

TAG UPDATE

DECEMBER 2024

Continuing Our Progress Toward Ending HIV, Tuberculosis, and Hepatitis C

Since our inception in 1992, TAG has focused on accelerating research to end the related pandemics of HIV, hepatitis C virus (HCV), and tuberculosis (TB), and we're still working to eradicate the many global health inequities that drive these pandemics. Here's some of the noteworthy media coverage from 2024.

HIV, HEALTH ADVOCATES TRY TO STOP "CATASTROPHIC" CLOSING OF KEY DRUG ACCESS INITIATIVE

The Body | Tim Murphy | October 1, 2024

<https://www.thebody.com/article/msf-access-campaign-closing-hiv-health-advocates-letter>

“Harrington [Mark Harrington, TAG executive director] described the Access Campaign as ‘a group of doctors, pharmacists, and other staff who would do deep research’ into barriers to treatment and care, and then bring that research directly to global organizations and national governments to demand change. One such area of research, Harrington said, was around issuing compulsory licenses to manufacture medications. The Access Campaign was invaluable because it would initiate campaigns to get key drugs, such as Gleevec for cancer or linezolid for TB, made into generics so they could be affordable in poor countries.”

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY IN HIV CURE RESEARCH.

aidsmap | Gus Cairns | July 2024

<https://www.aidsmap.com/about-hiv/diversity-and-equity-hiv-cure-research>

“A challenge in HIV cure research is that it does not include enough of the populations most likely to have HIV and who would most benefit from cure research... According to 2023 figures from the Treatment Action Group, women and girls made up only 20% of participants across 124 cure trials globally, even though women make up the majority of people with HIV. Black people made up 23% of the total. Despite their heightened risk of infection, there were only 19 trans people across the 124 trials.”

WHAT IS “POST-TREATMENT CONTROL,” AND WHY ARE SO MANY HIV RESEARCHERS TALKING ABOUT IT?

The Body | Tim Murphy | March 15, 2024

<https://www.thebody.com/article/what-is-post-treatment-control-why-researchers-talking-about-it>

“According to Jefferys, [Richard Jefferys, TAG basic science, vaccines, and cure project director], who follows such research carefully, about 30 studies involving treatment interruptions are currently active, but not all of them are necessarily looking for post-treatment control as the endpoint of the study. ‘What people would really like to see,’ he said, ‘is a study where a substantial proportion of participants show good post-treatment control—but that hasn’t happened yet.’”

HUGE TB VACCINE TRIAL STARTS IN SA. IT COULD DELIVER FIRST NEW TB JAB IN OVER A CENTURY

Spotlight | Marcus Low | March 19, 2024

<https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/news/huge-tb-vaccine-trial-starts-in-sa-it-could-deliver-first-new-tb-jab-in-over-a-century-20240319>

“While he said it is good to finally see the phase 3 trial of M72 get underway, Mike Frick, TB co-director at Treatment Action Group, a New York-based TB advocacy organisation, went on to say: ‘The fact that we had to wait so long between phase II and phase III says everything one needs to know about the headwinds – financial, political, commercial – that TB research is up against.’”

WHY INCLUDING PREGNANT WOMEN IN A TB STUDY IN SA WAS A BIG DEAL

Spotlight | Tiyese Jeranji | October 29, 2024
<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2024/10/29/why-including-pregnant-women-in-a-tb-study-in-sa-was-a-big-deal/>

“ Lindsay McKenna, TB Project Co-Director at Treatment Action Group (TAG – a New York-based advocacy organisation), stresses that pregnant women are often among the last groups to benefit from treatment innovations. ‘They get stuck with longer, more toxic, more poorly performing regimens for longer,’ she says.”

NEW TB DRUG SHOWS PROMISE, BUT EXPERIMENTAL VACCINE DISAPPOINTS

Spotlight | Elri Voigt | March 11, 2024
<https://www.spotlightnsp.co.za/2024/03/11/new-tb-drug-shows-promise-but-experimental-vaccine-disappoints/>

“ Lindsay McKenna, the TB Project Co-Director at Treatment Action Group (TAG – a New York-based NGO), explained to Spotlight that quabodepistat is a new drug with a new mechanism of action for inhibiting TB’s cell wall synthesis. While there are a few new drugs that work the same way, quabodepistat is the furthest along. Essentially, this means that the drug interferes with the TB bacteria’s cell wall structure... ‘It’s the first in a new class of TB drugs to reach this stage since bedaquiline and delamanid were in phase 2b over ten years ago,’ McKenna said.”

NEW STUDY: COMBO TREATMENT CAN HELP SOLVE THE TB-HIV CO-INFECTION CRISIS - MORE THAN HALF A MILLION PEOPLE COULD BENEFIT

Reliefweb.int | March 5, 2024
<https://reliefweb.int/report/world/new-study-combo-treatment-can-help-solve-tb-hiv-co-infection-crisis-more-half-million-people-could-benefit>

“ ‘This research gives programs the green light to fully integrate [TB preventive therapy combo] 3HP into the care of people with HIV right from the very beginning of HIV treatment,’ said Mike Frick, co-director of the TB program the Treatment Action Group, a community-based research and policy think tank. ‘We already knew that it was okay to use 3HP and dolutegravir together in people experienced with HIV treatment. Now we know the same is true for people who are just starting HIV treatment for the first time.’”

WHO DECLARES MPOX AN INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

POZ | Liz Highleyman | August 16, 2024
<https://www.poz.com/article/declares-mpox-international-public-health-emergency>

“ ‘The limited access to vaccines, tecovirimat and other essential health commodities this far into the current outbreak is yet another demonstration that the existing global health system cannot guarantee the human rights to health and scientific progress for all. Major reforms and a reallocation of resources are necessary,’ Treatment Action Group said in a statement. ”

Supporting TAG is an invaluable investment in advocacy efforts aimed at putting an end to the devastating epidemics of HIV, hepatitis C, and tuberculosis. TAG’s smart and relentless staff maximize the impact of your support every day. Every donation to TAG brings us closer to achieving our goal of eradicating these epidemics and improving equitable access for all.

DONATE ONLINE:
<https://treatmentactiongroup.salsalabs.org/yearend2024>



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