Pediatric HIV Is Down, But Insufficient Children Are Treated

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Rates of mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) of HIV have fallen dramatically in recent years, although the scale-up of treatment among HIV-positive children and adolescents lags behind that of adults, the Huffington Post reports. A UNICEF report on the epidemic among young people in low- and middle-income nations estimates that 1.1 million new HIV infections were prevented among children up to age 14 between 2005 and 2013, thanks to the expansion of prevention programs.

In 2013, approximately 240,000 children 14 years or younger contracted HIV in these countries, a 40 percent decline from the 2009 figure. In 2013, 67 percent of pregnant mothers received antiretroviral (ARV) treatment, which can prevent MTCT, compared with 47 percent in 2010.

However, just 23 percent of HIV-positive children were receiving ARVs in 2013, compared with 37 percent of adults. An estimated 190,000 children died of complications related to AIDS that year, thanks to lack of treatment. Global AIDS-related deaths fell by almost 40 percent between 2005 and 2013 for all age groups except young people between the ages of 10 and 19. For that demographic, evidence suggests that the rate of AIDS-related deaths is actually rising.

To read the Huffington Post story, click here.

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