

# Visualizing and Presenting Data Effectively for Decision-Making

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## Background

- Ryan White programs have access to jurisdictional data from state HIV surveillance systems and internal data from their own programs
- Analyzing and presenting data effectively, particularly to HIV Planning Councils, is an important responsibility of Ryan White programs and should be done with careful consideration

## Methods and Activities

HIV care continuum data from the Ryan White Part A database system and HIV surveillance data from the Florida Department of Health were presented by:

- Race/ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Transmission histories

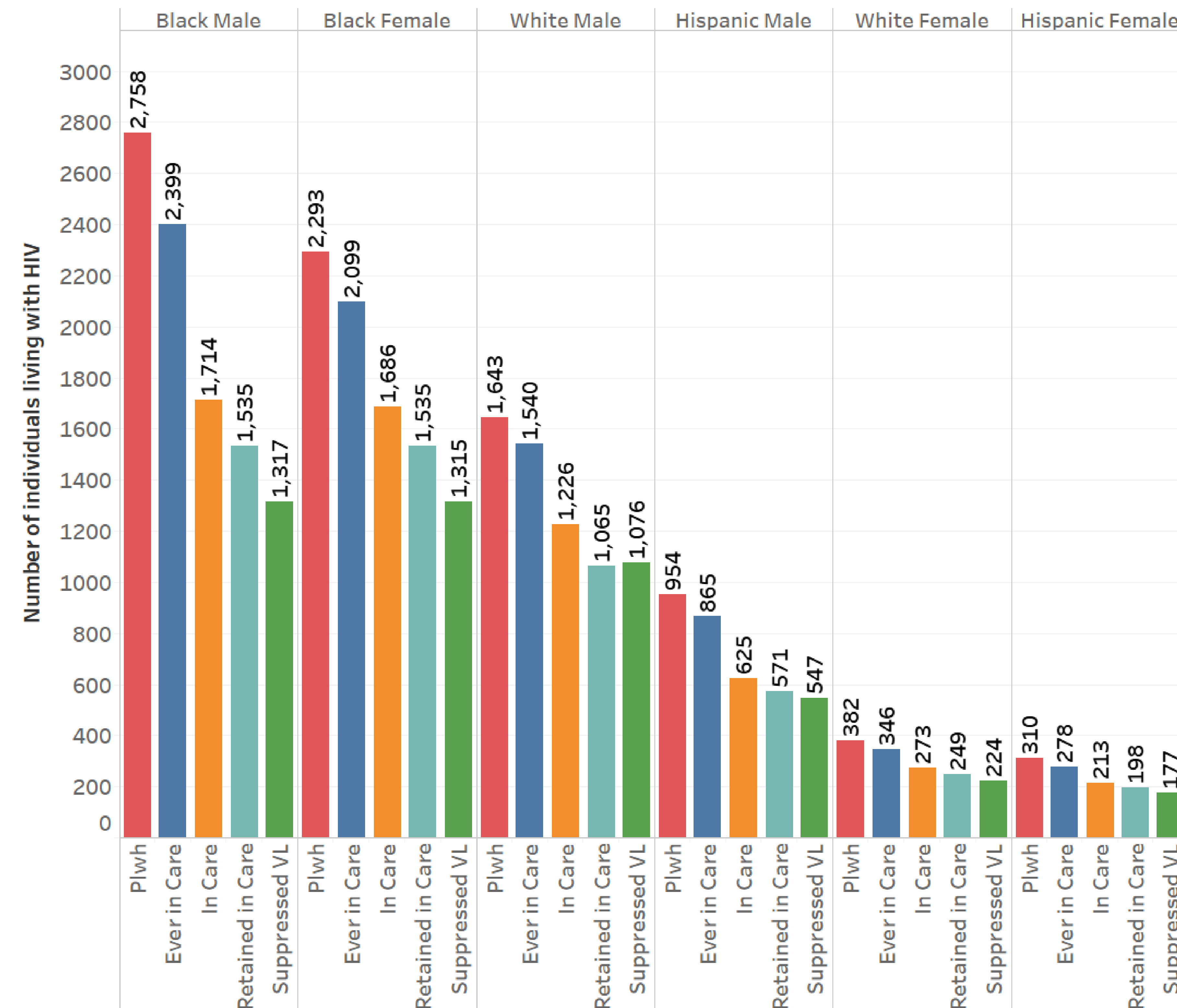
Absolute number bar charts were presented in June 2019 to the HIV Planning Council, as well as to the Priorities & Allocation Committee

One principle of effective data presentations, as put forward by Edward Tufte in his book *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*, is to encourage the eye to compare different pieces of data

People can more easily process differences in line length than area or numbers in a table; therefore, bar charts are easier to see differences than pie charts or tables

## Results

HIV Care Continuum in Palm Beach County 2017 by Race/Ethnicity and Gender



The council members visually recognized the large gaps in the HIV care continuum and voted to allocate more funding to Early Intervention Services to address the large out of care population in the jurisdiction

Absolute bar charts also aided the Care Council to see the number of individuals in each race/ethnic and gender group and compare to other groups; something not visible when comparing percentages across groups

Members thus recognized the large disparities by race/ethnicity, which also influenced allocation decisions in the Minority AIDS Initiative budget

## Acknowledgements

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## Lessons Learned

- Visualizing data using absolute number bar charts, rather than relying on tables or only percentages, was critical in empowering the Council to be more data-driven and to address disparities by race/ethnicity
- Number of individuals rather than percentages are helpful in health planning and allocation of funds
- Other absolute number data have been created and presented, including number out of care and not virally suppressed by zip code

## Challenges/Limitations

- Data literacy still remains a challenge among audiences, and being able to present data effectively also relies on the skills of the presenter
- Percentages are still useful to present especially when comparing to other jurisdictions; identifying the purpose of the comparison is key

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