





Infectious Syphilis Surveillance 2015-2019

Rhode Island Department of Health

Division of Preparedness, Response, Infectious
Disease and Emergency Medical Services

Center for HIV, Hepatitis, STD, and TB Epidemiology



About Infectious Syphilis

- Infectious syphilis includes primary, secondary, and early latent stages of syphilis.
- Syphilis is caused by a bacteria that is spread through sexual contact.
- Depending on the stage of syphilis, symptoms may include painless sores or a non-itchy body rash.
- High risk groups include gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men.



Data Overview, Infectious Syphilis

- There were 210 reported cases of infectious syphilis in Rhode Island in 2019.
- The incidence rate in Rhode Island was 19.9 cases per 100,000 in 2019.
- The highest rates of infectious syphilis are seen in Providence County.

Reported Cases of Infectious Syphilis, Rhode Island, 2015-2019

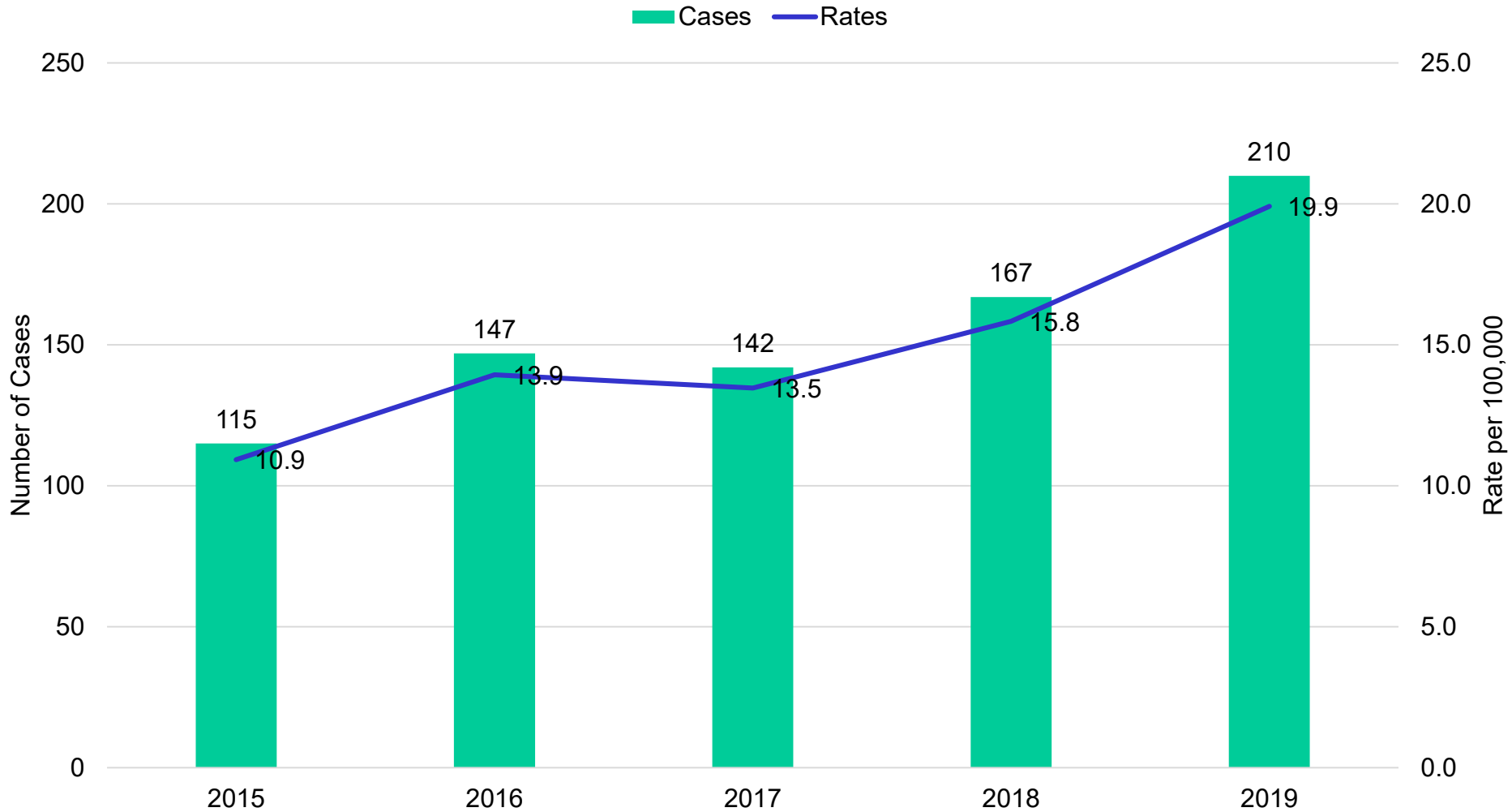


Figure 1: In 2019, there were 210 cases of infectious syphilis reported in Rhode Island, at a rate of 19.9 cases per 100,000 population. Infectious syphilis cases increased by 25.7% since 2018.

Rate of Infectious Syphilis, Age Group, Rhode Island, 2019

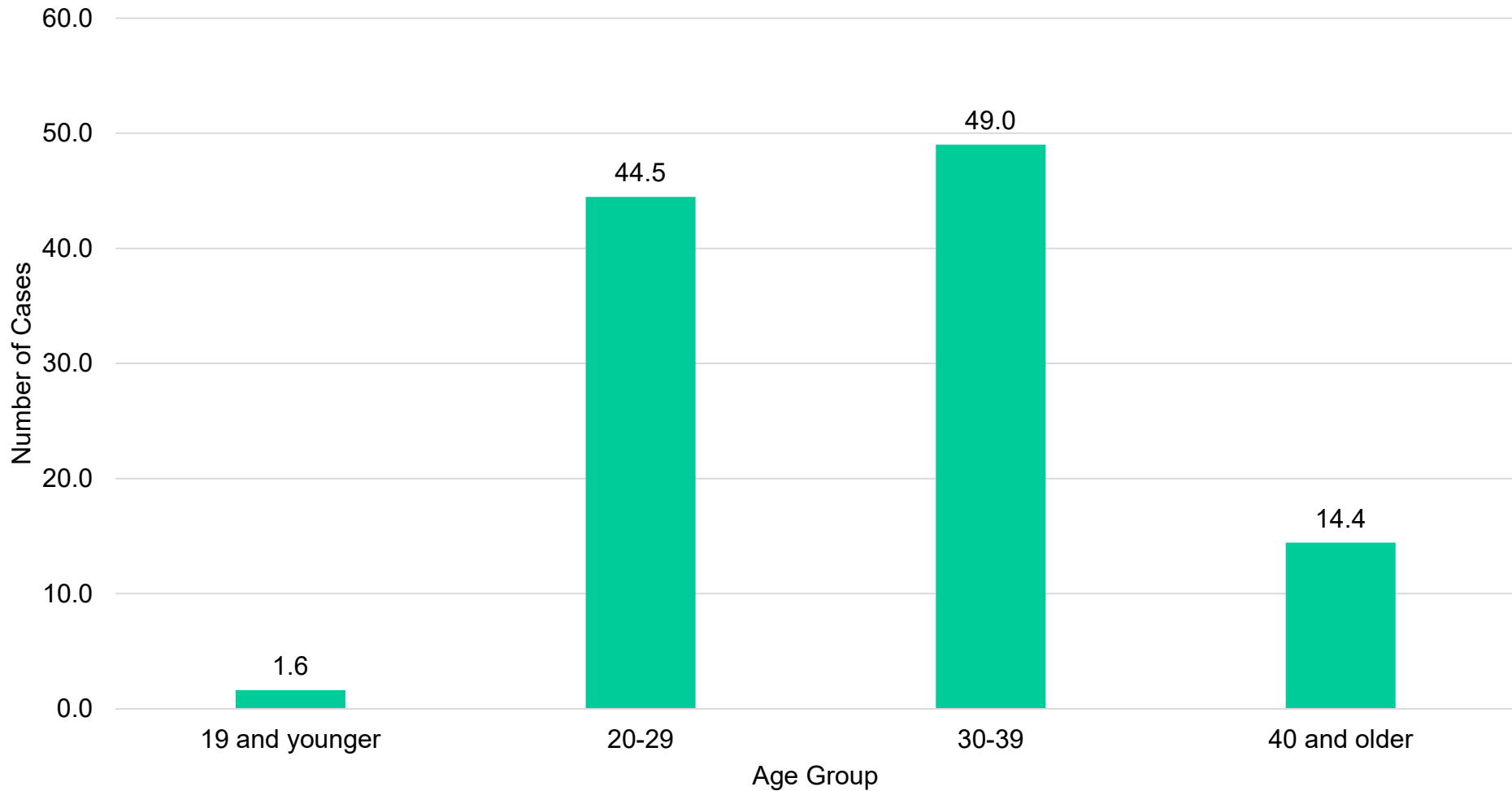


Figure 2: In 2019, infectious syphilis rates were highest in the 30-39 year old age group, followed by the 20-29 year old age group.

Rate of Infectious Syphilis, Sex and Year, Rhode Island, 2015-2019

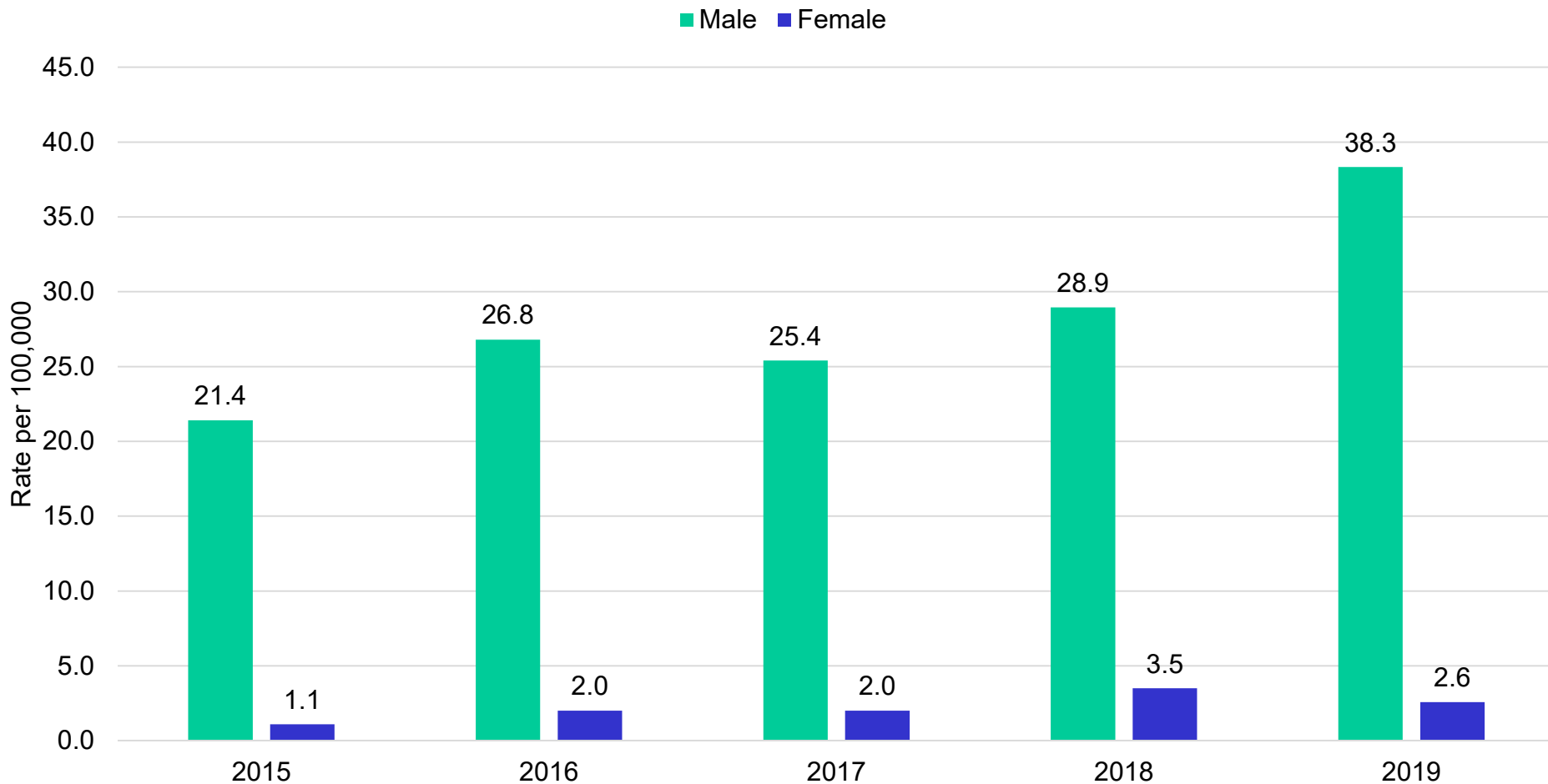


Figure 3: Infectious syphilis rates have been higher in males than in females over the last five years. In 2019, there were 14 cases in females and 196 cases in males. As seen in the rest of the country, gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men account for the majority of syphilis cases reported.

Rate of Infectious Syphilis, County and Year, Rhode Island, 2015-2019

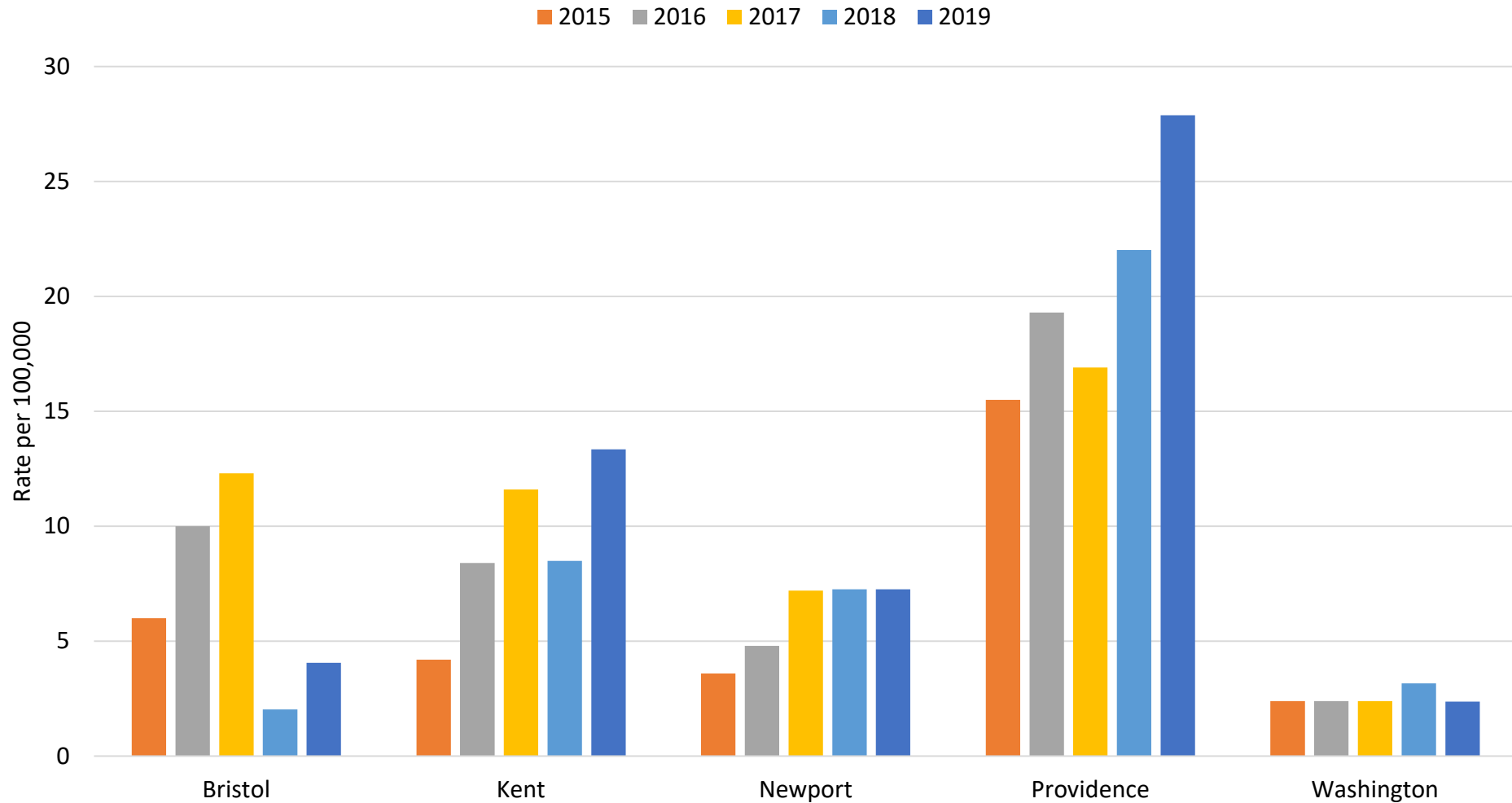


Figure 4: Between 2015 and 2019, rates of infectious syphilis have been consistently highest in Providence County compared to all other counties.

Rate of Infectious Syphilis, Racial/Ethnic Group, Rhode Island, 2019

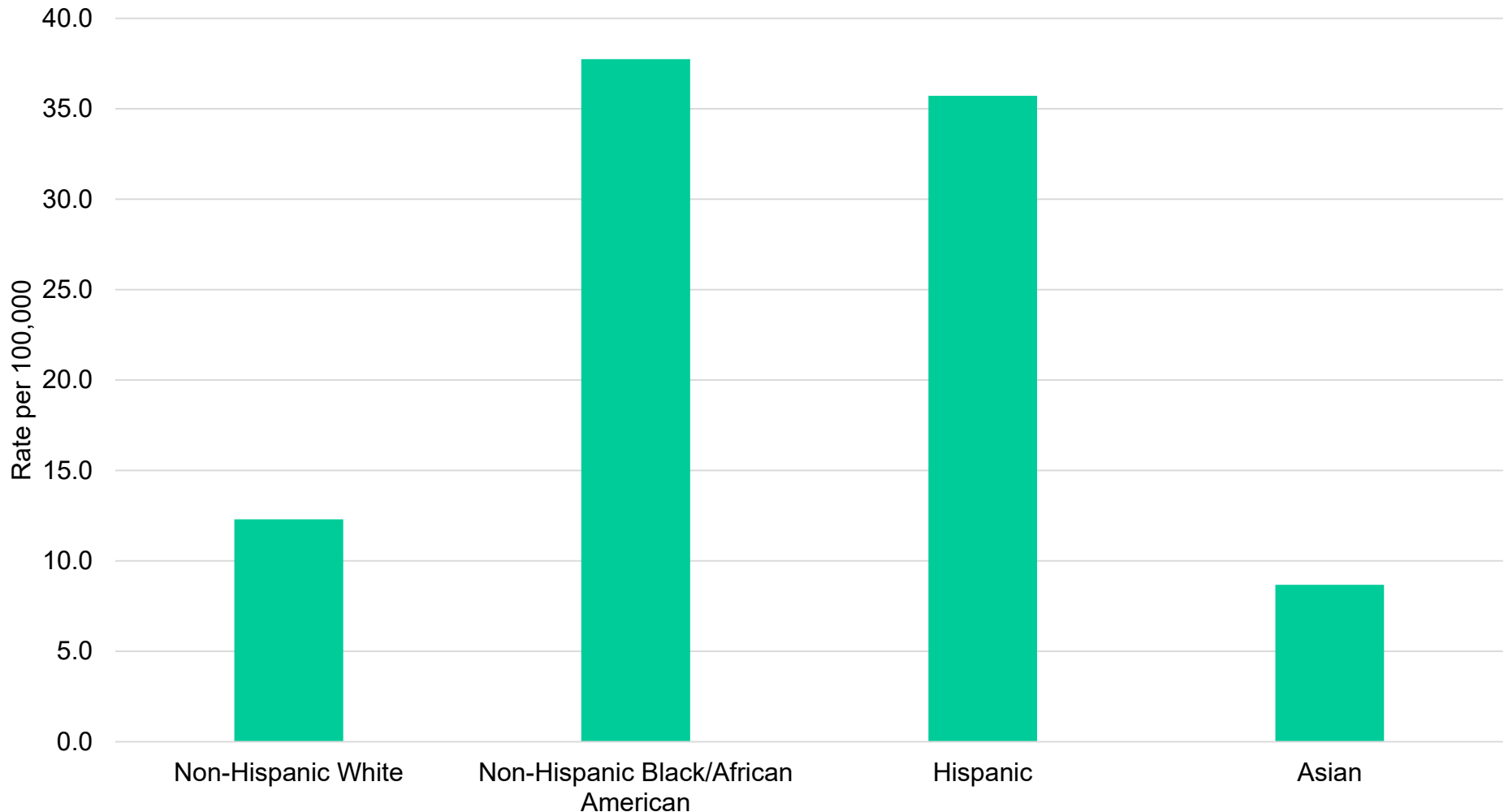


Figure 5: In 2019, rates of infectious syphilis were highest among non-Hispanic Blacks/African Americans, followed by Hispanics.

Infectious Syphilis Frequency and Rates by Year, Rhode Island, 2015-2019



Table 1. Frequency by Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Number of Cases	115	147	142	167	210

Table 2. Rate by Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Rate per 100,000	10.9	13.9	13.4	15.8	19.9

Infectious Syphilis Frequency, Age Group and Year, Rhode Island, 2015-2019



Table 3. Frequency by Age Group and Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
0-19	7	6	7	6	4
20-29	44	59	62	49	68
30-39	24	37	35	60	62
40 and older	40	42	38	52	76
Total	115	147	142	167	210

Infectious Syphilis Rates, Age Group and Year, Rhode Island, 2015-2019



Table 4. Rate by Age Group and Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
0-19	2.7	3.4	2.9	2.4	1.6
20-29	29.7	39.9	39.9	32.0	44.5
30-39	19.2	29.6	26.3	47.4	49.0
40 and older	7.7	8.1	7.2	9.9	14.4

Infectious Syphilis Frequency and Rates, Sex and Year, Rhode Island, 2015-2019



Table 5. Frequency by Sex and Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Female	6	11	11	19	14
Male	109	136	131	148	196
Total	115	147	142	167	210

Table 6. Rate by Sex and Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Female	1.1	2.0	2.0	3.5	2.6
Male	21.4	26.8	25.4	28.9	38.3

Infectious Syphilis Frequency, County and Year, Rhode Island, 2015-2019



Table 7. Frequency by County and Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bristol	3	5	6	1	2
Kent	7	14	19	14	22
Newport	3	4	6	6	6
Providence	97	121	108	139	176
Washington	3	3	3	4	3
Unknown	2	0	0	3	1
All	115	147	142	167	210

Infectious Syphilis Rates by County and Year, Rhode Island, 2015-2019



Table 8. Rate by County and Year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Bristol	6.0	10.0	12.3	2.0	4.1
Kent	4.2	8.4	11.6	8.5	13.3
Newport	3.6	4.8	7.2	7.3	7.3
Providence	15.5	19.3	16.9	22.0	27.9
Washington	2.4	2.4	2.4	3.2	2.4



Notes on Data

- Case counts include patients classified as confirmed and probable cases.
- For years 2015-2016, rates calculated based on 2010 US Census Population.
- For years 2017-2019, rates calculated based on 2016 RI Population Estimate Data.
- Rates expressed per 100,000 population.



References

- <http://www.cdc.gov/std/syphilis/stdfact-syphilis.htm>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/std/stats16/syphilis.htm>