

# CDC's Five-Year HIV Prevention Strategic Plan

## Key Facts

### *New Strategies for the New Realities of HIV*

CDC is entering the third decade of AIDS with a new strategic plan to cut annual infections in half in the United States within five years.

- While HIV prevention has played a major role in combating AIDS over the past 20 years, new strategies are essential to address an increasingly complex epidemic.
- Prevention successes in the 1980s and 1990s helped significantly reduce annual HIV infections from a peak of 150,000 per year to 40,000 per year, but making further reductions will require a major expansion in prevention.

Developed through extensive consultation with a wide array of prevention experts inside and outside the agency, the new strategic plan establishes the following:

- Mobilization to increase the proportion of HIV-infected individuals who know their status
- New prevention programs and services for individuals living with HIV combined with improved linkages to treatment and care
- Highly targeted prevention programs for HIV-negative individuals at greatest risk

### *Five-year Prevention Goal*

The plan expands CDC's existing approach to prevention in the U.S. to reach the following key goals by 2005:

- Through voluntary counseling and testing, increase from the current estimated 70% to 95% the proportion of HIV-infected people who know they

are infected. Nearly 300,000 Americans who are HIV positive are unaware of their infection.

- Increase from the current estimated 50% to 80% the proportion of HIV-infected people who are linked to appropriate prevention, care and treatment services – linking more of the 800,000 to 900,000 HIV-positive Americans to prevention and care services.
- Decrease by 50% the number of individuals at high risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV infection by delivering targeted, sustained and evidence-based HIV prevention interventions.

### *A New Approach to Prevention: SAFE - CDC's Prevention Program for HIV Positives*

In February, CDC announced SAFE, a major new component of the five-year strategic plan:

- SAFE (Serostatus Approach to Fighting the HIV Epidemic) specifically targets services to those infected with HIV by significantly increasing voluntary testing to identify HIV-positive individuals and by linking those infected to prevention, treatment and care.

As part of SAFE, CDC is proposing a range of voluntary counseling and testing options to make testing easier, including:

- Making anonymous and confidential HIV testing widely available in all public and private health care settings, including community health centers, STD clinics, and hospital emergency rooms

- Evaluation and adoption of rapid testing technologies to enable testing in non-traditional sites such as street outreach programs
- Working with national, state and local partners to develop additional programs to increase knowledge of HIV infections, including new testing programs and partner referral efforts

SAFE provides prevention services specifically suited to individuals living with HIV to help them protect others from infection, and links them with treatment and care; expanded efforts include:

- Testing and development of HIV prevention messages and campaigns specifically targeted to those with HIV (e.g., HIV-positive people of color, newly diagnosed individuals)
- Research into behavioral interventions that work best to help HIV-positive individuals reduce risk behavior and maintain safer behaviors
- New research to identify “hard to find” individuals and link them to services that meet their needs
- Studies of what works best to help individuals living with HIV adhere to complex treatment regimens

### ***Importance of Prevention for HIV-Positive Individuals***

There are several reasons to intensify efforts to reach infected individuals:

- People who know they are infected can benefit from prophylaxis for opportunistic infections, monitoring of their immune status, antiretroviral therapy (when recommended by their physicians), and, if needed, substance abuse and/or mental health treatment.
- Studies indicate that after learning their HIV status, most infected individuals take steps to protect their partners.
- New HIV therapies, by lowering viral load, may reduce the degree of infectiousness. While antiretroviral therapy will not eliminate transmission of HIV at an individual level, it could theoretically reduce that risk, which at a population level could impact the course of the epidemic. More research is

needed to confirm this theory.

### ***Expanding Prevention in the U.S.***

As part of CDC’s new five-year prevention strategy, SAFE expands upon existing prevention efforts – it does not replace them.

- Traditional HIV prevention efforts, proven to change behaviors and decrease risk among high-risk HIV-negative individuals, will remain a fundamental part of CDC’s HIV prevention portfolio.
- CDC currently provides almost \$400 million to state and local prevention programs targeting high-risk individuals.
- CDC’s current approach to prevention funding at the state and local level ensures that HIV prevention programs are culturally relevant and highly targeted to those at highest risk.

