



Expanding PrEP Coverage

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January 8, 2024 By [Liz Highleyman](#)

A decade after its debut, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has yet to reach its full potential. In October, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new HIV surveillance data showing that, overall, 36% of the 1.2 million people who could benefit from PrEP were prescribed it in 2022, up from 23% in 2019.

But there are large gaps in coverage. While 94% of white people who could benefit received a PrEP prescription, this fell to 24% for Latino people and only 13% for Black people. About 40% of men who could benefit were prescribed PrEP, compared with just 15% of women.

Barriers to PrEP use include lack of awareness, cost and a shortage of providers. In August, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommended all approved PrEP methods—two different daily pills and long-acting injections—which requires insurers to fully cover them. And under a new federal policy, Medicare will cover PrEP for people ages 65 and older.

“Continued and expanded efforts will be vital to overcome the significant barriers that continue to hinder PrEP uptake, including lack of knowledge and lack of trusted or easily accessible PrEP providers in many communities,” according to Robyn Fanfair, MD, MPH, and Jonathan Mermin, MD, MPH, of the CDC.

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