Trump’s Emergency Declaration on the Opioid Crisis

What does it mean for HIV/AIDS funding?

October 27, 2017 By Martha Warriner Jarrett

On NPR yesterday, they said that Trump’s new declaration on the opioid crisis will shift funds from HIV/AIDS prevention, but the truth of that statement hasn’t been easy to find. Probably because, like most of Trump’s pronouncements, there is no plan behind the declaration. Just lots of speculation.

What is known is that the program (if it can be called that) will be administered by HHS, which currently has no money, and that Trump has not asked for any new money. Which means that if it is funded at all, the funds will have to come from other programs, such as HIV/AIDS prevention. Given that one of the fears that comes out of the opioid crisis is that addicts’ IV use will cause a big increase in new HIV infections, that doesn’t seem to make any sense.

An article in Politico quotes Tiffany Kaszuba, deputy director of the Coalition for Health Funding: “There are some measures in the package that suggest states could shift money away from HIV to the opioid crisis, but the fact is patients who are suffering from the opioid crisis, they have other health concerns too. It’s not even robbing Peter to pay Paul anymore. It’s robbing Peter to pay Peter.”

Like most things these days, I guess we’ll just have to wait and see what happens. Living with so much uncertainty can’t, on the other hand, be good for people who are already struggling with addiction.

For more details about this topic, read fellow POZ blogger AIDS United’s post, “Trump’s Declaration on the Opioid Crisis Might Harm People Who Have HIV.”

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