



# Improving the Service Delivery of the Macon-Bibb County Health Department for Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Infections

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### Abstract

The central goal of this capstone project was to provide awareness of the Sexually Transmitted Disease/Infection rates in the Macon-Bibb County community which utilize public health clinical services via a medical record review. Medical records of all patients receiving testing or treatment from the Macon-Bibb County Health Department were analyzed and documented over a six month period, July 2014 through December 2014. After reviewing over 250 medical records, it is suggested that the Macon-Bibb County Health Department implement an Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system to ensure patient information accessibility in a multi-clinic facility like the Macon-Bibb Health Department. Such a system would facilitate efficient continuity of care, reduce medical record errors, promote clinical and social preventive services, reduce time documenting information, and offer a more structured avenue for storing patient information. By analyzing the age, gender, location, educational level, health behaviors, sexual preference, and race of patients, health educators, communicable disease specialists, and health behaviorists have the opportunity to identify high risk populations and target educational activities to reduce the rate of sexually transmitted infections. Presently, there are no personnel who conducts systematic record reviews of STD/STI data to aid in the reduction and awareness of communicable diseases.

### Introduction

Medical record reviews have the capacity to hold substantial value if utilized to their maximal potential. Analysis and review of medical records permits a potential increase in the quality and continuity of care being received by patients. This study sought to address the concern of not utilizing communicable disease records to provide targeted health education, elevate awareness for the public and public health officials, as well as improving the implementation of advanced technology to enhance the health of the community. Currently there is no personnel within the areas of Health Promotion or Communicable Diseases which analyzes medical records of communicable disease patients at any period during the year to determine where the problem may exist based on location (zip code), community demographics, or what patients are repeatedly infected. The Macon-Bibb Health Department (North Central Health District 5-2), only references medical records if there is an infection of HIV or syphilis.

The current protocol for interventions within communicable disease infections can be problematic in that it does not utilize all means of preventative services. To ensure that the quality of healthcare is improved, it is essential that medical records are clear and legible for those individuals providing care, as well as properly signed and dated by healthcare staff.

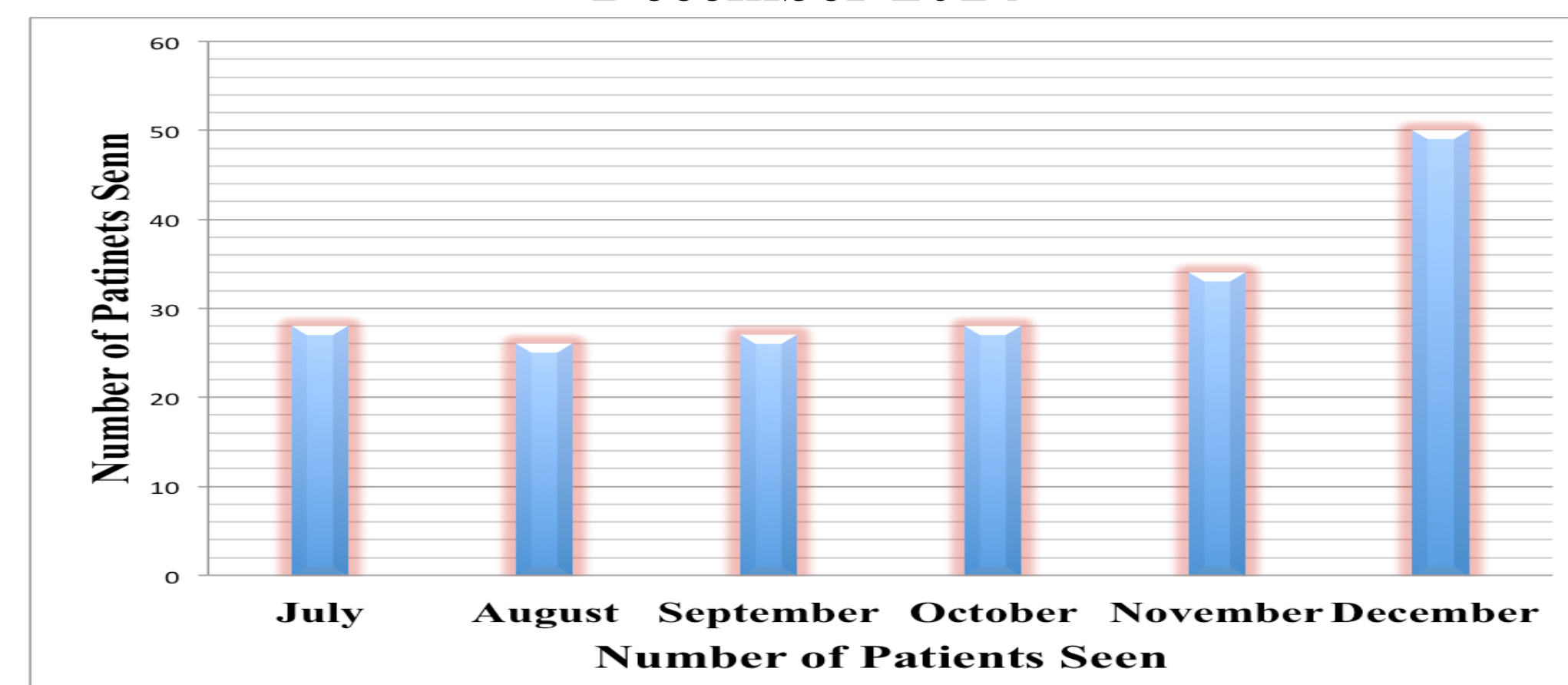
The most notable issue and also the purpose of carrying out the project at hand is the growing rate of sexually transmitted diseases and infections. Per the Georgia Department of Health (2011), in 2011, the rate of STDs in the North Central Health District was 1,428 per 100,000 vs. 700 per 100,000 for the state of Georgia. The Macon-Bibb County Health Department most commonly screens for chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), (NCHD, 2011). Bibb County ranks as the 9<sup>th</sup> highest county out of 159 counties for chlamydia infections, and 8<sup>th</sup> highest for gonorrhea infections, with both rates being the highest among 18-24 year olds (NCHD, 2011). Bibb County ranks the 8<sup>th</sup> highest for syphilis infections, and is highest amongst 20-24 year olds (NCHD, 2011). With such tremendous rates of infection located in Bibb County alone, it is crucial that preventative measures are properly administered to individuals, especially those at-risk for contracting STDs and other infectious diseases. To reduce the high rates of infections, and identify areas, which require a specialized public health response, implementation of intervention programs targeted to ensure the health of the population, may be necessary.

### Methods

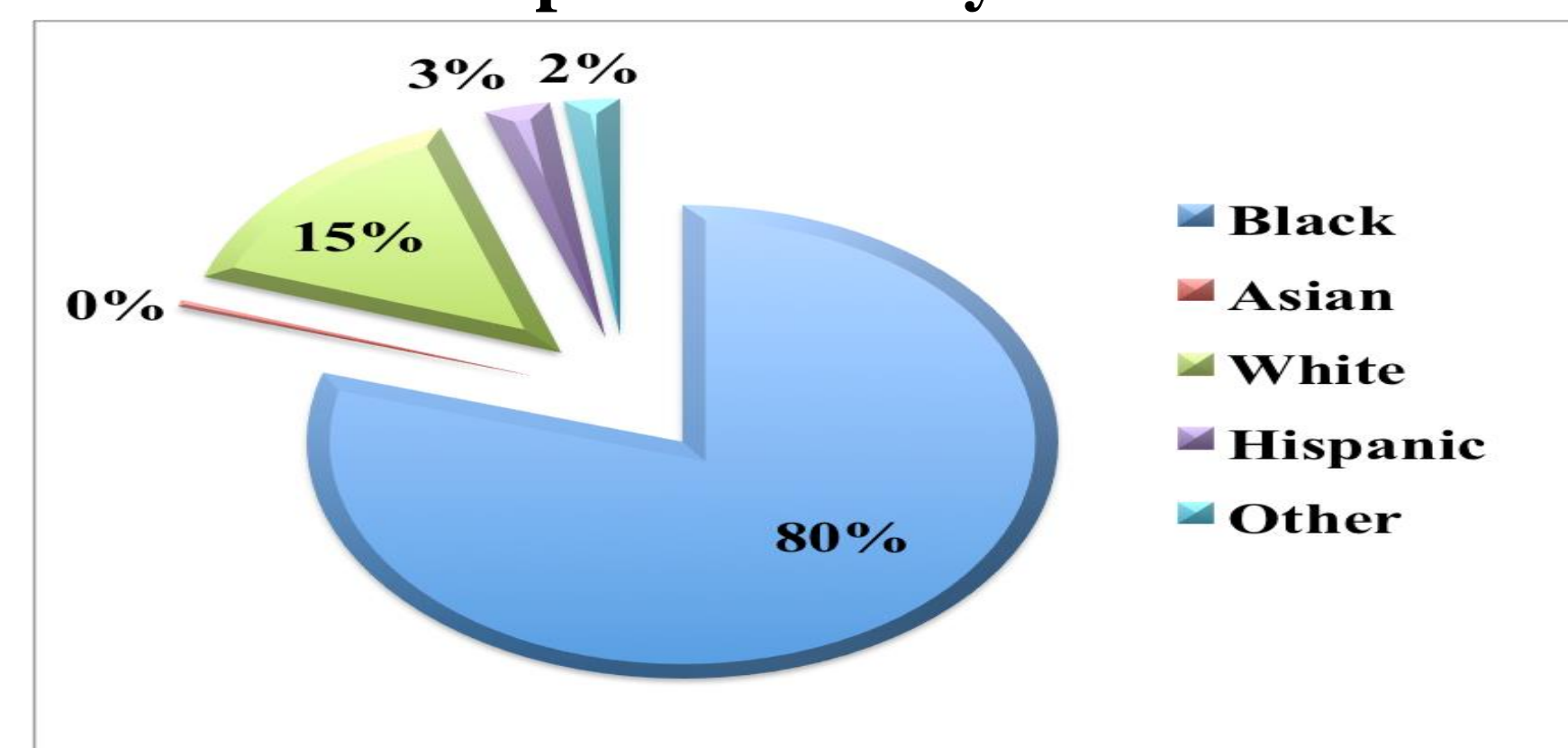
A meeting was initially set with the Bibb-County Nurse Manager to discuss the plans, expectations, and analysis of communicable disease records. Subsequently, all research and analysis was completed within the medical record department under the supervision of Medical Records Manager. Medical records were requested, provided and reviewed from the months of July- December of 2014, for patients requesting services related to an STD. Several variables, including, but not limited to, age, sex, location (zip code), sexual preference, prior infections, test results, and their level of education, were reviewed. The data was then analyzed to determine where health education interventions should be targeted. The confidentiality of each patient was maintained during the process by not using any identifiable information for any client seen. In the process of the medical record review, suggested improvements were also documented to ensure that data was properly noted and that it served to be valid.

### Results

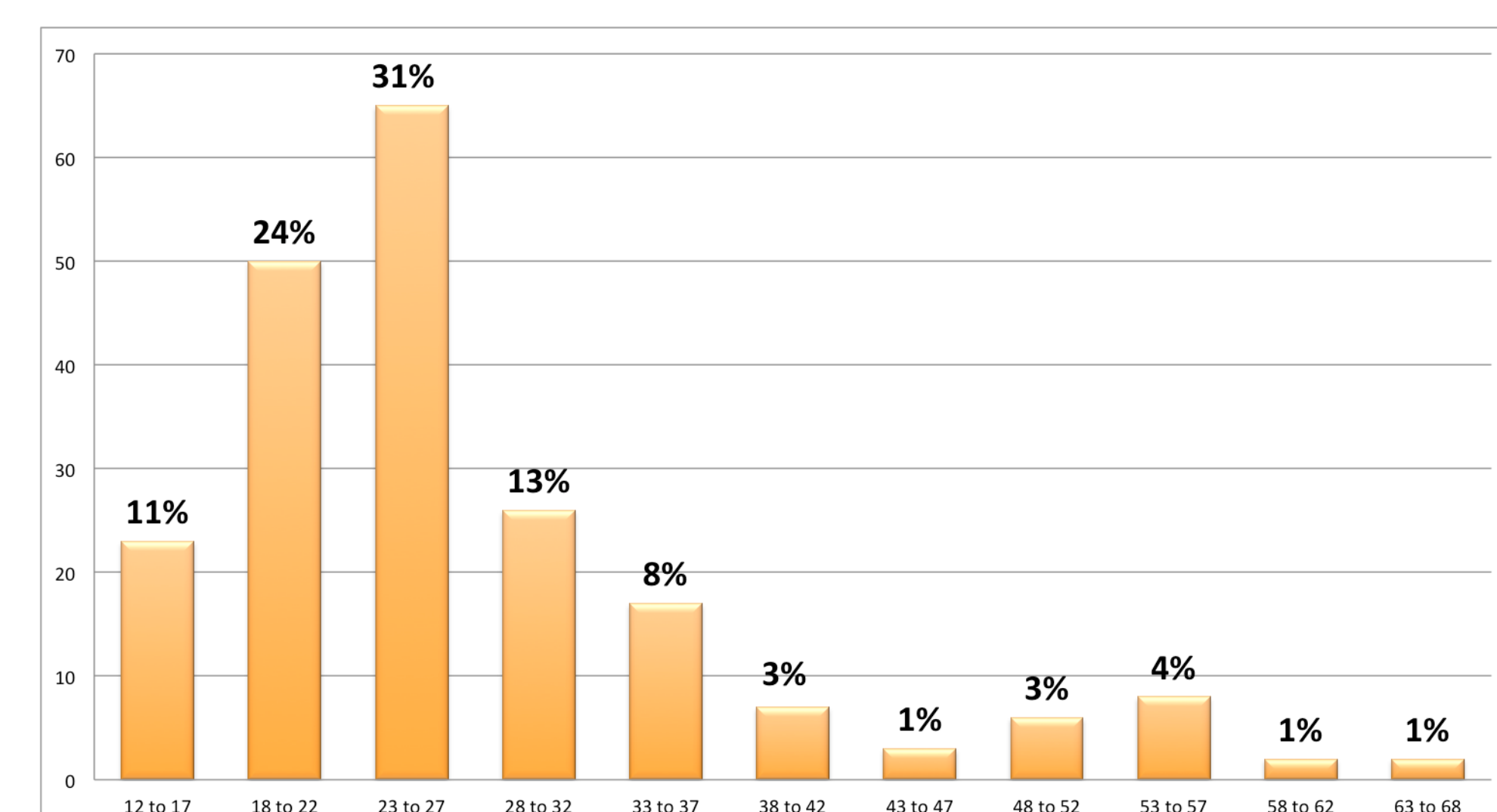
#### Number of Patients Treated/Diagnosed for STD/STIs at Macon-Bibb County Health Department July-December 2014



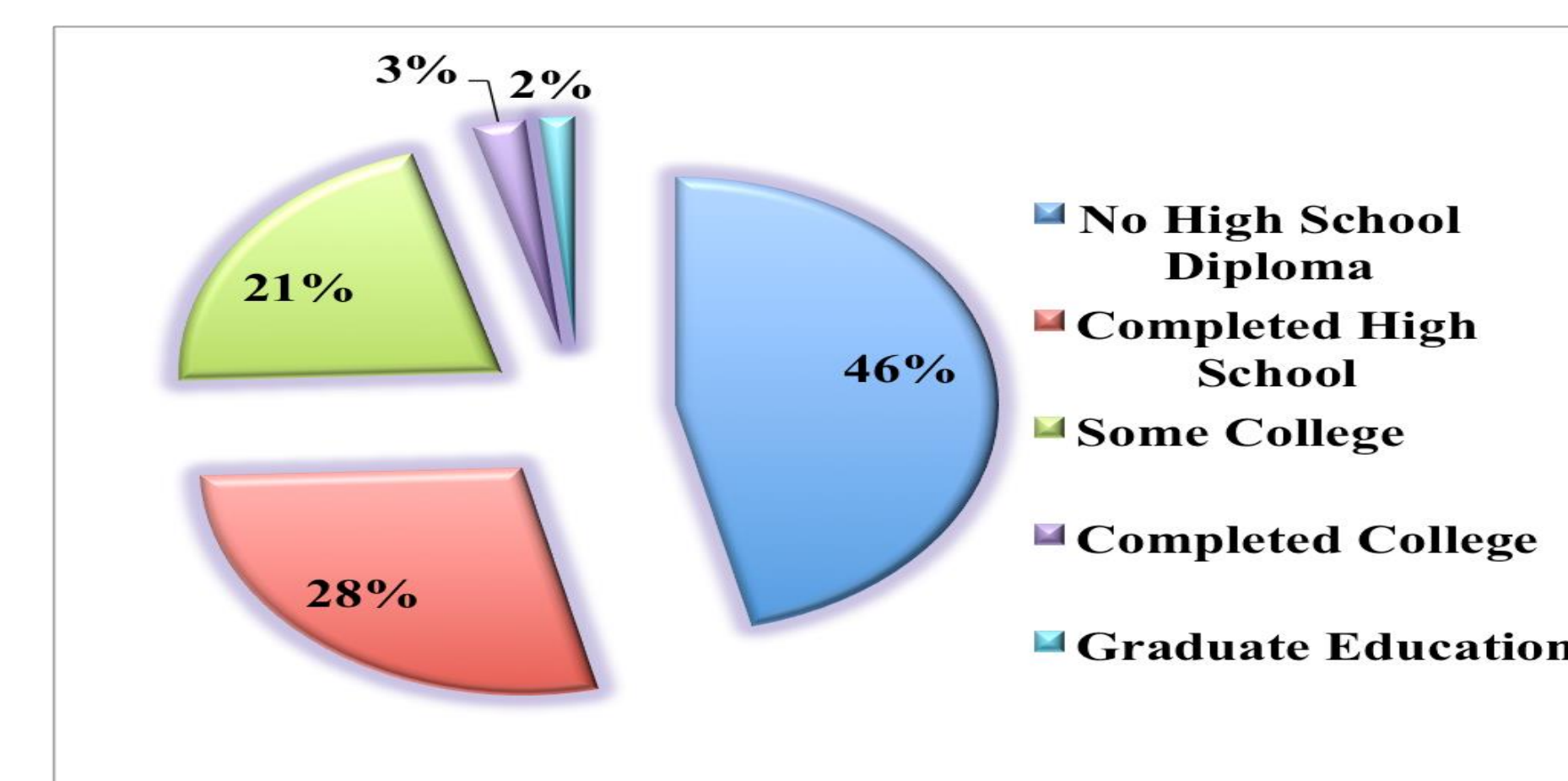
#### Race of Patients Seen at Macon-Bibb County Health Department July- December



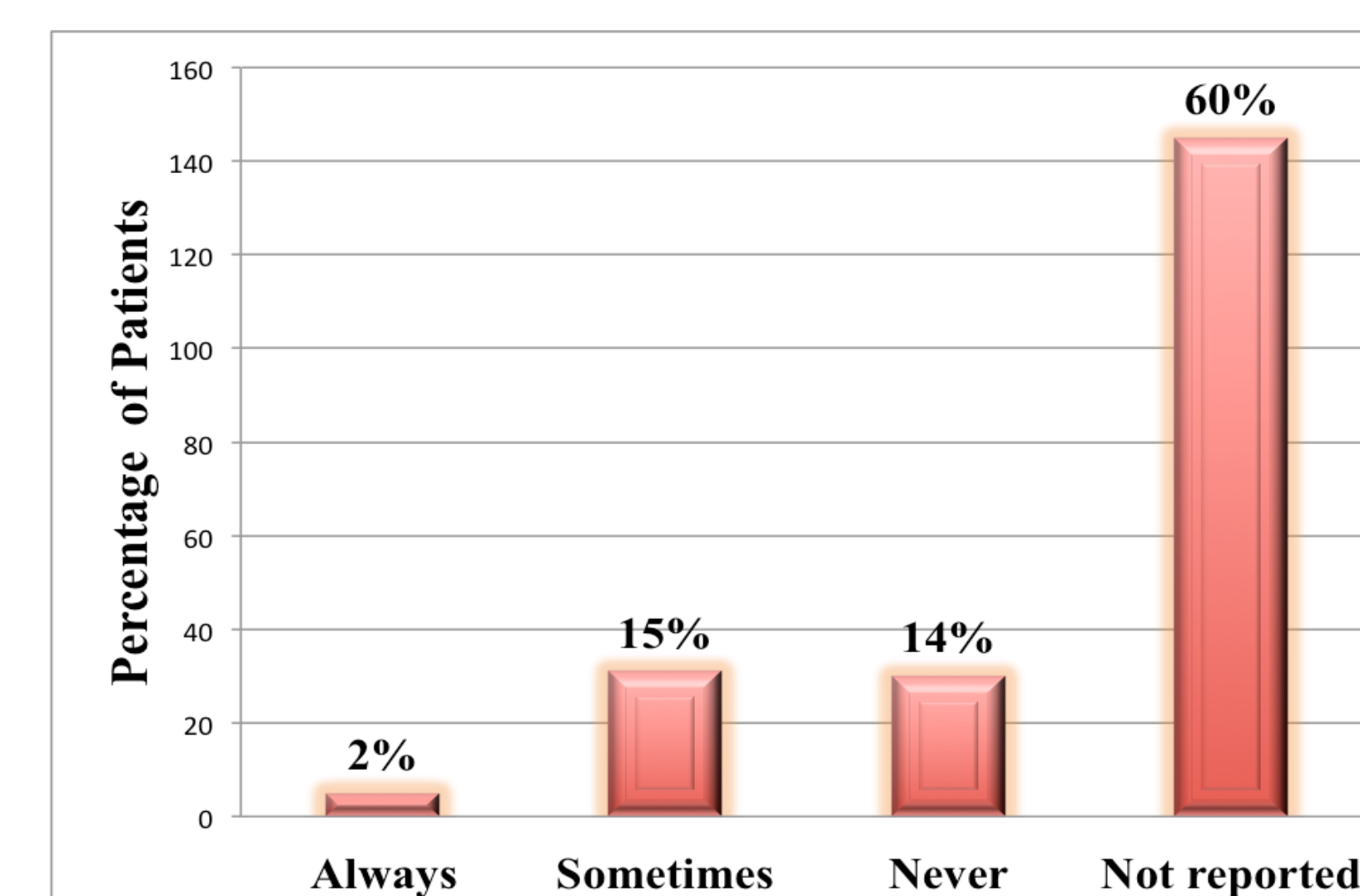
#### Age Range of Patients Seen at Macon-Bibb County Health Department July-December 2014



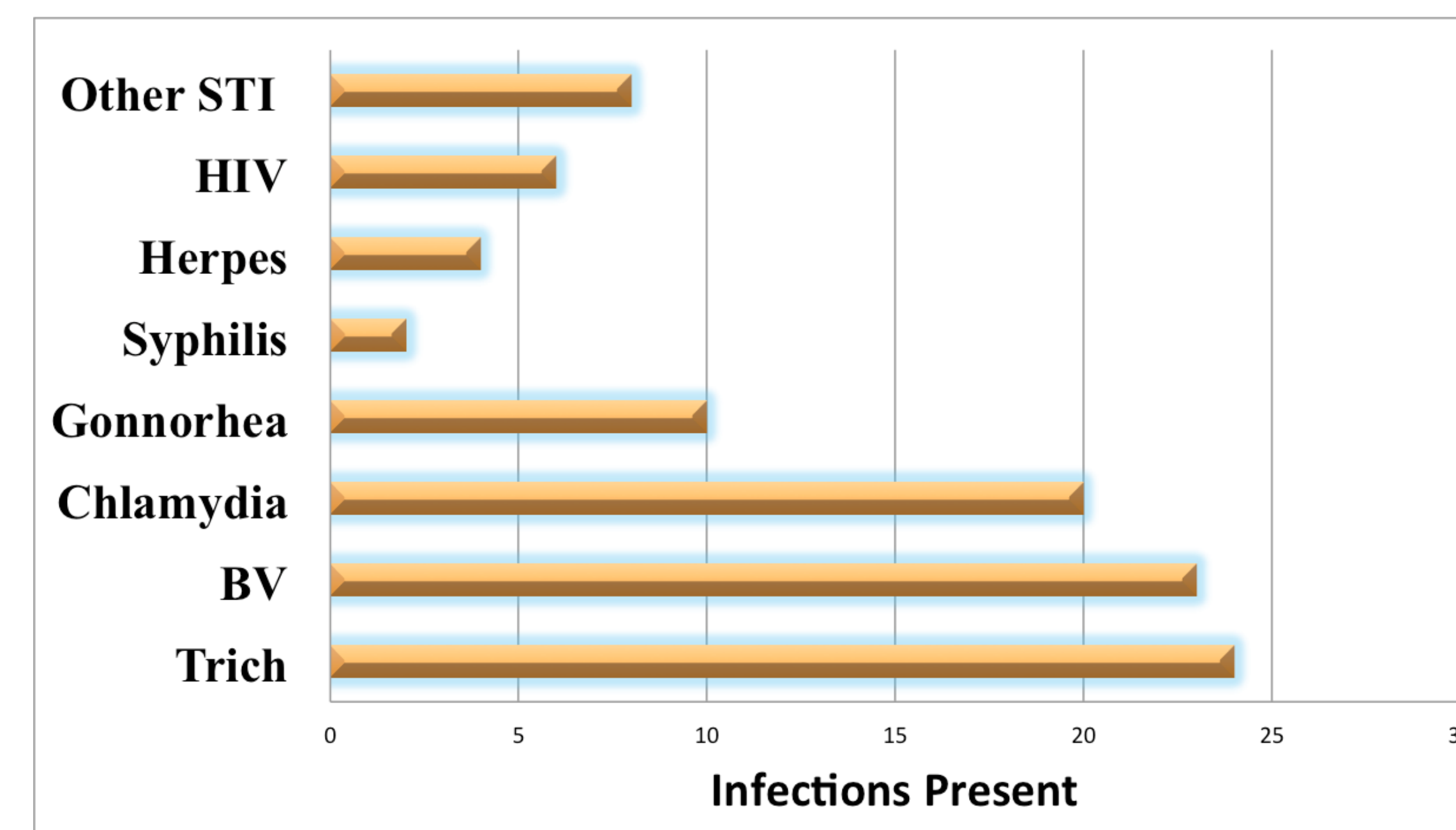
#### Level of Education Achieved by Patients Seen at Macon-Bibb County Health Department July-December 2014



#### Use of Contraceptives among Patients Seen at Macon-Bibb County Health Department July-December 2014



#### Most Common Sexually Transmitted Diseases Present at Macon-Bibb County Health Department July-December 2014



### Conclusions and Recommendations

In pursuance of improved health and well-being amongst all patients whom are sexually active, it may be necessary to provide additional preventive care by way of implementation of health programs which target the demographic backgrounds of those who frequently utilize the health department for STD/STI, and HIV/AIDS treatment and diagnosis. Focusing on preventative measures of sexually transmitted diseases and infections rather than treatment could emit the high rate of infection in the Macon-Bibb County area, as well as surrounding areas who utilize services provided.

Implementation of an EMR system would serve to be beneficial for clinics like the Macon-Bibb County Health Department, which serve a high volume of patients in that it allows for the elimination of storage space needed for paper records, and increase the number of patients being seen on a day to day basis due to less time being spent on documentation, and could alert staff to additional prevention efforts the client may need. The implementation of specific categories may lead to how patients became infected, health barriers present, the number of partners patients have been in contact with, current health behaviors, and sexual preferences all are additional facts which may serve to reduce the number of infections present at the Macon-Bibb County Health Department.

In conclusion, the practice of medical record reviews provides a standard for both clinical staff and physicians to abide by for the benefits of patients. Implementing annual medical record reviews allows for continuous improvements to be made in the health delivery at the Macon-Bibb County Health Department.

### References

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