

# TAG UPDATE

DECEMBER 2022

## Marking Thirty Years of Progress Toward Ending HIV, Tuberculosis, and Hepatitis C

Since January 1992, TAG has focused exclusively on accelerating research to end the related pandemics of HIV, hepatitis C virus (HCV), and tuberculosis (TB), and to eradicate the global health inequities which drive these pandemics. Here's a sample of what we've been up to in 2022.

### PANDEMIC ERA TESTS MAY SPEED HEPATITIS-C DETECTION

New York Times | Ted Alcorn | February 4, 2022  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/04/health/hepatitis-c-test.html>

“ ‘This is a whole class of technologies that could have a lot of potential for hepatitis C [diagnosis] that are just completely stalled on the regulatory side,’ said Annette Gaudino, director of policy strategy at the Treatment Action Group.”

### WHAT DOES THE “NEW YORK PATIENT” MEAN FOR EVERYONE ELSE WHO’S LIVING WITH HIV?

TheBody | Tim Murphy | February 17, 2022  
<https://www.thebody.com/article/hiv-remission-cure-new-york-patient>

“ ...Richard Jefferys, the HIV cure research expert at the advocacy organization and think tank Treatment Action Group [stated,] ‘It’s great to have a woman join the men in having good results from an [HIV-resistant bone marrow] transplant,’ he said, ‘even though there’s some uncertainty about whether to call this remission or cure at this point.’”

### HOPE FOR TB PATIENTS AS TREATMENT COST CUT BY MORE THAN HALF

The Star (Kenya) | Magdaline Saya | August 16, 2022  
<https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2022-08-16-hope-for-tb-patients-as-treatment-cost-cut-by-more-than-half/>

“ ‘We expect this desperately needed child-friendly formulation to be ready for distribution by no later than the end of 2024,’ Mike Frick from the Treatment Action Group said. ‘To ensure countries are prepared to order these new regimens once they are ready we’re already starting to raise awareness among communities and eligible populations that currently do not have access to optimal TPT regimens.’”

### MEDIA HEADLINES OFTEN SUGGEST THAT HIV VACCINES AND CURES ARE IMMINENT. NOT SO FAST!

TheBody | Tim Murphy | March 31, 2022  
<https://www.thebody.com/article/media-headlines-hiv-vaccines-and-cures>

(Excerpts from interview with Richard Jefferys, TAG’s Basic Science, Vaccines, and Cure Project Director.)

“ Tim Murphy: ‘Hi Richard! Thank you so much for being our scientific explainer-in-chief once again. Before we break down the three items in question here, what would be your topline thought about them?’

Richard Jefferys: ‘They definitely generate excitement. This is valuable science and it’s welcome to see it moving forward. Problems arise in terms of people misunderstanding the significance of the launch of these studies. And the worst example is the Moderna HIV vaccine Phase 1 trial, which has been misinterpreted on social media as signaling that an HIV vaccine is imminent.’”

### TREATMENT ACTION GROUP CALLS FOR MORE RESEARCH, TREATMENT, PREVENTION

The Desert Sun | Al Jones | May 20, 2022  
<https://www.desertsun.com/story/life/2022/05/20/treatment-action-group-calls-more-research-treatment-prevention/9816195002/>

“ Kevin and Neil Goetz and Ellen Wolf hosted nearly 100 community members May 1 to meet TAG (Treatment Action Group) executive director Mark Harrington and his team from New York: Director of Development Jason Kirk and HIV Project Director Cheriko Boone. ... TAG is celebrating 30 years as an independent, activist and community-based research and policy think tank fighting for better treatment, prevention, a vaccine and a cure for HIV, tuberculosis (TB) and hepatitis C (HCV). Harrington lamented that while TAG has been advocating for a cure and treatment for 40 years, there are still 40 million people living with AIDS around the planet.”

## AS TUBERCULOSIS BURDEN INCREASES DUE TO COVID-19, WHO CALLS FOR URGENT ACTION

Forbes | Madhukar Pai | October 27, 2022

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/madhukarpai/2022/10/27/as-tuberculosis-burden-increases-due-to-covid-19-who-calls-for-urgent-action/?sh=5bf85a7e7e65>

“ ‘This campaign is a remedy proposed by a coalition of TB community groups, civil society organizations, survivor networks and their allies to the second year of setbacks felt across all aspects of TB programs since Covid-19,’ said Lindsay McKenna, TB Project Co-Director at Treatment Action Group (TAG), one of the organizations involved in coordinating the campaign. ‘It acknowledges that despite the pandemic, we’re actually sitting in a place of great opportunity. Scientific advances have given us shorter regimens for treating and preventing nearly all forms of TB. WHO has acted quickly to put these regimens into guidelines. Now it’s our responsibility as a global TB community to ensure that people with and at risk of TB can benefit from access to them. Universalizing access to the highest standard of treatment is necessary not only to build back but to go farther than where we were before Covid-19,’ she explained.”

## BLACK HIV ADVOCATES PLAN SUMMIT TO ADDRESS PREP DISPARITIES

POZ | Trent Straube | July 20, 2022

<https://www.poz.com/article/black-hiv-advocates-plan-summit-address-prep-disparities>

“ ‘It is widely believed that we now have all the tools necessary to end the HIV epidemic,’ added Riko Boone, the HIV project director of the Treatment Action Group. ‘The approval of oral PrEP in 2012 as a tool to prevent HIV was an extraordinary game-changer that should have been scaled up exponentially, particularly to reach populations that carry the disproportionate burden of the epidemic. But, shamefully, that has not been the case. Now, with the recent approval of injectable PrEP, we are in danger of repeating history yet again. As we recognize the 10th year anniversary of oral PrEP’s approval, we must recommit to turning the ship of inequity around.’”

## MONKEYPOX OUTBREAK NEEDS ‘HARD AND FAST’ RESPONSE

FOX 5 New York | Linda Schmidt and Fox 5 NY Staff | July 25, 2022 and updated July 26

<https://www.fox5ny.com/news/us-response-monkeypox-outbreak>

“ The World Health Organization over the weekend declared the growing monkeypox outbreak an international public health emergency. Treatment Action Group, a health activism think tank for the LGBTQ community, agrees with the declaration. ‘This truly is a global health emergency,’ Treatment Action Group Executive Director Mark Harrington said. ‘Two months ago, there were less than 120 cases. Now, there’s over 16,000 cases in an ever-increasing number of countries.’”

## JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY: JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICINE-LED CONSORTIUM TO RECEIVE UP TO \$200 MILLION TO FIGHT TB GLOBALLY

IndiaEducationDiary.com | IED News Desk | August 5, 2022

<https://indiaeducationdiary.in/johns-hopkins-university-johns-hopkins-medicine-led-consortium-to-receive-up-to-200-million-to-fight-tb-globally/>

“ ‘This extraordinary investment from USAID will enable us to have a transformational impact on global efforts to end TB and will provide unparalleled research, strategic development and policy support opportunities for Johns Hopkins Medicine and our collaborators around the world over the next five years,’ says SMART4TB consortium chief of party Richard Chaisson, M.D., director of the Center for Tuberculosis Research and professor of medicine at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. ‘Additionally, we’ll be able to strengthen and empower the people, organizations and communities directly fighting TB in the areas most affected by the disease.’ Partnering with Johns Hopkins Medicine in the SMART4TB consortium are the University of California, San Francisco, Center for Tuberculosis; the KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation; the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation; the Treatment Action Group; and five regional hubs”



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<https://treatmentactiongroup.salsalabs.org/yearend2022>

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