

Achieving Together: A Community Plan to End the HIV Epidemic in Texas

Texas Has a Clear Vision

Texas will become a state where HIV is rare, and every person will have access to high-quality prevention, care, and treatment regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and socio-economic status.

More than three decades of dedicated work and research have given us the experience, tools, technology, people, and passion to end the HIV epidemic. Now is the time to create the will and the environment to end the HIV epidemic.

Texas has combined its HIV prevention and care planning groups together as The Texas HIV Syndicate. The Texas HIV Syndicate has created a plan that will work for everyone, no matter their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or life circumstances. The group is committed to innovative ideas and thinking so that Texas can become a leader in HIV prevention, care, and treatment.

Ending HIV as an epidemic is about supporting people who are living with HIV and preventing others from acquiring it. It involves using a combination of the behavioral and biomedical tools available, creating a stigma-free climate, and reducing barriers in systems that keep people from accessing services and achieving their health and wellness goals. It continues the work and honors the accomplishments of those who came before us and of the long-term HIV survivors still among us.

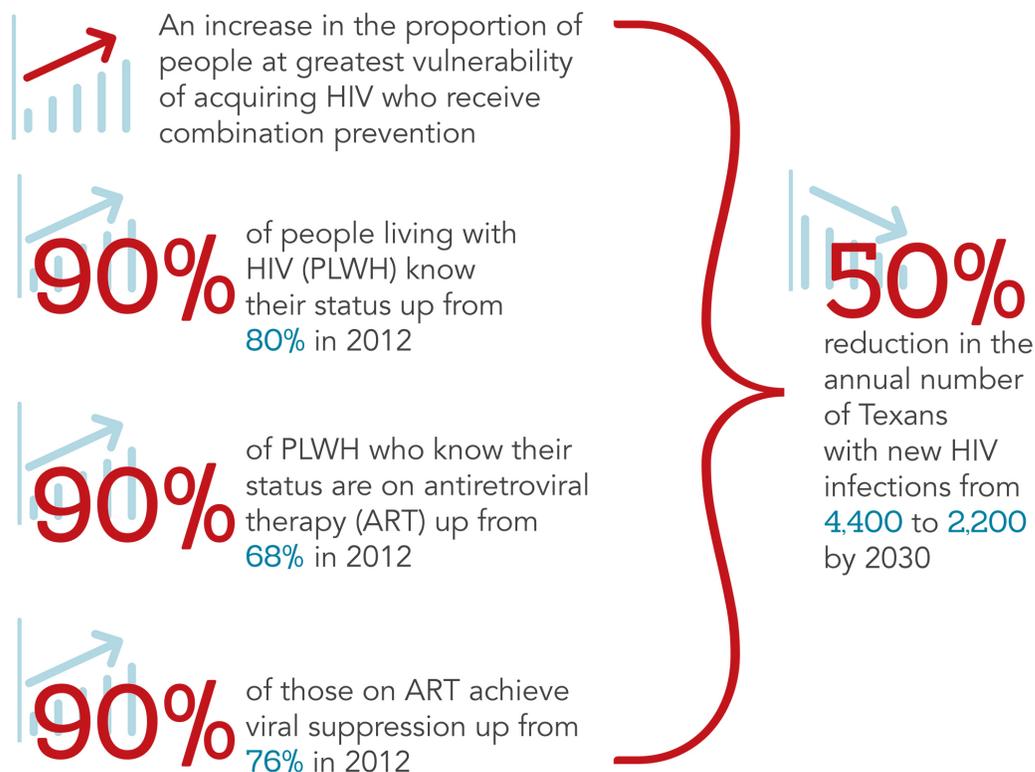
The Time Is Now

We know that reducing HIV viral load is a powerful tool both for enhancing the health of individuals and preventing transmission of the disease. We have a better understanding of how the environment creates health inequities and continues to allow inequities to persist. This increased understanding provides us with an opportunity to engage in conversations that can influence action. It also reinforces our commitment to create systems for all people to thrive. Our knowledge and understanding continues to grow and the possibility of ending the HIV epidemic is a reality on the horizon.

Four goals will make our vision a reality:

1. Reduce HIV Transmission & Acquisition
2. Increase Viral Suppression
3. Eliminate Health Disparities
4. Create a Stigma-Free Climate

Measuring Success: By 2030, we aim to achieve...



...while striving for equity among priority populations across all measures and indicators.

Data show that the five populations in Texas most impacted by HIV are Latino, Black, and White gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men; Black women; and transgender individuals. Many of these communities face barriers affecting their access and ability to focus on HIV prevention and care. We will not achieve our goals without working with and addressing the needs of these communities.

Our work is guided by the principles of:

Social Justice: Remove barriers, eliminate oppressive systems, and provide opportunities and freedoms so that people from all communities - including Black, Latino, and LGBTQ communities - can thrive and achieve optimal health and wellness.

Equity: Focus on strategies that will create access to resources and services for all people, eliminate inequities, and increase people's capacity to make decisions that affect themselves, their families, and their communities. Focus especially on those communities that face the biggest barriers affecting their access and ability to focus on HIV prevention, treatment, and care services.

Integration: Create an integrated system of HIV prevention, treatment, care, and advocacy across the state. Allow space for ideas and innovation to emerge and for each part of the system to function individually and collectively to their greatest capacity. Build bridges to connect people, groups, organizations, and systems in order to share data, resources, knowledge, funding, and support.

Empowerment: Support shared decision-making between people affected by HIV, providers and across systems. Recognize that people are experts in their own lives. Provide people with the skills, tools, and health literacy needed to navigate their health and wellbeing. Build capacity in the people and organizations working in the field so that they can be leaders and role models for the communities they serve.

Advocacy: Promote and implement policies that will support the work in all areas of the plan. We need supportive policies at the federal, state, local, and organizational levels. In addition to policy work by people who work within health and legislative systems, there is a role for advocates and grassroots efforts outside of these established systems.

Community: Lasting change happens at the local level among people who are working together, without a partisan frame, to create a healthy community. To create movement around this plan, start by strengthening existing relationships among people and organizations and reaching out to new ones. Listen and learn from multiple perspectives and build bridges with non-traditional partners and with people who have been left out of the conversation in the past. This creates opportunities to hear their stories and questions and to learn about what matters to them. Then, the work of this plan will reflect all people who are affected by HIV.

Taking Action

We believe that specific and bold action and advocacy across six areas of focus will have a high impact on our goals. These focus areas are interconnected and we must address *all of them* if we are going to reach our goals. None of this can be accomplished in isolation, just like no single person or entity can end the HIV epidemic. It will take the synergy of people, organizations, and communities each identifying where they can contribute and taking action.



Our diversity makes us stronger

There are many ways to reach the goals of the plan, just like there are many pathways for individuals to meet their health and wellness goals. The Texas HIV Syndicate is leading the charge for ending HIV as an epidemic in Texas. The purpose of this plan is to inspire and guide people, organizations, and communities to take action in ways that will move Texas in the direction of ending the HIV epidemic.

Join us.

www.achievingtogethertx.org

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