



NMAC Hires Chief Medical Officer To Bridge Public Health Disparities Through Community, Provider, And Policy Education

This new leadership position plays a crucial role in executing the Chief Executive Officer's transformative vision.

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NMAC today announced the appointment of its first Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Dr. Leandro Mena - a nationally renowned clinician and researcher in sexually transmitted infections and HIV. This new leadership position plays a crucial role in executing the Chief Executive Officer's transformative vision, rooted in health equity and racial justice, to educate community, policymakers, healthcare providers, and grantmaking organizations about the impact and intersectionality of how HIV burdens communities of color. Dr. Mena's clinical expertise and relationships are also essential to reimagining how our 10th Biomedical HIV Prevention Summit and our 30th U.S. Conference on HIV/AIDS in 2026 can meet the evolving needs of our community partners and the clinical and public health workforce."

"We recognize the urgent need for Dr. Mena's trusted and culturally competent public health leadership to address the misinformation, medical mistrust, and the misperception that HIV is no longer an issue, especially among historically marginalized populations. Ensuring an optimal quality of life for people living with HIV and erasing prevention disparities by advancing PrEP access have been foundational to NMAC's programs; incorporating them into our new strategic vision with Leandro on board allows us to connect those dots across our policy education, conferences' programming, partnership building, and digital engagement efforts," shared Harold Phillips, CEO, NMAC

Dr. Leandro Mena, CMO, NMAC said, "As a clinician, researcher, public health advocate, and a Latino, I'm thrilled to leverage my expertise to elevate NMAC's bold leadership to confront the systemic disparities that continue to harm minority communities across America. This national HIV organization's new strategic direction led by Harold Phillips is what our movement needs in this moment of duress. My decision to join NMAC is founded on the belief that everyone deserves access to effective HIV prevention, early diagnosis, and timely treatment, regardless of who they

are or where they live. By working together, leveraging the tools we have, and addressing the challenges that remain, we can truly end HIV transmission and achieve our goal of ending the HIV Epidemic. La única forma de acabar con la epidemia del VIH es juntos.”

About: [Leandro Mena, MD, MPH, FIDSA](#) is a physician, public health leader, and academic whose career has focused on addressing health disparities in HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), particularly among underserved populations in the United States. He currently serves as Professor of Medicine at Emory University School of Medicine.

Dr. Mena previously served as Director of the Division of STD Prevention at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where he led national efforts to modernize STI prevention and care, elevate health equity, and strengthen public health infrastructure. Earlier, he spent nearly two decades in Mississippi, where he developed nationally recognized models of inclusive sexual healthcare—including as founding Medical Director of Open Arms Healthcare Center, which provided comprehensive services for LGBTQ+ individuals in the Deep South.

Board certified in infectious diseases and a Fellow of the Infectious Diseases Society of America, Dr. Mena has held numerous leadership roles in academia, public health, and clinical care. His work has advanced syndemic-informed approaches, expanded access to HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and integrated social determinants into STI/HIV prevention strategies. He has authored over 140 peer-reviewed publications and served on multiple national and international expert panels and guideline committees.

Dr. Mena is widely recognized for his commitment to health equity, community-engaged research, and mentorship of the next generation of clinicians and public health professionals.

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