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## **amfAR and Treatment Action Group Call for a Strategic Research Agenda Needed to End HIV/AIDS in the United States**

**NEW YORK, December 1, 2013.** Today, on World AIDS Day, amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research, and Treatment Action Group (TAG) called for a deliberate and expedited research agenda designed to begin to end the AIDS epidemic in the United States. Both organizations noted that in order to achieve this goal, Congress must end sequestration and work to ensure the full implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). AmfAR and TAG's new report, [\*Filling the Gaps in the U.S. HIV Treatment Cascade: Developing a Community-Driven Research Agenda\*](#), outlines several recommendations for the Obama administration.

"Today there is much greater clarity about what we need to do to accelerate the beginning of the end of HIV/AIDS," said Chris Collins, amfAR's vice president and director of public policy. "HIV testing and treatment, targeted HIV prevention, and support services such as housing are bringing down infection rates in several communities in the United States. A cure and vaccine are essential to ultimately ending AIDS. But now we also need a dedicated research agenda to learn how to deliver currently available, effective interventions to all at-risk populations."

"Thirty years after the discovery of HIV, we finally have the tools that can end the epidemic in our lifetime," said Mark Harrington, executive director of Treatment Action Group. "The time is now. What we need is the political commitment to fund evidence-based prevention, treatment, care, and implementation at the federal, state, and local levels. We need a fully funded implementation science agenda to bring down HIV incidence, morbidity, and mortality in every region of the country, for all populations at risk."

Recent scientific findings prove that providing access to routine testing for HIV, and ensuring that people living with HIV have access to care, helps people with the virus live longer, and reduces the number of people newly infected. Yet research, policy, and funding for health care access are in danger as federal budget paralysis and the impact of sequestration has forced across-the-board cuts to federal spending.

Meanwhile many states are blocking full implementation of Medicaid expansion through the ACA, further limiting access to lifesaving HIV testing, prevention, and treatment.

The new report, [\*Filling the Gaps in the U.S. Treatment Cascade: Developing a Community-Driven Research Agenda\*](#), summarizes key implementation science research priorities developed at a June 2013 gathering of HIV community activists, researchers and policy makers, and health care providers. Participants identified critical areas for research and policy to address gaps in the United States continuum of HIV care, also known as the HIV treatment cascade. Among the key recommendations are:

- Identify barriers to HIV testing and sustained engagement in care;
- Fund research to optimize programming for groups most at risk in the U.S. epidemic, including gay men, African Americans, and Latinos and Latinas;
- Strengthen the provider-person with HIV relationship to optimize outcomes;
- Increase funding for community-centered health and treatment literacy;
- Support best practices for providers that increase treatment adherence, retention, and reengagement in care;
- Research and disseminate models for ongoing community mobilization; and
- Ensure health care infrastructure and financing that end disparities in health care access.

This past summer, amfAR and TAG released [an issue brief](#) showing that the flat funding for biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health has resulted in a 22 percent drop in real purchasing power for the agency over the last decade. Although the United States has long been recognized as the world leader in biomedical research, stagnant funding imperils U.S. leadership and jeopardizes future lifesaving research advances.

### **About amfAR**

amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research, is one of the world's leading nonprofit organizations dedicated to the support of AIDS research, HIV prevention, treatment education, and the advocacy of sound AIDS-related public policy. Since 1985, amfAR has invested more than \$366 million in its programs and has awarded grants to more than 2,000 research teams worldwide. For more information, please visit [www.amfar.org](http://www.amfar.org).

### **About Treatment Action Group**

Treatment Action Group is an independent AIDS research and policy think tank fighting for better treatment, a vaccine, and a cure for AIDS. TAG works to ensure that all people with HIV receive lifesaving treatment, care, and information. TAG catalyzes open collective action by all affected communities, scientists, and policy makers to end AIDS. For more information, please visit [www.treatmentactiongroup.org](http://www.treatmentactiongroup.org).