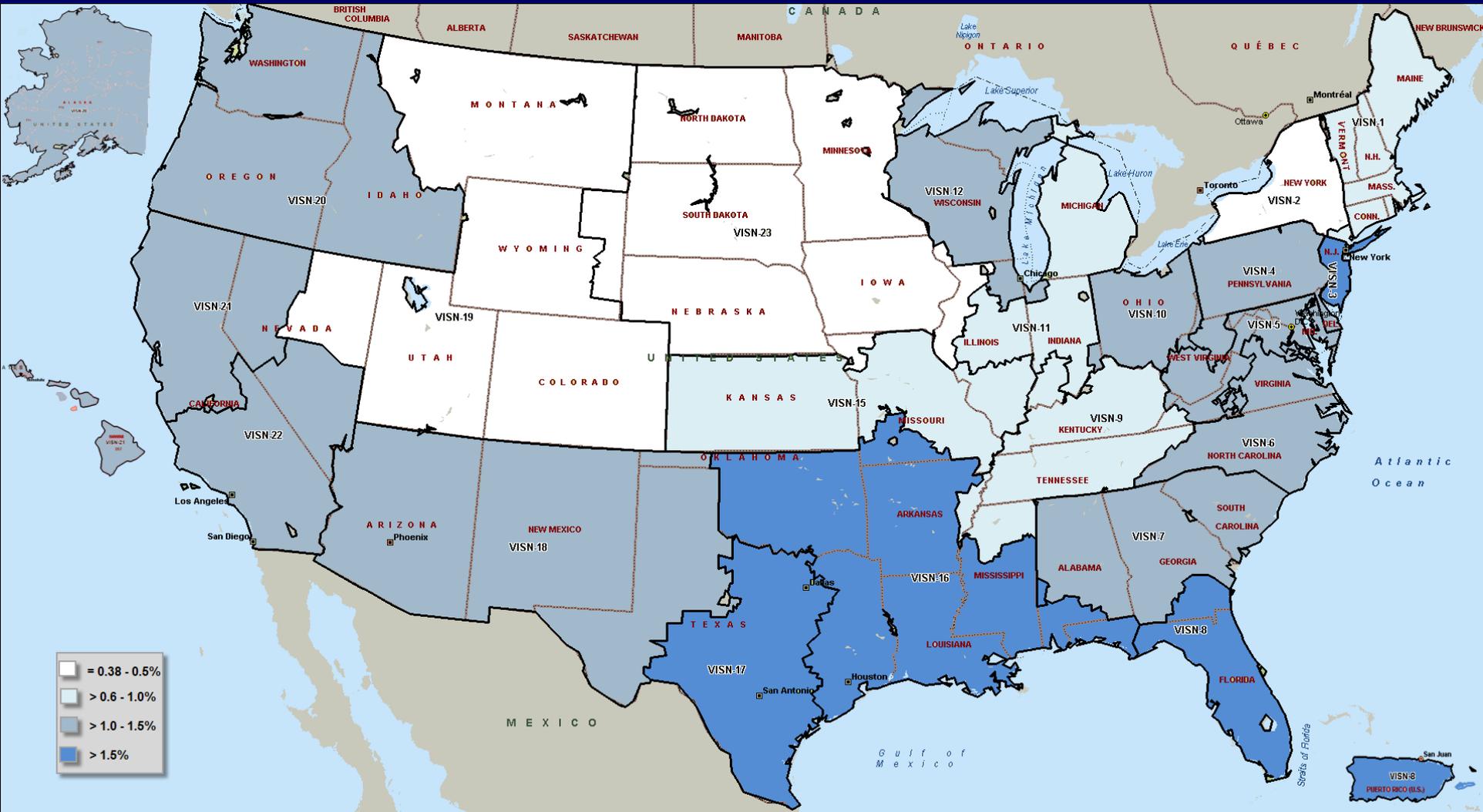
# Percent Veterans in Care in 2009 Tested For HIV in 2009, by VISN



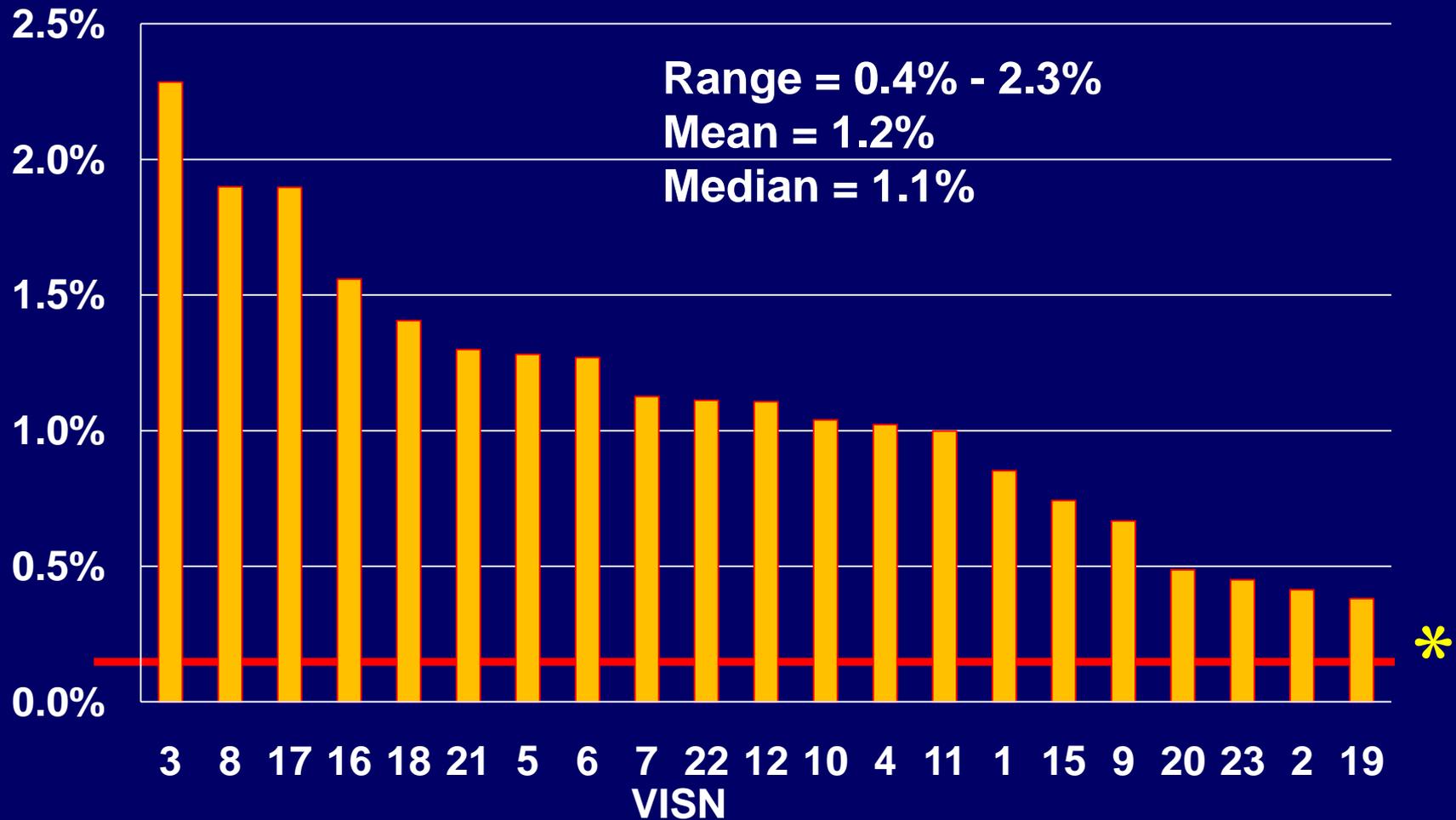
# Percentage of Veterans in care in CY 2009 with an HIV Test in 2009, by VISN



# Percent Veterans in Care in 2009 With Positive HIV Test in 2009, by VISN



# Percentage of HIV Positive Tests in CY 2009, by VISN



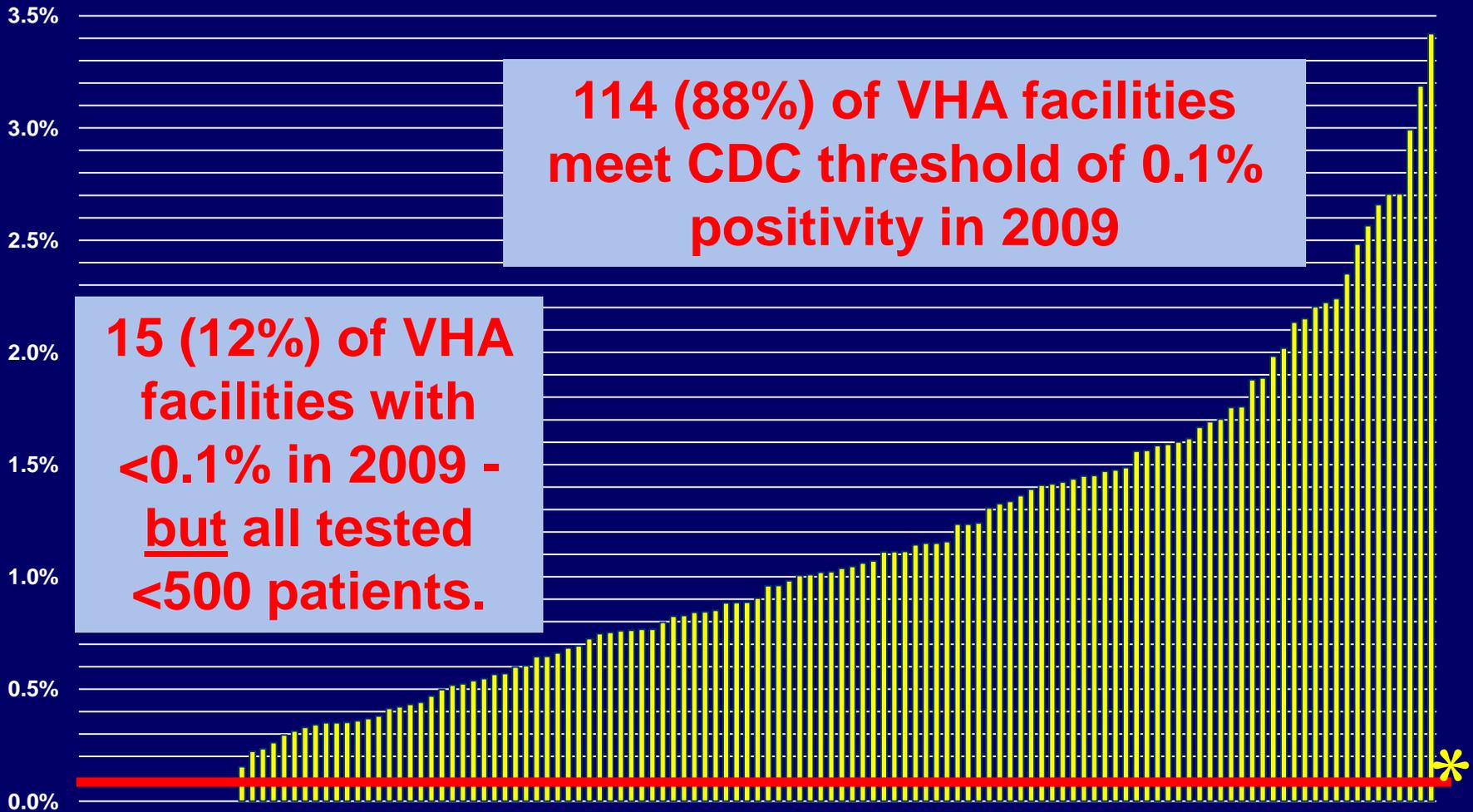
\* CDC suggested threshold for routine HIV testing

# Screening for HIV Infection

- If yield  $< 1$  per 1000, continued screening is not warranted
- To ensure 95% Confidence Interval that prevalence is  $< 0.1\%$ , 4000 patients need to be screened with no confirmed positives\*

\*As of 1/1/2010 no VA facilities meet this criterion

# Percent HIV Positive on 2009 Tests, by facility



# Online Resources for Providers and Patients

21

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Search  
» Open Advanced Search

Home Veteran Services Business About VA Media Room Locations Contact Us HIV/AIDS

CLINICAL PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS Search HIV/AIDS:  GO

About Us  
Site Map  
Contact Us

*The Nation's Largest Care Provider*

**HIV/AIDS**

For Patients and the Public **ENTER** For Health Care Providers **ENTER**

VA Public Health Strategic Health Care Group  
in collaboration with

CENTER for HIV INFORMATION  
UCSF CHI

**For facility level HIV testing data visit:  
<http://vaww.hiv.va.gov> – VA intranet**