$12.3M Grant to Explore Links Between Alcohol, HIV and Health Issues

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How does alcohol affect comorbidities among people living with HIV—specifically, how does it impact cardiovascular health, tuberculosis (TB) and falls, fractures and frailty? A $12.3 million grant from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) will help fund research into these links.

The five-year grant goes to researchers at Boston Medical Center (BMC), Boston University Schools of Medicine and Public Health (BUSM, BUSPH), the University of California at San Francisco and the Vanderbilt University Medical Center, according to a BMC press release.

The studies include groups of people living with HIV in Boston, Uganda and Russia who have been part of the Uganda Russia Boston Alcohol Network for Alcohol Research Collaboration on HIV/AIDS (URBAN ARCH) Consortium.

Thanks to antiretrovirals, people with HIV are living much longer. However, they are seeing an increase in comorbidities. “Unhealthy alcohol use is prevalent in this population and is associated with increased risks and worse outcomes for multiple adverse health conditions, such as TB, cardiovascular disease and falls,” said consortium principal investigator Jeffrey Samet, MD, MPH, in the press release.

Clinical researchers must address these high-priority comorbid health conditions, Samet said, in order to increase the availability of treatments and improve health outcomes for alcohol-using individuals living with HIV.

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