

# New York City Achieves Global Milestone in Fight to End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

December 2, 2019

***Once the center of the epidemic, New York is the first Fast-Track City to reach the UNAIDS 90-90-90 target***

**NEW YORK**—New York City today announced that it has reached the **UNAIDS 90-90-90 goals** two years ahead of schedule, meaning that 90% of all people with HIV know their status, 90% of all people diagnosed with HIV are on treatment, and 90% of all people diagnosed with HIV who are on treatment are virally suppressed. As of 2018 in New York City, 93% of people with HIV have been diagnosed, 90% of people diagnosed with HIV are on treatment, and 92% of people on treatment are virally suppressed.

“Years of hard work and determination has put New York front and center in the global fight against HIV/AIDS,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “With more New Yorkers receiving treatment than ever, the day of zero diagnoses is closer than ever—something many believed unthinkable not so long ago. We will not rest until we end the epidemic once and for all.”

“The early attainment of the UNAIDS 90-90-90 target underscores our remarkable evolution in New York City from one-time epicenter of the HIV epidemic to global leader in prevention and treatment,” said **Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Raul Perea-Henze**. “This historic achievement shows what is possible when local government partners with the community, and New York City’s experience can inspire the world with a proven blueprint for a healthier and more equitable future. As we look toward the day of zero new HIV diagnoses, we continue our work to end the epidemic in honor of all those we have lost in this fight.”

“New York City is charting a path to zero new diagnoses,” said **Health Commissioner Dr. Oxiris Barbot**. “The roadmap to ending the epidemic includes celebrating healthy sexuality, making PrEP available for those who want it and fighting against the racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia that drive transmission. We will end this epidemic through unity, education and advocacy in partnership with activists.”

New York City is the first Fast-Track City in the U.S. to reach the milestone. The Fast-Track Cities initiative is a global partnership of more than 300 cities and municipalities around the world working to achieve the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets. Last month, the Health Department released the **2018 HIV Surveillance Annual Report**, which showed the number of people newly diagnosed with HIV in New York City in 2018 fell below 2,000 for the first time since annual HIV reporting began in 2001.

To continue its efforts to end the HIV epidemic once and for all, the Health Department will continue its citywide HIV testing initiative, **New York Knows**, for another five years. Launched during the first-ever World AIDS Day citywide event in 2014, New York Knows has grown into the nation’s largest HIV testing initiative, with over 2.5 million HIV tests conducted by community-based organizations, community health centers, hospitals, colleges and universities, faith-based organizations, and businesses since 2014. Moving forward, New York Knows will embody an **HIV status neutral approach** to prevention and treatment, ensuring that all New Yorkers receive quality care and services, regardless of HIV status. New York Knows will also expand its focus to include sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and hepatitis C in program goals, planning, and activities.

“Once a city known for being the epicenter of the U.S. HIV epidemic, New York City is now the epicenter of the end of the domestic HIV epidemic,” said **Dr. Demetre Daskalakis, Deputy Commissioner for the Health Department’s Division of Disease Control**. “The incredible success of reaching UNAIDS 90-90-90 goals belongs to the entire city – from the people who are vigilant in being tested to the community partners who tirelessly work to remove barriers to HIV care – and is a credit to what health departments can accomplish when working hand in hand with their community. I am now more confident than ever that together we will end the HIV epidemic in New York City.”

“Combatting the HIV/AIDS epidemic has always been a big priority for me as Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and member of the House HIV/AIDS Caucus,” said **Congressman Eliot Engel**. “We have made tremendous progress in the global fight against AIDS, with initiatives like PEPFAR and the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program. But New York City continues to stand out on the world stage, reaching their 90-90-90 goal 2 years ahead of schedule. I applaud New York City for its staunch commitment to helping those with HIV/AIDS and the outstanding work it has done to help bring an end to this epidemic.”

“New York City’s investment in prevention, testing and treatment has resulted in historic movement toward bringing us closer to ending the epidemic. The City’s effort should be seen as a model for other jurisdictions and the federal government of a program of action that works,” said Congressman **Jerrold Nadler**.

"Our city's success in reaching the UNAIDS 90-90-90 goals two years early is an incredible example of what is possible when government agencies partner with advocates on the ground to meet the needs of our communities. We must continue to stand united in the struggle to end the AIDS epidemic by staying vigilant in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights and access to quality healthcare for every New Yorker," said **State Senator Alessandra Biaggi**.

"More than 100,000 New Yorkers died of AIDS — but within a generation, we have the opportunity to end this epidemic once and for all. It's why I sponsor legislation to make insurers cover PEP and PrEP. I'm thrilled New York City has reached the UNAIDS 90-90-90 goals two years ahead of schedule and congratulate Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Barbot and the thousands of activists, community leaders and public health officials who made this a reality," said **State Senator Brad Hoylman**.

"New York City is on track to ending the AIDS epidemic once and for all," said **NYC Council LGBT Caucus Chair Daniel Dromm**. "These results show that the vast majority of New Yorkers living with HIV are receiving care and have viral loads at undetectable, and therefore, untransmittable levels. As an openly gay man who lived through the AIDS crisis, this news is truly heartening. I am pleased to have worked with Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Barbot and Speaker Johnson to ensure that our city's Health Department and our clinics have the resources they need to care for New Yorkers living with the virus. Because of this concerted effort, NYC is now a model for other municipalities working to end AIDS and new HIV infections."

"New York City's progress towards ending the HIV epidemic is a dramatic public health success story, with our achievement of the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets being only the latest critical milestone. This is a vindication for all the advocates, providers, and public health leaders who have fought for decades to ensure our city invests in the battle against this disease and against the unjust conditions which allow it to spread. It's critical that we keep this progress going until we achieve our ultimate goal of once and for all ending the HIV epidemic in New York City," said **Council Member Mark Levine, Chair of the NYC Council Committee on Health**.

"As a city, we have always overcome every obstacle together through innovative ways. Reaching the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets is a testament to how a multi-pronged and inclusive approach can beat the odds, transforming the City of New York from an epicenter into the world's leader in ending the HIV epidemic. This milestone takes us one step closer to zero diagnoses, the ultimate goal that we can accomplish by expanding our efforts to raise awareness, end the stigmatization and discrimination while cultivating new community-based partnerships to share critical resources," said **Council Member Farah N. Louis**.

"Just as it took a village to confront the specter of AIDS in the early 1980s, it has taken a village of political and public health leaders, clinicians and service providers, and affected communities for the Big Apple to become the first Fast-Track City in the United States to attain the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets," said **Dr. José M. Zuniga, President/CEO of the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC)**, the core technical partner of the Fast-Track Cities initiative. "New York City has also pioneered many new innovations that we will

encourage other Fast-Track Cities to replicate, notably a 'status neutrality' approach that links, normalizes, and destigmatizes prevention and treatment services for New Yorkers regardless of their HIV status."

"Once ground zero for the epidemic, New York City has become a model for reducing new HIV infections in urban areas. Located in Bed-Stuy with the highest new infections in the City and soon to have our headquarters in Crown Heights, the area with the second highest new infection rates, all of us at Brooklyn Community Pride Center are particularly grateful for New York's strategic success by galvanizing grass-roots coalitions of community based organizations, faith based institutions, and others to end this nightmare once and for all," said **Floyd Rumohr, CEO, Brooklyn Community Pride Center**.

"As the Executive Director of Stonewall Community Development Corporation, working to address the housing and health needs of New York City's LGBTQ older adults, I commend the City for making such progress towards ending the epidemic. Many of our members lived through and lost loved ones during the AIDS crisis and still feel the scars. As a person who had full blown AIDS in 1995, with only 35 T-cells and PCP pneumonia, I can personally attest to the efficacy of treatment and the advances that have been made. The virus is undetectable in my blood today and I am in excellent health, said **Paul Nagle, Executive Director, Stonewall Community Development Corporation**.

"Jim Owles, one of the founders of the Gay Activist Alliance and GLAAD, was lost to AIDS in 1993 after years of dedicating his life to the causes of the LGBTQ community," said **Allen Roskoff, President of the Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club**. "Today's announcement is most encouraging news. It is vital that we continue the progress in ending the AIDS epidemic and New York City is leading the way. We are thrilled to see what has been done and hope other cities learn from our work."

"From the federal to local level, governmental inattention to HIV in the 1980's ripped away the lives of friends, lovers, and family members and shattered my early years. It was clear to me and to all people in the marginalized populations with the highest body count that our lives simply did not matter. The pioneering approaches and breakneck progress in treatment and prevention of the de Blasio administration's New York City provides a shining contrast to those dark days. LGBTQ New Yorkers and other at-risk populations can live their lives filled with the hope and promise of knowing NYC is a city that celebrates, not shuns them," said **Rod Townsend, President, Stonewall Democratic Club of NYC**.

"The de Blasio administration is taking a huge step forward toward ending the epidemic once and for all, and we're excited to see this progress and reach its goal" said **Jared Arader, President of Lambda Independent Democrats of Brooklyn**. "We're happy to see this built on the legacies of so many activists who lost their lives to the epidemic, including many of LID's own founders."

"New York City is leading the fight to end the epidemic once and for all," said **Michael Mallon, president of the Lesbian and Gay Democratic Club of Queens**. "Many of us have lost family and friends to the AIDS crisis, and we remember a time when resources for those living

with HIV were scant. It is incredibly moving to see how far we have come. Thank you Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Barbot, Speaker Johnson and all those who have brought us to this point. Thanks to their years of hard work and to that of the activists who were determined to 'Act Up and Fight AIDS,' new infection rates will soon be a thing of the past. It is a great day to be a New Yorker."

"As a global leader in LGBTQ healthcare, Callen-Lorde has been resolutely committed to the fight against the HIV and AIDS epidemics since the beginning," said **Kimberleigh Joy Smith, Senior Director for Community Health Planning and Policy at Callen-Lorde Community Health Center**. "It is our deep privilege to serve our community in every aspect of the plan to end HIV and with every tool at our disposal – from pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), stigma-free sexual health screening, frequent HIV testing, early HIV treatment and ongoing culturally-competent care. But we know that our work exists as only a small part of an impressive infrastructure – one that was built by activists and is now propelled by partnerships between science, community and our city's government. It is no wonder that New York City is the first of the Fast Track cities in the United States to reach the UN's 90-90-90 targets. We look forward to New York City leading the nation in getting to zero."

"In New York City, we helped write the blueprint to end AIDS in New York State, because we know what it takes to get things done—partnership and trust among and across community activists, social service providers, medical facilities, health departments and policy makers," said **Sharen Duke, Executive Director at the Alliance of Positive Change**. "Today's news is testament to the power of collaboration and the investment in strategies that ensure access to prevention, care and treatment. During World AIDS Day, we honor those whose lives have been lost, those who serve tirelessly on the frontlines of eradicating HIV and AIDS, and those who have taken control of their health to live better, feel better, and do better,"

"When New York City signed on to the U=U campaign in Summer 2016 as the world's first city and public health body, it ignited a global movement," said **Bruce Richman, Founding Executive Director of Prevention Access Campaign**, which launched the international Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U) campaign. "It is now clear that ensuring people with HIV receive successful treatment and care not only saves lives, but also prevents new transmissions. NYC led the way for that revolutionary message demonstrating the kind of bold leadership and innovative community partnerships that will bring NYC to the end of the epidemic. I'm proud to live with HIV in NYC."

"Today's news is encouraging, but we must continue to step up and accelerate our efforts to reach all those living in communities where the risks of new HIV infection, AIDS, and related conditions are the most disproportionately high," said **Mark Harrington, Executive Director, Treatment Action Group (TAG)**. "Often these communities do not benefit equitably when advances are made. To consolidate these gains and to reach and surpass the 2020 targets, New York City must continue to insist on reaching all people living with and at risk for HIV with successful prevention, treatment, and care."

"We honor the leadership of New York City in achieving a milestone as the first Fast-Track City in the U.S. to reach the UNAIDS 90-90-90 markers in advancing the response to the AIDS

epidemic," said **Guillermo Chacón, President, Latino Commission on AIDS**. "Communities across the U.S. have been developing plans to End the HIV and AIDS Epidemic and New York City will continue to lead by example."

"NYC's success in reducing the number of new HIV infections to less than 2000 per year is a testament to what can be achieved when science, government, and community join efforts and resources," said **Nathaly Rubio-Torio, Executive Director of Voces Latinas**. "NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, representing the most diversified communities in the country, exemplifies the leadership and inclusivity that it takes to reach such an accomplishment."

Meeting the UNAIDS 90-90-90 goals is an extraordinary achievement, and one that everyone in the AIDS community should be proud of," said **Rosemary Lopez, Executive Director of AIDS Center Queens County(ACQC)**. "But important work remains to be done in the fight against the social determinants of healthcare disparities, including racism, homophobia ,transphobia, and xenophobia. That's a fight that ACQC is committed to winning."

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"As we commemorate World AIDS Day, I am both humbled and encouraged by the news of our city's success at increasing the impact of our HIV prevention/ care efforts," said **Donald R. Powell, Senior Director of Programs & Development at Exponents, Inc.** "Coupled with the recent news of significant decreases in new diagnoses, I am excited to work as a member of the Exponents' team in partnership with our Bureau of HIV at the NYCDoHMH and community- and faith-based allies. We must double down on our efforts to forge ahead while ensuring that transphobia, racism, sexism and other forms of oppression aren't allowed to undo this momentous milestone."

"New York has demonstrated that with community and government partnership it is possible to surpass the 90-90-90 goals," said **Ingrid Floyd, Executive Director, Iris House**. "We look forward to continuing the progress and ensuring that all New Yorkers achieve equal outcomes, particularly those most impacted i.e. African Americans and women of color."

***pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov***

***(212) 788-2958***