AIDSmeds.com’s Tenth Anniversary: A Bittersweet Commemoration

May 12, 2010 By Tim Horn

It’s been a decade since AIDSmeds.com launched to provide the information and tools that people living with HIV and their care providers needed in order to make empowered health care decisions. Yet the commemoration of our 10th anniversary this spring is truly bittersweet. Though we take great pride in being a valuable and trusted source of education and support for thousands of people whose lives have been affected by HIV, it is unfortunate that websites such as AIDSmeds are still necessary.

Since AIDSmeds went live in April 2000, we have grown significantly--by hundreds of pages and hundreds of thousands of words--to meet the ongoing and often-changing needs of people living with HIV. And since joining Smart + Strong, AIDSmeds and its sister publications POZ magazine and POZ.com are now reaching more than 70 percent of all people living with HIV in the United States who know their status, not to mention a rapidly growing number of users from all over the world.

I am proud to have been a contributor to AIDSmeds since its inception and am thankful for the tremendous work that has gone into the site over the years, notably its establishment and proliferation under the guidance and nurturing of founder Peter Staley, the invaluable contributions of David Evans--an astoundingly brilliant HIV educator and activist--and several freelance writers, the seamless and often thankless work of the Forums moderators (notably Andy Velez and Ann Smith) and the tremendous business, editorial, IT and moral support of Smart + Strong.

That said, it doesn’t seem right to herald the accomplishments of AIDSmeds or to “celebrate” its 10th anniversary. Not when more than 33 million people are living with HIV/AIDS in the world (more than 1 million of whom are residing in the United States). Not when millions continue to go without lifesaving care in resource-poor areas, not to mention in the United States. Not when stigma and discrimination remain pervasive. And, perhaps most important, not when a vaccine and cure for HIV/AIDS continue to elude us.

Indeed, I look forward to the day that educational resources like AIDSmeds are no longer necessary and can be shut down for good. But until then, we will continue in our efforts to remain the most comprehensive, accessible and supportive source of HIV/AIDS treatment and health care information on the web.

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