



Defining the Goals of HIV Science Through 2034

NIAID plan focuses on discovery, development and delivery for an increasingly interconnected HIV landscape.

October 2, 2024 By National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

The NIAID HIV clinical research enterprise has celebrated important scientific advances since awards were made to the [current networks](#) in 2020. These achievements include the culminating steps in decades of research that led to approval of the first generation of long-acting medications for HIV prevention—a milestone that raises the standard for any future antiretroviral drug development to levels unimaginable even a decade ago.

Our research has highlighted opportunities to maintain the overall health of people with HIV throughout their lifespans. We continue to expand the boundaries of scientific innovation in pursuit of durable technologies that could hasten an end to the HIV pandemic, especially preventive vaccines and curative therapy. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, our networks stepped forward to deliver swift results that advanced vaccines and therapeutics within a year of the World Health Organization declaring the global pandemic, while maintaining progress on our HIV research agenda. The impact of this collective scientific progress is evident worldwide.

Together with my NIH colleagues, I express sincere gratitude to the leaders and staff of current clinical trials networks, our research and civil society partners, and most importantly, clinical study participants and their loved ones, for their enduring commitment to supporting science that changes lives.

As we do every seven years, we are at a point in the funding cycle when our Institute engages research partners, community representatives, and other public health stakeholders in a multidisciplinary evaluation of network progress toward short- and long-term scientific goals. This process takes account of knowledge gained since the networks were last funded and identifies essential course corrections based on the latest scientific and public health evidence and priorities. Subsequent NIAID HIV research investments will build on the conclusions of these discussions.

Looking to the future, we envision an HIV research enterprise that follows a logical evolution in addressing new scientific priorities informed by previous research progress. We will fund our next networks to align with updated research goals to take us through the end of 2034. The HIV

research community's outstanding infrastructure is the model for biomedical research. Now, our capacity must reflect an increasing interdependence across clinical practice areas and public health contexts. Our goals for the next networks are to:

- Maintain our support for core discovery and translational research to address gaps in biomedical HIV prevention and treatment, including a vaccine and therapeutic remission or cure. Our objective is to identify effective interventions that expand user choice and access, as well as improve quality of life across the lifespan;
- Provide the multidisciplinary leadership required to address the intersections between HIV and other diseases and conditions throughout the lifespan, including noncommunicable diseases, such as diabetes mellitus and substance use disorder, and infectious diseases that share health determinants with HIV, such tuberculosis and hepatitis;
- Compress protocol development and approval timelines for small and early-stage trials to enable more timely translation of research concepts to active studies;
- Respond to discrete implementation science research questions as defined by our implementation counterparts, including federal partners at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Agency for International Development, agencies implementing the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, and other nongovernmental funders and implementing organizations worldwide;
- Draw from nimble and effective partnerships at all levels to leverage the necessary combination of financial resources, scientific expertise, and community leadership and operational capacity to perform clinical research that is accessible to and representative of the populations most affected by HIV, especially people and communities that have been underserved in the HIV response;
- Leverage our partners' platforms if called on to close critical evidence gaps for pandemic response; and,
- Plan for impact by mapping clear pathways to rapid regulatory decisions, scalable production, and fair pricing before the start of any efficacy study.

Our shared goal is to produce tools and evidence to facilitate meaningful reductions in HIV incidence, morbidity and mortality globally. I invite you to continue sharing your thoughts with us

to help shape the future of HIV clinical research, and to review the blogs on specialized topics that we will continue to post on the [HIV Clinical Research Enterprise](#) page in the coming weeks. Please share your feedback, comments, and questions at NextNIAIDHIVNetworks@mail.nih.gov. Submissions will be accepted through December 2024.

This blog is the third in a series about the future of NIAID's HIV clinical research enterprise. For more information, please visit the [HIV Clinical Research Enterprise](#) page.

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