A Message to Anyone With HIV: “You Are Never Alone”

Plus: Five trends that will transform health care in the next 20 years.

June 4, 2018 By Trent Straube

What does the future look like for people living with and at risk for HIV? A series of videos and a report by HIV: The Long View Coalition explore that topic. Funded by Gilead Sciences, the coalition includes the American Academy of HIV Medicine, Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC), HealthyWomen, the National Council on Aging and the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS.

The coalition launched a video series titled Never Alone that features long-term survivors of HIV/AIDS talking about their challenges and how finding a network of support helped them overcome isolation and loneliness. So far, two videos have been released, starring Ed Shaw and Michelle Lopez.

Researched by The Future Foundation, the coalition’s report, A Healthier Future Starts Today describes five trends that will transform health care in the next 20 years and how those trends will affect people living with HIV. According to the report, those five trends are:

- Access to Health Care: With the introduction of the Affordable Care Act, our nation’s health system—and Americans’ access to it—is undergoing major changes, many in their infancy. The full effects will continue to play out over the next two decades, including efforts to improve value of care, not just volume of care. And through all of this, our health system is under escalating cost burdens.

- Preventive Medicine: Lightning-fast advances in technology are creating new ways to connect individuals to health care. Beyond wearable devices and other health-tracking tools that support healthy habits and decision-making, technology has massive potential to connect patients in rural or remote locations to top specialists.

- Chronic Diseases: The large and aging baby boomer population brings with it increasing rates of age-related chronic conditions, including heart and kidney disease, diabetes and obesity, among others.

- Personalized Medicine: Scientific advances, including Big Data, are now combining to allow better and more targeted collection of information. This is paving the way for more precise and individualized treatments.

- Infectious Diseases: Outbreaks of new, and sometimes old, infectious diseases continue (e.g., Ebola, Zika), garnering intense media attention and stretching health resources for education, treatments and vaccine developments. At the same time, there's well-placed hope that the spread of some infectious diseases can be largely eliminated through vaccination and other types of prevention.

In related news, Tuesday, June 5, marks HIV Long-Term Survivors Awareness Day (HLTSAD). Watch a video of long-term survivors talking about their legacies here.

And for a look at the long-term impact of AIDS activism, read the POZ article "How Are Early Members of ACT UP Adjusting Today?"

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