

**HARRISHEALTH**  
SYSTEM

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# Harris Health System

## How and Where Service Linkage Fits in a Routine HIV Screening Program

# Project RUSH -- Background

- 2008-2009 Began routine opt-out screening at Ben Taub and LBJ Hospital ER's
- 2010-2011 Added 12 community health centers
- 2012-2013 Added 11 Healthcare for the Homeless clinic sites

# Project RUSH – Key Features

- We use an opt-out process
- We use standard blood testing processed on a rapid basis (ER's only)
- We make it easy for staff:
  - No extra paperwork
  - No extra procedures
  - No requirements for extra time spent with patients

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## Key Features (continued)

- We work closely with the local public health authority to verify new/existing cases
- We use dedicated service linkage staff to ensure comprehensive follow-through to care

# Project RUSH Stats

August 4, 2008 – March 31, 2013

Total Tests	300,037
New Positives	821
Prevalence	0.27%
Previous Positives	3,397
Overall Prevalence	1.41%
Total Positives	4,218

# Purpose of Service Linkage

## **National HIV/AIDS Strategy Goal**

Increase the proportion of newly diagnosed patients linked to clinical care within 3 months of their HIV diagnosis from 65 to 85 percent by 2015.

# What is the service linkage role?

- Provide HIV testing services
- Conduct and document patient assessments
  - For hospitalized patients
  - For patients new to Thomas Street Health Center
- Assist patients with access and adherence
- Assure completion of referral process
- Assist patients in navigating agency procedures

## Service linkage role (continued)

- Work with case managers and other clinic staff to ensure patient care plans are implemented

# Model of the Service Linkage System

Ben Taub Inpatient

Ben Taub ER

LBJ ER

Thomas Street Testing

Jail

Thomas Street Access

In Care at  
Thomas  
Street

12 Community  
Health Clinics

11 Homeless Clinic Sites

Retention in Care SLW (TSC)

# Results -- Linkage to Care

- Linkage to Care (1 completed primary care visit within 6 months):

2008      25%

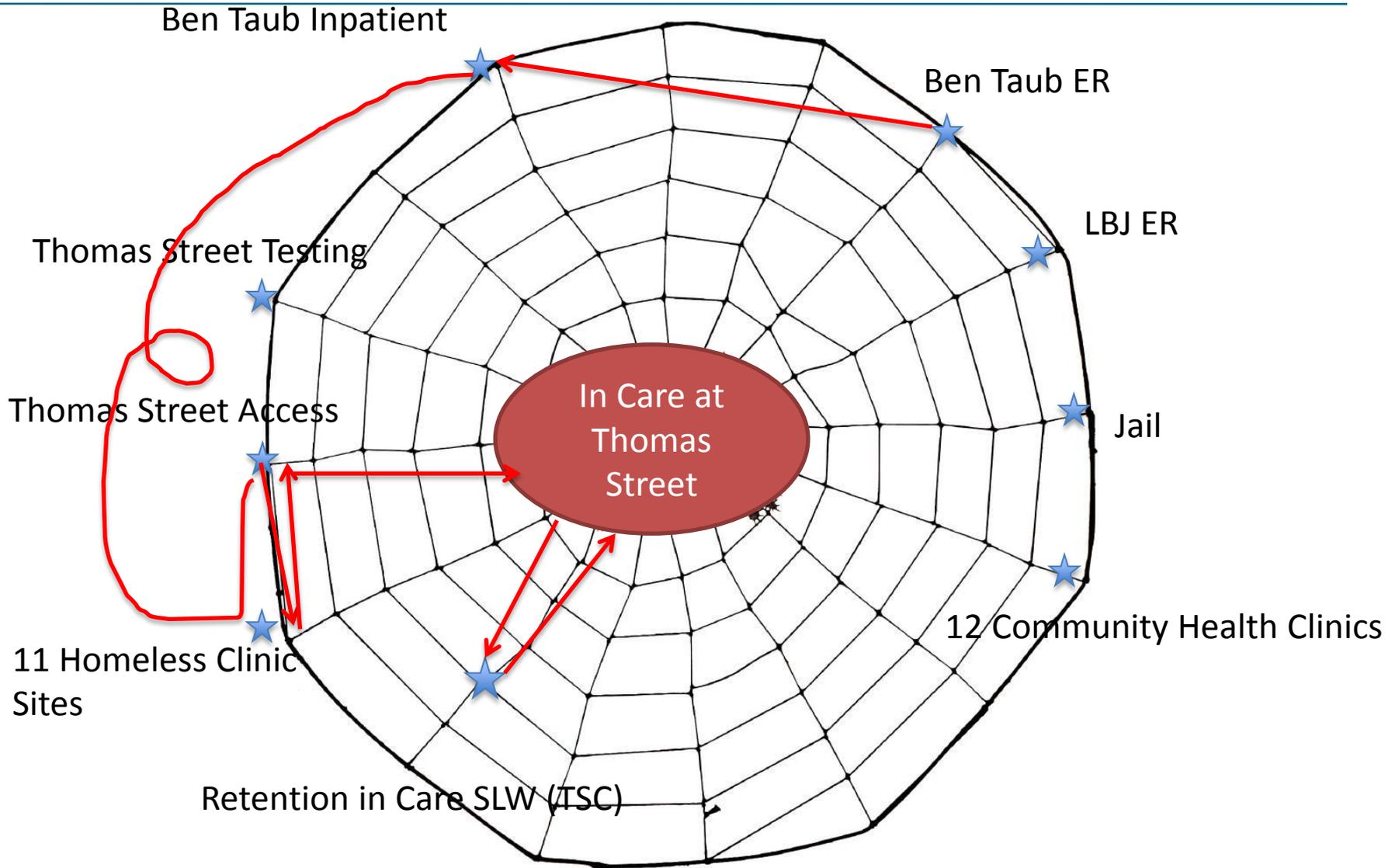
2009      44%

2010      47%

2011      62%

2012      58%

- New positive prevalence is continually decreasing.



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