Britain Proposes Free HIV Treatment for Non-citizens

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The British government is considering a proposal to lift the National Health Service (NHS) ban on providing free HIV treatment to those living in the country without British citizenship, The Telegraph reports. Those supporting the proposal argue that providing HIV-positive immigrants, students and failed asylum seekers access to free treatment would lower long-term costs to the British government and reduce the risk of Britons contracting HIV, since being on successful antiretroviral treatment can reduce transmission risk—specifically, the HPTN 052 study found that among serodiscordant, monogamous heterosexual couples, the risk dropped by 96 percent. Opponents of the proposal warn that providing non-citizens access to free HIV treatment will prompt so-called “health tourism”—when a person travels expressly for receiving medical care or treatment. However, NHS treatment would only be allowed for people “ordinarily resident” in the United Kingdom.

To read the Telegraph article, click here.

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