



A Real National HIV/AIDS Strategy: Cure HIV

November 17, 2011 By [David Evans](#)

In April of this past year, more than 50 scientists, government officials and activists gathered in Baltimore to figure out what were the greatest obstacles to research aimed at eradicating HIV from the body, and what might be the best ways of overcoming those obstacles.

My organization, Project Inform, along with amfAR, the Treatment Action Group and the AIDS Policy Project, did what great activists have been doing for two decades: cut through the bull, insist on collaboration and focus on the biggest sticking points in important research.

Fortunately, the state of cure-research is actually quite vibrant and some of the best minds talk to one another frequently. This is vastly different than it was in the earlier years of the epidemic when scientific silos were so hardened that immunologists never talked to virologists, who never talked to people with HIV or the doctors and nurses who treated them every day.

Just because things are better than they were, however, doesn't mean that more work isn't needed. In particular, the branch of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) called the Center for Biologics Evaluation & Research (CBER) that will likely oversee many of the drugs and strategies aimed at eradicating HIV is not as familiar with HIV research as the branch that has overseen the development of antiretroviral drugs for the past 24 years.

Activists have asked the Office of AIDS Research at the National Institutes of Health to call a meeting where top AIDS researchers, activists and CBER can discuss how promising treatments can be fast tracked without sacrificing the safety of the study participants.

If you care about cure research, give a half-hour or so to reading the report that Project Inform and its partners released recently. Warning, it's scientific and wonky, but it does lay out quite clearly both the promise and the hurdles involved with finally curing the disease. For a simpler tour through the world of AIDS research, a great primer before reading the Cure Report, start with Regan and Tim's excellent POZ [article here](#).