How to Visually Track Data From the Plan to End the U.S. HIV Epidemic

A digital dashboard displays six gauges in the nation's effort to lower HIV rates by 90% by 2030.

September 2, 2020 By Trent Straube

You've probably read about "Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America," the national initiative President Trump launched last year with the goal of reducing new HIV diagnoses in the country by 75% by 2025 and by 90% by 2030. Now you can actually track the plan's progress using America's HIV Epidemic Analysis Dashboard (AHEAD).

The plan funnels federal resources into 57 key jurisdictions. This translates to the 48 counties plus Washington, DC, and San Juan, Puerto Rico, that together account for 50% of new HIV cases, plus seven rural states with high HIV burdens: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and South Carolina.

> The federal government, advocacy groups, and local leaders are working to #EndHIVEpidemic together and tracking progress across the 6 Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America (#EHE) indicators. Visit the AHEAD dashboard to join us: https://t.co/fc3iVru6Rm #eheAHEAD #EHEdata pic.twitter.com/pzTmCYBZfh
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> — HIV.gov (@HIVGov) August 17, 2020

Located on HIV.gov, AHEAD includes a map of the United States, with these 57 jurisdictions highlighted, plus the states that contain the 48 counties. Click on a jurisdiction to view HIV-related data pertaining to the initiative's goals. AHEAD divides the data into six indicators:

- Incidence: the estimated number of new HIV infections in a given year;
- Knowledge of Status: the estimated percentage of people with HIV who have received an HIV diagnosis;
- Diagnoses: the number of people with HIV diagnosed in a given year confirmed by laboratory or clinical evidence;
- Linkage to HIV Medical Care: the percentage of people with HIV diagnosed in a given year who have received medical care for their HIV within one month of diagnosis;
- Viral Suppression: the percentage of people living with diagnosed HIV in a given year who have an amount of HIV that is less than 200 copies per milliliter of blood (this is also referred to as being undetectable; people with HIV who take their meds daily and have a suppressed viral load can't transmit HIV through sex, even during condomless sex, a fact referred to as Undetectable Equals Untransmittable, or U=U);
- PrEP Coverage: the estimated percentage of individuals with indications for PrEP classified as having been prescribed PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis refers to a daily tablet taken by HIV-negative people at risk for HIV; in the United States, PrEP is available as Truvada and Descovy tablets; both consist of two meds).

For its beginning, or baseline, data points, AHEAD will use HIV data from 2017 and then update the initiative's six indicators as information becomes available.

For a detailed explanation on the different elements available on AHEAD, view the webinar above and on YouTube.

AHEAD was developed by the Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy, which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services.

A screenshot of America's HIV Epidemic Analysis Dashboard (AHEAD)Courtesy of HIV.gov

If the national strategy succeeds in reducing HIV rates by 90% by 2030, fewer than 3,000 people would contract HIV each year, achieving the criterion for ending the epidemic.

To learn more about the Ending the HIV Epidemic initiative, read an overview at HIV.gov and visit the official webpage at HRSA.org. For a related POZ article, see "Plans to End the HIV Epidemic at Home and Abroad."

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