Vivent Health Celebrates 40 Years of Integrated HIV Care

Launched in Wisconsin, Vivent Health now provides HIV services in six states. CEO Brandon Hill looks back at the transformation.

July 9, 2026 By Eva Lorenz

Vivent Health, formerly known as the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW), started as a small local health organization with a staff of one. Forty years later, Vivent is a nationally recognized leader in HIV care, prevention and treatment, offering integrated healthcare and social services in Wisconsin, Missouri, Michigan, Illinois, Colorado and Texas.

"What we've always strived to do is make sure that we're meeting the epidemic where it is," said Vivent Health president and CEO Brandon Hill in an interview with Milwaukee's WUWM highlighting the 40-year anniversary. "And it's been quite a transformation over the course of the 40 years."

Despite the prevailing stigma and fear at the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, multiple health organizations, state institutions and volunteers in Wisconsin worked together to hold fundraisers and expand healthcare access for people living with HIV. As a result, individual AIDS organizations across Milwaukee, Madison and Green Bay came together under ACRW to form one integrated healthcare network for the state. The unique system alleviated competition for funding among organizations and increased access to services for people living with HIV.

In the WUWM feature, Doug Nelson, former CEO of ARCW, walked through some of the group's early challenges. When trying to find dental care for people living with HIV and AIDS proved difficult, for example, ARCW established dental clinics, medical clinics, behavioral health clinics, mental health clinics and pharmacies for people living with HIV. Today, Vivent continues to provide these services, along with food pantries, legal assistance, case management, HIV prevention services and more.

Here's a sample of Vivent's social media campaigns:



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A post shared by Vivent Health (@viventhealth)

According to AIDSVu.org, which maps HIV data, 7,173 people were living with HIV in Wisconsin in 2023; that same year, 255 people were newly diagnosed. According to Vivent, about 80% of people diagnosed with HIV in Wisconsin go to Vivent Health for HIV care. For 95% of those patients, the virus is undetectable.

This is an important accomplishment because people with HIV who achieve and maintain viral suppression experience slower disease progression, enjoy better overall health and are less likely to develop opportunistic illnesses. What's more, people with an undetectable viral load don't transmit HIV to others through sex. This is known as treatment as prevention, or Undetectable Equals Untransmittable (U=U).

What's more, according to AIDSVu, among people newly diagnosed in Wisconsin 2023, nearly 84% were male, 34% were Black and 29% were Latino.

"Now, we're looking at what other primary care is needed to keep people healthy," said Hill. "HIV prevention efforts, like the use of PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, can be mobilized to address where the epidemic is today, mostly among younger, queer-identified people of color, so our Black and brown communities."



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Federal funding cuts to HIV services under the Trump administration present another challenge to Vivent. The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, which distributes funding for state and local HIV services and treatment across the United States, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are among many federal organizations and programs that have seen unprecedented funding cuts since 2025. In fact, Republican lawmakers in the House have proposed cutting more than $1 billion in HIV funds for fiscal year 2027.

Despite funding uncertainties, Vivent Health remains committed to ending the epidemic.

“We’ve walked this path before when the organization was founded and HIV wasn’t a government priority,” Hill said in an interview with Shepherd Express. “We’re going to rely on our community and keep caring for folks. It will keep up, moving forward.”

Read about Vivent Health recent initiatives and new facilities covered by POZ:

- “Vivent Health Merges With UNIFIED to Enhance HIV Services in Detroit Area,”
- “Vivent Health/TPAN to Offer HIV Services at New Chicago Health Center,”

- “Vivent Health’s Food Pantries Help Keep HIV Clients Undetectable,”
- “Vivent Health to Expand Its HIV Medical Home in Milwaukee” and
- “Vivent Health Opens a New HIV Care Facility in Kansas City, Missouri.”

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/vivent-health-celebrates-40-years-integrated-hiv-care