Cure Watch

October 10, 2011 By Laura Whitehorn

Recent advances in AIDS research have increased the hope of finding a functional, or therapeutic, cure for HIV (one that controls the virus and also keeps it from replicating again—without meds), even if eradication (removing HIV from the body entirely) remains elusive. Another advance: At the International AIDS Society meeting (IAS 2011) this past July in Rome, scientists and positive people announced their collaboration on a new initiative called “Towards an HIV Cure.” It will coordinate and accelerate global work to find a cure.

People living with the virus will play an important role. Francoise Barré-Sinoussi, IAS president elect and co-chair of the IAS international scientific working group, told POZ, “Patient community involvement is compulsory if we are to find a cure.”

Steve Deeks, MD, of the University of California at San Francisco and co-chair of the initiative, added:

“HIV research has long had tremendous support from the community. Countless volunteers participated in research with high risk and substantial burdens—particularly in the early years, before we had effective therapies. In many ways, today’s HIV cure research is comparable. It will depend on informed participants who will [join] studies with great benefit for the community, but perhaps limited benefit for the individual.”

To sign up to help now, search “cure” at iasociety.org and add your name to the statement of support.

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