# Whitman-Walker Health Reflects on Today's Changing HIV Conversation

The AIDS service organization based in Washington, DC, is part of AIDS United's Public Policy Council.

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At the heart of everything the Policy Team does here at AIDS United is the guidance and leadership of our Public Policy Council (PPC). This body, which will be celebrating its 35th anniversary this month, brings together 55 HIV service organizations and advocacy groups from across the United States to advocate for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and the organizations that serve them. A mixture of federally qualified health centers, Ryan White clinics, grassroots community organizations, and federal policy advocates, the PPC is the moral compass and driving force behind AIDS United's policy agenda.

In honor of National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, which is observed each September 27, we at AIDS United wanted to spotlight the reflections of one of our longest-serving members of the PPC, Whitman-Walker Health.

Last week, we marked the 11th annual National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. The 2019 theme "The conversation about HIV is changing" reminds us that HIV is more preventable and treatable than ever. Three recent advancements in HIV prevention are PrEP, PEP and U=U.

HIV prevention starts with you! If you don't know your HIV status, get tested. The CDC estimates that 14% of people living with HIV are unaware of their status. With treatment, people living with HIV experience long and healthy lives.

If you are negative, take control of your sexual health by asking your medical provider about PrEP, or Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, for HIV. PrEP is a revolutionary pill that, when taken daily, reduces the risk of HIV transmission by much more than 92%.

PEP or Post-Exposure Prophylaxis, is a twenty-eight day course of treatment to prevent HIV up to 72 hours after a potential transmission. If you are HIV-negative, and think you may have been recently exposed to HIV, go to an emergency room right away.

U=U, or Undetectable = Untransmittable. If you are living with HIV, and stay in treatment and on your medication, you can achieve an undetectable viral load; then there is no risk of you sexually transmitting the virus to your partners. Talk to your provider about becoming undetectable.

Get tested, talk to your provider, and love openly.

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