U.S. Should Aim to Suppress HIV Within 3 Months of Diagnosis

That's according to New York City health officials who showed that the city has made great strides on this measure.

November 8, 2018 By Benjamin Ryan

New York City health officials have called for U.S. guidelines to establish a target of getting people with HIV virally suppressed within three months of diagnosis, aidsmap reports. Data from the past decade indicate that New York has made considerable strides on this measure.

In 2015, the global START study proved that treating HIV when CD4s are high (above 500) is preferable to delaying treatment. Additionally, a series of major studies have indicated that fully suppressing HIV with antiretroviral treatment renders the virus effectively untransmissible.

So successfully treating HIV as early as possible after diagnosis has a twofold benefit: protecting the health of the individual and protecting public health by effectively eliminating the chance for transmission of the virus.

Publishing their findings in The Journal of Infectious Diseases, researchers from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene conducted a retrospective analysis of HIV surveillance data covering 2007 to 2017.

During this period, 27,520 people were diagnosed with HIV in New York City, including 3,649 in 2007 and 1,977 in 2016, a 46 percent decline. Between those two years, the proportion of people linked to medical care for the virus within a month of diagnosis increased from 56 percent to 79 percent.

The proportion of those people diagnosed with HIV who achieved full suppression of the virus within three months of their diagnosis increased from 9 percent in 2007 to 37 percent in 2016. Older people were more likely to become virally suppressed in this three-month window.

In 2016, 40 percent of both Latinos and whites were virally suppressed within three months of diagnosis, compared with 34 percent of Blacks.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

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