5 Goals for Ending the HIV Epidemic in Minnesota

As laid out in the state's newly launched "End HIV MN" plan

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The Minnesota Department of Health has unveiled its new "End HIV MN" battle plan in the war against HIV/AIDS, reports WCCO Valley News Live.

Announced last month in St. Paul, "End HIV MN" outlines various strategies to achieve the following five broad goals:

- Preventing new HIV infections
- Reducing HIV-related health disparities and promoting health equity
- Increasing retention in care for people living with HIV
- Ensuring stable housing for people living with or at risk for HIV
- Achieving a coordinated statewide response to HIV.

According to a statement from the health department, these goals will be achieved via health care provider education and training, awareness campaigns, community outreach, comprehensive prevention education, capacity building, providing housing support and telemedicine.

Local communities affected by the epidemic, including people who identify as LGBT and people living with HIV, provided their input for the plan in facilitated workshops, focus groups and personal interviews.

"We can't end HIV until we listen to people from the communities most affected about their unique

challenges and opportunities," Claire Wilson, the deputy commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Services, told Valley News Live. "We know having these conversations and engaging with the communities is critical to being effective."

"End HIV MN" comes at a time when many other cities and states have stepped up their efforts to address the HIV/AIDS crisis. Earlier this year, Nashville Mayor David Briley signed an executive order permitting the formation of the Ending HIV Epidemic Advisory Council, and North Carolina announced the creation of the NC Ending the Epidemic Plan.

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