



Rx for Change to Boost PrEP Access

A new national coalition launches a pilot program in two states.

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Public health leaders from Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health, AIDS United, the Black Public Health Academy and the National Pharmaceutical Association launched a new initiative to help community pharmacies expand HIV prevention services in areas that are disproportionately affected by HIV.

Rx for Change is a community-centered and -led strategy that through a comprehensive training and partnership model will engage pharmacies and community-based organizations to increase access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and other HIV prevention services. The initiative will begin with a pilot in Georgia and Louisiana, two states experiencing high rates of new HIV diagnoses.

The Rx for Change launch coincided with Georgia Senate Bill 195, which was signed into law on May 5. The new law authorizes pharmacists in Georgia to prescribe the HIV prevention medications (PrEP and post-exposure prophylaxis, or PEP). It also helps expand the role of pharmacists as frontline healthcare providers and increases access to prevention services in communities with limited healthcare infrastructure. By allowing pharmacists to prescribe PrEP, it provides a new pathway for individuals to access HIV prevention services quickly, conveniently and confidentially. Louisiana enacted a similar law in 2024.

Research shows community pharmacies are uniquely positioned to expand HIV prevention services because they offer a convenient and cost-effective way to connect individuals to prevention services, particularly in communities where access to traditional healthcare settings is limited.

Natalie Crawford, PhD, an associate professor at Rollins, says expanding pharmacy-based HIV prevention services could increase PrEP access points by as much as 80-fold in the southeastern United States, since nearly 90% of Americans live within five miles of a pharmacy.

Rx for Change will help close persistent gaps in HIV prevention by integrating HIV testing and

prevention services into routine pharmacy care, providing enhanced workforce training and strengthening partnerships between pharmacies and community-based organizations.

Rx for Change—which is supported in part by the Elton John AIDS Foundation and Merck—will provide specialized training. Community-based organizations will get training focused on outreach, education and referral strategies.

Email RxforChange@emory.edu to learn how to participate.

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