

# **Understanding the Ryan White CARE Act**

## **An Incentive for HIV Case Data Collection**

The Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act is federal legislation that addresses the unmet health needs of persons living with HIV disease by funding primary health care and support services. The CARE Act was named after Ryan White, an Indiana teenager whose courageous struggle with HIV/AIDS and against AIDS-related discrimination helped educate the nation.

The CARE Act provides for significant local and state control of HIV/AIDS healthcare planning and service delivery. This has led to many innovative and practical approaches to the delivery of care for people living with HIV/AIDS. Statewide reporting of HIV infection in California will provide a strong basis for:

- Prioritizing services for persons and communities in greatest need,
- Setting evidence-based prevention priorities,
- Understanding how prevention strategies influence disease trends,
- Estimating future resource needs,
- Comparing the allocation of funds with the distribution of the epidemic, and
- Evaluating the effectiveness of public health prevention and treatment recommendations.

Future RWCA funding levels will hinge on California's ability to document the number of people living with HIV and AIDS. Specifically, the California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS, will have to show that:

- HIV case reporting should be at least 85% complete.
- At least two-thirds of the cases (66%) should be reported to the CDC within 6 months of diagnosis.
- Fewer than or equal to 5% of the cases area duplicates or involve incorrectly matched case reports.
- At least 85% of HIV cases have documented risk.