



"Committed to the Relentless Pursuit of an End to AIDS"

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OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENT

HIV PrEParedness

DETROIT, MI – AIDS Partnership Michigan is the oldest AIDS service organization in the state of Michigan. Since our inception in 1983, providing comprehensive services through prevention, access to primary medical care as well as community mobilization and education have been paramount to our success over the years. More than 30 years later we continue to tailor our services as the HIV epidemic has evolved.

AIDS Partnership Michigan was founded 2 years after HIV was first identified in 1981. During the late 1980s the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the first HIV medication that was commonly known for its serious and even life-threatening side effects. Three decades ago, an HIV diagnosis was nothing short of a death sentence. Today, thanks to years of research and advancements in treatments we have evolved to manageable treatment plans with little to no side effects. More like a chronic disease; with proper adherence HIV positive individuals are able to reach their full life expectancy.

Today, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention there are nearly 50,000 new HIV infections annually in the United States. With no cure or vaccine for HIV, prevention is crucial in reducing infection rates. Biopharmaceutical scientists at Gilead Sciences and their research partners have manufactured and tested the HIV medication, Truvada, for HIV prevention, commonly referred to as 'PrEP' (Pre-exposure prophylaxis). Nearly two years ago, the FDA approved PrEP and last year the CDC released guidelines for clinicians to prescribe Truvada as PrEP to their high-risk patients. PrEP is a way for people who do not have HIV but who are at substantial risk of getting it to *prevent* HIV infection. Now covered by Medicaid, simply taking one pill a day is highly effective in preventing HIV transmission. PrEP is even more effective when used with condoms and other prevention methods.

Recent funding from Gilead will help AIDS Partnership Michigan provide PrEP education to high-risk populations in Detroit. We are elated to be a part of this groundbreaking advancement in HIV research and prevention. Our new program will:

1. Provide training to increase and enhance the skills of HIV test counselors in Metro Detroit in order to incorporate education about PrEP, –as well as to conduct PrEP risk assessments for high-risk individuals and couples during HIV testing sessions
2. Facilitate four community advisory committees for men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender women, and heterosexual women to develop sex-positive messages around PrEP for social media campaigns and the development of a smartphone application
3. Link high risk negative individuals to other essential supportive services

Get PrEPared and stand with us as we begin to disseminate education around new prevention strategies here in Detroit. Currently we are looking to hire a full time PrEP Peer Specialist and are recruiting MSM, transgender women and heterosexual women to be a part of our Community Advisory Committee. Visit our website for details at www.aidspartnership.org.

Sign up for our mailing list at <http://www.aidspartnership.org> to receive information about our upcoming PrEP Community Information meeting.