



Treatment Action Group

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Barbara Hughes
President

Laura Morrison
Secretary and Treasurer

Jim Aquino
Frank Bua
Joy Episalla
Kevin Goetz
Roy Gulick, MD, MPH
Robbert W. Lennon
Richard Lynn, PhD
Alby Maccarone
Robert Monteleone
Jason Osher
David Sigal
Monte Steinman

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mark Harrington

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 life saving treatment, care, and information.

TAG is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

E.I.N. 13-3624785

December 1, 2015

Dear Friend of TAG,

I'm writing to thank you for the generous support that enables the incredible staff at Treatment Action Group—which I joined three years ago—to carry out our work in the struggle against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), and hepatitis C virus (HCV). I'd like to update you on some of TAG's key accomplishments in 2015.

TAG's three-year campaign for New York State to adopt a **Plan to End AIDS as an Epidemic by 2020** culminated in the April 2015 endorsement by Governor Andrew Cuomo of the community-driven Ending the Epidemic Blueprint. We're now working with activists, providers, policy makers, and public health authorities to adapt and adopt local or state plans to end the HIV epidemic in their jurisdictions—already New York has partners in Massachusetts and Washington states, and cities such as San Francisco and Washington, D.C., which have their own similar plans.

TAG worked with other activists to have an HIV presence at the inaugural **Movement for Black Lives Convening** in Cleveland, and our three workshops were filled to capacity. We provided capacity-building HIV prevention policy trainings for activists in Atlanta and Savannah, and continued working with numerous federal partners to implement evidence-based pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), treatment-as-prevention (TasP), and combination prevention strategies for all people living with, or vulnerable to, HIV infection.

TAG continues to be at the forefront of domestic and global HCV treatment advocacy. We work with a network of activists to **secure universal access to medicines that cure hepatitis C**—at affordable prices.

Our team of TB experts is heavily engaged in efforts to **revitalize investment in research on the new drugs, diagnostics, and vaccines that will bring an end to the TB pandemic**. And, like all of TAG's projects, the TB/HIV Project continues to work with local leaders by providing capacity and educational support required to mobilize affected communities to achieve zero deaths, new infections, suffering, and stigma.

So this year, we celebrate our victories. But there is much more work to do in 2016.

- **TAG will protect funding for AIDS research** at the National Institutes of Health that Congress is threatening to divert to other disease areas;
- **We will fight several dangerous bills** have been introduced in Congress that will potentially allow dangerous, unproven drugs onto the U.S. market;
- **We will fight to expand access wherever hepatitis C cures are being rationed** due to the exorbitant prices that countries, insurance companies, Medicaid, and Medicare refuse to pay; and
- **TAG will continue to press the White House and Congress** to adopt more aggressive strategies to end the HIV/AIDS, HCV, and TB epidemics.

We at TAG are determined to continue our work for universal health care access, social justice, and human rights through a hybrid of:

- conducting deep research, policy, and regulatory analysis;
- convening the best minds from across the globe to solve complex problems; and
- joining activist movements when called to demonstrate for the health and well being of people around the globe.

I personally feel blessed to be a part of this dedicated and very talented team at TAG.

Your support enables us to continue to do the lifesaving work that is the hallmark of TAG's mission.

I hope that you will demonstrate your love and commitment to justice during this season by making a donation to Treatment Action Group.

Thank you for your continued support and encouragement.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenyon Farrow', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kenyon Farrow
U.S. & Global Health Policy Director
Treatment Action Group

tagupdate

TAG'S PROGRESS ON THE FIGHT TO END HIV/AIDS, VIRAL HEPATITIS, AND TUBERCULOSIS

Dear Friends of TAG,

I'm very proud to send you the winter 2015 *TAGUpdate*. This has been a year of remarkable achievements for Treatment Action Group, which your generous support has made possible. In January, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo's Ending the Epidemic Task Force completed its blueprint for New York to end AIDS as an epidemic by 2020. The governor endorsed the entire blueprint in April 2015, and funding is being scaled up by both the state and New York City. TAG helped lead the efforts that resulted in the blueprint and convince the major pharmaceutical companies to commit to volume-based rebates on HIV drugs—for both treatment and prevention—to make it possible for New York to afford to treat all its people living with or at risk for HIV. And TAG is now helping to lead the implementation efforts now under way.



ACT UP/New York demonstrates at Governor Cuomo's NYC offices demanding the governor release and endorse the blueprint to end the epidemic by 2020; April 1, 2015

Our HIV prevention program continues to work with activists and government officials to modernize combination prevention efforts to focus on those most at risk, such as young gay men, black and Latino gay men, transgender people, and people living in the South.

TAG's hepatitis C virus (HCV) program is leading domestic and global efforts to reduce the high costs of new HCV curative combination therapies while speeding up U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval and broadening access to these revolutionary lifesaving treatments.

Meanwhile, TAG continues to push for an HIV cure and a vaccine as well as better treatments, prevention, and diagnostics for tuberculosis, the world's leading killer of people with HIV.

Finally, TAG is fighting efforts in Congress and elsewhere to cut the vital HIV/AIDS research programs carried out by the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

We're deeply grateful for your continuing support, which makes these efforts possible. Thank you from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of all those who benefit from TAG's lifesaving work.

Yours in the struggle,

Barbara Hughes
Board President

Ending the Epidemic Update

By Mark Harrington

On November 2 and 4, 2015, the White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP) convened two-day-long symposia to bring together U.S. jurisdictions working to end the AIDS epidemic with U.S. policy makers, international organizations such as UNAIDS, state and local public health departments, and community groups. Along with the New York State AIDS Institute's director, Dan O'Connell, New York City Deputy HIV/AIDS Health Commissioner Demetre Daskalakis, and activist James Krellenstein from ACT UP/ New York's Prevention of HIV Action Group, I presented on the creation and implementation of New York State's blueprint for ending the AIDS epidemic in the state by 2020. As O'Connell noted, "New York State's blueprint did not originate with Governor Cuomo. It was first conceived a few blocks from here in summer 2012 by Charles King [of Housing Works] and Mark Harrington," who were in jail after being arrested at the White House at the 2012 International AIDS Conference. New York's Governor Andrew Cuomo endorsed the plan in June 2014 and named a 65-member task force to develop a detailed blueprint, which was completed in January 2015. The governor endorsed all the blueprint recommendations in April 2015. The state has begun to implement the blueprint, opened the nation's first state assistance program for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), matched the City with ambitious new commitments to help homeless and unstably housed New Yorkers to achieve housing stability, and negotiated major drug price rebates with the six major HIV pharmaceutical manufacturers, whom TAG and a coalition of community groups persuaded to come on board. Meanwhile, TAG, with Housing Works and allies among clinicians, researchers, activists, public health officials, and policy makers, is working with other jurisdictions around the country—including Fulton County, Georgia; the state of Massachusetts; San Francisco, CA; and Washington, D.C.—to encourage other states and cities to adapt and adopt their own blueprints to end their HIV epidemics. The effort is also spreading internationally with advocacy leadership from UNAIDS and the World Health Organization (WHO), whose updated 2015 HIV guidelines for the first time recommend widespread use of PrEP and universal use of HIV treatment among all those diagnosed with HIV.



Photo caption: Mark Harrington (TAG), Greg Millett (amfAR), James Krellenstein (ACT UP/New York), Kali Lindsey (amfAR), Jeff Crowley (Georgetown University; former director, ONAP), and Terrance Moore (National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors) at the HIV Funders Meeting, White House, Washington, D.C., November 2, 2015

REPORT FROM THE FRONT

In 2015, TAG's Hepatitis/HIV Project continued to punch far beyond its weight, working locally, nationally, and globally for universal access to treatment for hepatitis C virus (HCV). Although revolutionary new oral drugs can cure HCV in just a few months, each year 700,000 people die from it. Since 2007, more people in the United States have died from hepatitis C than from AIDS. This reflects the incredible progress against HIV—and the need for a vibrant HCV treatment activist movement.

Direct-acting antivirals (DAAs), the new hepatitis C wonder drugs, are priced at \$1,000 per pill although they can be produced for little more than a dollar each. These prices have sparked protests and congressional inquiries and led to treatment rationing in the United States and other high-income countries.

A global movement to fight for access to HCV prevention, diagnostics, care, and treatment is under way. With our allies, TAG is fighting the restrictions that prevent millions of people in this country from being cured as well as the access barriers to treatment in low- and middle-income countries.

TAG is at the forefront of the global HCV treatment activist movement: we coordinate it, share scientific information, and work with partners from around the world to develop strategies and campaigns. Many of them are the same activists who have been fighting for lifesaving research and access to HIV prevention, diagnostics, care and treatment, human rights, housing, and harm reduction.

In 2015, the Hepatitis/HIV Project:

- strengthened the growing global movement for access to HCV treatment by sharing lessons from three decades of AIDS activism with the release of *Activist Strategies for Increasing Access to HCV Treatment in Low- and Middle-Income Countries*;
- organized a meeting with leading global activists to review progress against HCV treatment-access barriers, share new information, and devise short- and long-term advocacy goals, strategies, and campaigns;
- worked on global and domestic HCV treatment-guidelines panels to ensure that people get the best possible care and treatment;
- contributed to the development of a global response to the HCV epidemic through participation in the WHO's Strategic and Technical Advisory Committee for Hepatitis, and the Civil Society Reference Group;



Campaign action against Gilead's exorbitantly price sofosbuvir, an advanced medicine for hepatitis C treatment, at Ministry of Public Health in Thailand on May 20, 2015



Malaysian hepatitis C/HIV advocates demand the Ministry of Health issue compulsory licenses for expensive hep C medications (International Harm Reduction Coalition, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, October 2015)

- raised the visibility of our issues on social media;
- documented restrictions to HCV treatment, the lack of evidence supporting them, and a clear rationale for abolishing them;
- reported on HCV drug development;
- moderated, convened, co-organized, and presented at sessions during the International AIDS Conference, the Second International HIV/Viral Hepatitis Coinfection Satellite Meeting, the International Harm Reduction Conference, and the International Symposium on Hepatitis C in Substance Users;
- delivered presentations to HIV and HCV support and education groups, New York State Health Department staff, and policy makers;
- provided technical support to allies in low- and middle-income countries who are campaigning for expedited access to affordable generic HCV treatment;
- coauthored several papers published in peer-reviewed journals; and
- continued to manage two global listservs providing information and technical assistance on HCV treatment research, advocacy, and access to hundreds of people.



Tuberculosis Research Funding Crisis Imperils **Elimination** Goal

TAG has conducted a global survey on funding for TB research and development (R&D) since 2005; this year's report describes trends for 10 consecutive years of data. "Chronic underfunding made the last decade of TB research one of missed targets," said Mark Harrington. "We cannot ask scientists to confront a global epidemic of this size and intensity with flatlined or falling resources." The 2015 report is available online at:

www.treatmentactiongroup.org/tbrd2015

SUPPORT TAG

Supporting TAG is a wise investment in AIDS treatment advocacy. Every donation brings us one step closer to better treatments, a vaccine, and a cure for AIDS. Donate online: www.treatmentactiongroup.org/donate.

Does your company have a matching gifts program? If so, you can double or even triple your donation. Just complete the program's matching gift form and send it in with your donation to TAG.

When you shop on Amazon, enter the site at smile.amazon.com. Choose **TAG Treatment Action Group** as your designated charity, and 0.5 percent of the price of your eligible purchase will benefit TAG.

ABOUT TAG

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. We are science-based treatment activists working to expand and accelerate vital research and effective community engagement with research and policy institutions.

TAG catalyzes open collective action by all affected communities, scientists, and policy makers to end AIDS.

TAG
Treatment Action Group

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT

Barbara Hughes

SECRETARY AND TREASURER

Laura Morrison

Jim Aquino

Frank Bua

Joy Episalla

Kevin Goetz

Roy Gulick, MD

Robert W. Lennon

Richard Lynn, PhD

Alby Maccarone

Robert Monteleone

Jason Osher

David Sigal

Monte Steinman

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mark Harrington

DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Scott Morgan

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Andrea Benzacar

COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY DIRECTOR

Lei Chou

U.S. AND GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY DIRECTOR

Kenyon Farrow

TB/HIV PROJECT OFFICER

Mike Frick

HIV PROJECT DIRECTOR AND TAGLINE EDITOR

Tim Horn

MICHAEL PALM BASIC SCIENCE, VACCINES, AND CURE PROJECT COORDINATOR

Richard Jefferys

HIV PREVENTION RESEARCH AND POLICY COORDINATOR

Jeremiah Johnson

INTERNATIONAL HEPATITIS/HIV POLICY AND ADVOCACY DIRECTOR

Karyn Kaplan

TB/HIV PROJECT DIRECTOR

Erica Lessem

ADMINISTRATOR

Joseph McConnell

TB/HIV PROJECT OFFICER

Lindsay McKenna

HEPATITIS/HIV PROJECT DIRECTOR

Tracy Swan

Treatment Action Group

261 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2110

New York, NY 10016

Tel 212.253.7922

Fax 212.253.7923

tag@treatmentactiongroup.org

www.treatmentactiongroup.org

TAG is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. EIN 13-3624785