



Be Prepared

HIV.gov reposted a CDC.gov blog entry titled “September 27 Is National Gay Men’s HIV/AIDS Awareness Day,” by Robyn Neblett Fanfair, MD, MPH, and Jonathan Mermin, MD, MPH, about a new program. Below is an edited excerpt.

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Recently, encouraging progress shows declines in new HIV cases among gay and bisexual men overall as well as among many subgroups. However, gay and bisexual men continue to be most affected by the virus. Of the 31,800 estimated new HIV cases in the United States in 2022, 67% (21,400) were among this group. In 2022, almost half (47%) of new HIV cases among gay and bisexual men were in the South, and nearly three fourths (73%) of those were among Black and Latino men.

The annual number of estimated new HIV cases in 2022 compared to 2018 shows a 10% overall decrease among gay and bisexual men. Age-specific trends reveal a 31% decrease among all young gay and bisexual men ages 13 to 24; by region, there was a 16% decrease among gay and bisexual men who live in the South.

Among Black gay and bisexual men, there was a significant 16% overall decrease, including a 26% reduction among young Black men ages 13 to 24. Similarly, among white gay and bisexual men, there was a 20% overall decrease, including a 39% reduction among young white men ages 13 to 24. Cases among Latino gay and bisexual men remained stable, indicating a need for better understanding of the situation and improved support.

Although progress is being made, it has been uneven. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a key tool in continuing to reduce new HIV cases, and recent surveillance data from the National HIV Behavioral Surveillance system show increases in PrEP awareness and use among a survey of gay and bisexual men.

From 2017 to 2023, the proportion of gay and bisexual men who were aware of PrEP increased from 85% to 93%, and PrEP use among gay and bisexual men increased from 25% to 45%. Overall increases in PrEP prescriptions among people who could benefit show that since the implementation of Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. in 2019, the number of people in the United

States who have been prescribed PrEP has increased.

Even so, the reach of this strategy is far from equal, and substantial racial and ethnic disparities persist. Black gay and bisexual men and Latino gay and bisexual men reported increases in PrEP awareness and use over the same period, but more culturally and linguistically appropriate access to HIV testing and prevention services is needed.

To address these disparities, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is launching PrEPared/PrEParado, a social marketing initiative under the CDC's "Let's Stop HIV Together" campaign to increase PrEP uptake among Black and Latino gay and bisexual men in the South.

PrEPared aims to encourage conversations about PrEP between Black and Latino gay and bisexual men and their providers, increase the number of providers prescribing PrEP and increase the number of Black and Latino gay and bisexual men in the South who get and stay on PrEP. In the coming months, the CDC will partner with health departments and local partners across the South for co-implementation of the initiative.

The CDC's "Let's Stop HIV Together" campaign offers valuable resources to support HIV prevention efforts across the country. "Let's Stop HIV Together" is an evidence-based campaign in English and Spanish that aims to empower communities, partners and health care providers to reduce HIV stigma and promote HIV testing, prevention and treatment.

Together, we can all work to reduce HIV-related disparities among gay and bisexual men and continue our hard-earned progress toward ending the HIV epidemic in the United States.