



Welcome to the Zero HIV Stigma Blog

We hope to share lived experiences, preview data and research, and promote best practices to help end HIV stigma in all its forms

July 18, 2023 By [Zero HIV Stigma](#)

This post is written by Dr. José M. Zuniga, President/CEO of the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) and the Fast-Track Cities Institute.

The [International Association of Providers of AIDS Care](#) (IAPAC) is proud to launch this new blog as an extension of [Zero HIV Stigma Day](#), whose first commemoration is Friday, July 21, 2023. Thanks to POZ magazine for providing us a platform, we aim to foster ongoing multistakeholder dialogue about the impact of and solutions to end HIV stigma in all its forms.

In writing this introductory Zero HIV Stigma blog, I am reflecting on the sad reality that stigma has permeated the history of the HIV epidemic from its early days – persistently and unrelentingly. Yes, the stigma associated with HIV has abated in some ways and among some people, however too many people living with and affected by HIV continue to experience it in ways that dehumanize them.

Courtesy of the Zero HIV Stigma Day campaign

Stigma takes many forms, including self-stigma as well as interpersonal and institutional stigma. But as complex as those constructs may be from psychosocial and other perspectives, matters are made far more complex when we factor the intersectionality of stigma associated with gender identity, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other distinctions that make up the diversity of our human existence.

It bears noting that our efforts to end AIDS as a public health threat, the United Nations goal for 2030, are jeopardized by HIV and intersectional stigma. Combined with inequities and inequalities, stigma is a barrier to accessing HIV care and other health and social services. We cannot avert new HIV infections if people are too stigmatized to get tested or access HIV prevention services. And we cannot avoid AIDS-related deaths if people are too stigmatized access HIV treatment to

achieve undetectable equals untransmittable (U=U).

Through this blog, we hope to serve as a forum to share lived experiences, preview data and research, and promote best practices as we strive to realize the theme of this year's inaugural Zero HIV Stigma Day – Human First. It may sound cliché, but the H in HIV stands for “human.” Together, we can, and we must, muster the courage of our convictions to end HIV stigma for everyone, everywhere by protecting our common humanity.

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