2022 Top HIV News Stories

Celebrities shine bright among 2022 POZ HIV News headlines about PrEP, discrimination, crime laws, COVID, fake meds and more.

December 16, 2022 By Ian Anderson and Trent Straube

If you scroll through the POZ News headlines of 2022, you might think that, after three years of COVID-19 and growing political, racial and economic unrest, we have finally returned to a semblance of normalcy. Then again, if you recall the year's biggest non-HIV-related news stories—the Supreme Court overturning the right to abortion, the January 6 committee investigating the attack on the Capitol, Russia invading Ukraine, Elon Musk buying (and torching) Twitter, Florida passing "Don't Say Gay" laws, inflation ballooning, Will Smith slapping Chris Rock—well, let's just hope this is anything but our new normal.

Below is a list of the most viewed POZ News stories of 2022. Unlike recent years, one or two HIV topics did not dominate this year's POZ News. The same thing cannot be said of our Science News, which spans HIV treatment, cure research and, most important for 2022, mpox, formerly known as monkeypox, and a topic that was extremely popular with our readers. (See "2022 Top HIV Science Stories.")

Instead, a list of the POZ News articles with the most page views shows the enduring interest in HIV stories about discrimination, prevention, health equity, fundraisers, conferences, obituaries, education and celebrities—plus alarming reports of counterfeit HIV medications.

On the antidiscrimination front, the Defense Department updated its HIV policy after a federal judge in April ruled that service members living with HIV could not be discharged or denied promotions based on their HIV status. In acknowledging that "appropriately managed HIV is a chronic condition with little to no effect on a person's overall health or daily activities," as Scott Schoettes, Esq., put it, the Pentagon's new policy aligns with modern science. Praised as a "landmark victory," the court ruling paved the way for members of Congress, HIV advocates and a new lawsuit demanding that the military go further and allow people with HIV to enlist.

Similarly, as more lawmakers grasped the modern science of HIV—notably that people living with HIV who maintain undetectable viral levels do not transmit the virus, a fact known as Undetectable Equals Untransmitable, or U=U—more states and municipalities are modernizing their HIV crime laws. Georgia and New Jersey made headway in 2022, following Illinois's lead the previous year. (Pennsylvania's governor apparently didn't get the memo; in fact, he signed a law increasing penalties related to HIV criminalization.) This year also saw the launch, on February 28, of the

annual HIV Criminalization Awareness Day.

In 2022, Truvada marked a decade since it was approved by the Food and Drug Administration as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for the prevention of HIV. And yet, as many reports noted, PrEP (in its various forms) hasn't reached its full potential, especially when it comes to uptake by women, people in the South and Black and brown populations. Expect more PrEP battles in the coming years, as a federal judge in 2022 ruled that the mandate to cover PrEP violates religious freedom and advocacy groups urge Congress to fund a national PrEP program.

This year also saw the return of in-person gatherings and fundraisers, such as the U.S. Conference on HIV/AIDS, held in October in Puerto Rico, and the AIDS/LifeCycle Ride, which broke fundraising records after a two-year hiatus. Broadway Bares: XXX, the one-night-only burlesque, returned after three years for its 30th anniversary to raise money for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS—and garnered a slew of online peepers (the POZ article about XXX drew more page views—not to be confused with Facebook Likes—than any other story this year).

As always, sex—or scantily clad Broadway dancers—sells. As does celebrity. Elton John, Nicole Kidman, Troye Sivan, Beyoncé's mom, OnlyFans influencer Reno Gold, The Real World's Danny Roberts and other boldface names caught our readers' attention for their HIV advocacy. Sadly, so did those who left us this year, such as Leslie Jordan, Angela Lansbury and Olivia Newton-John, who used their star wattage to shine a spotlight on HIV issues.

The 20 POZ HIV News Stories that received the most page views in 2022

1. Watch XXX Broadway Talent Bare It All to Fight HIV
Posted: June 30

2. Will Pop Star Troye Sivan Find Love in the HIV Movie "Three Months"? [VIDEO]
Posted: February 14

3. This Pleasure Principle Boosts Condom Use and Fights HIV and STIs
Posted: November 22

4. All Adults Ages 19 to 59 Should Get Hepatitis B Shots, Says CDC
Posted: April 1

5. Can You Score Cheaper Meds via Mark Cuban's Online Pharmacy?
Posted: January 25

6. Of Course Leslie Jordan Advocated for HIV and AIDS Causes
Posted: November 11

7. Watch a "Flabbergasted" Elton John Receive a Medal for His HIV Advocacy

Posted: September 26

8. Does Meth Use Make You Biologically More Vulnerable to HIV?
Posted: April 29

9. Lawyer Who Fought Abortion Rights Takes Aim at HIV Prevention PrEP
Posted: July 15

10. R.I.P. Dawn Smith, an HIV Prevention Advocate and CDC Researcher
Posted: November 10

11. Justice Department Probes Network That Allegedly Sold Fake HIV Meds
Posted: April 1

12. Experts Recommend Fifth COVID-19 Vaccination for Immunocompromised People
Posted: April 28

13. HIV Long-Term Survivors Awareness Day 2022
Posted: June 3

14. She Lost Her Best Friend to AIDS in ’92. Listen to Her Tell That Story Today
Posted: June 24

15. Faith Leaders Who Promoted COVID-19 Vaccines Pivot to Fight HIV
Posted: January 5

16. The Tractor Supply Company Is Sued for HIV Discrimination
Posted: November 8

17. People With HIV Can’t Join the Military. A New Lawsuit Aims to Change That
Posted: May 9

18. “Real World: Homecoming” Omits Danny Roberts’s HIV Storyline
Posted: July 13

19. Watch Beyoncé’s Mom, an OnlyFans Star and a Sports Analyst Tackle HIV
Posted: May 24

20. Guess Who’s the New No. 1 Philanthropic Funder of HIV Programs
Posted: May 23

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