In Vancouver, a Call for Early Access to HIV Treatment Worldwide

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Global leaders in the HIV community are calling for immediate access to HIV treatment upon diagnosis and for easier access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for people at high risk for the virus, aidsmap reports.

Titled the Vancouver Consensus Statement, the endorsement pertains to people worldwide and arrives on the opening day of the 8th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention (IAS 2015) in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Major organizations that have signed the statement include Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EJPAF) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The Vancouver Consensus Statement reads, in part:

> Building on knowledge accumulated over the last decade, the START trial has released its first results, showing that rather than waiting for immune deterioration, immediate antiretroviral (ARV) treatment more than doubles an individual's prospects of staying healthy and surviving. Offering immediate ARV access is further supported by studies showing antiretrovirals can prevent transmission from people living with HIV to their negative partners. And data shows ARVs can effectively

protect people at risk of infection through prophylactic use.

Medical evidence is clear: All people living with HIV must have access to antiretroviral treatment upon diagnosis. Barriers to access in law, policy and bias must be confronted and dismantled. And as part of a combination prevention effort, PrEP must be made available to protect those at high risk of acquiring HIV. The strategic use of ARVs—through treatment and other preventive uses—can save countless millions of lives and move us vastly closer to our goal of ending the epidemic. A new era of opportunity against this epidemic has dawned, and we must seize it.

You can read the entire statement and a list of signatories here.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/vancouver-consensus-statement-27519-3504