



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Michelle Batchelor
(202) 434-8090

**NASTAD CONDUCTS CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING AND RELEASES ISSUE
BRIEF ON BLACK WOMEN AND HIV**

Washington, D.C. – In order to focus needed attention on the impact of HIV/AIDS on women, particularly black women, and in recognition of [National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day \(NWGHAAD\)](#) on March 10th, the [National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors \(NASTAD\)](#) will hold a Congressional briefing and release Black Women’s Issue Brief No. 2, [Black Women and HIV/AIDS: Findings from Southeast Regional Consumer and Provider Focus Groups](#). The Congressional briefing will take place on Tuesday, March 9, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services, [Office on Women’s Health \(OWH\)](#).

The Congressional briefing and release of Black Women’s Issue Brief No. 2 are part of NASTAD’s ongoing efforts to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities in the HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis epidemics and will focus attention on the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on women and the need to do more to provide science-based, effective HIV and STD prevention programs for women and girls in the United States.

NASTAD and the OWH’s National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Congressional briefing will:

- Raise awareness about HIV/AIDS among federal and community leaders;
- Promote access to HIV/AIDS prevention and care services for women and girls;
- Support a comprehensive federal agenda to combat HIV/AIDS among women and girls; and
- Encourage federal and community partners to expand and strengthen their responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic among women and girls.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that women, ages 13 to 64 years of age, account for 26 percent of all new HIV/AIDS diagnoses. The largest number of HIV/AIDS diagnoses are among women aged 15-39. Up to 80 percent of new diagnoses among women is attributed to heterosexual contact. Alarming, black women represent a disproportionate number – 65 percent – of the total number of women currently living with HIV/AIDS, and are 20 times more likely to acquire HIV than white women.

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“The issue brief we are releasing today describes in the words of women living with HIV/AIDS the complexities of their lives and the significant challenges they face to care for their families and access the quality care that they need,” remarked Julie Scofield, NASTAD’s Executive Director. “NASTAD will continue to advocate for collective action among federal, state and local partners to reduce HIV incidence, particularly among black women, who carry a disproportionate burden of HIV/AIDS disease among women,” she continued.

Featured speakers include Dr. Howard Koh, Assistant Secretary of Health, Department of Health and Human Services and Tina Tchen, Executive Director of the White House Council on Women and Girls. Other speakers include: Janet Cleveland, Deputy Director of Prevention Programs, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Amna Osman, Director, Michigan Department of Community Health and NASTAD Executive Committee member; Dr. Gail Wyatt, Associate Director, University of California-Los Angeles AIDS Institute; and Reverend Debra Hickman, President and CEO, Sisters Together and Reaching Inc.

Founded in 1992, NASTAD is a nonprofit national association of state health department HIV/AIDS program directors who have programmatic responsibility for administering HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis health care, prevention, education, and supportive services programs funded by state and federal governments. NASTAD’s mission is to strengthen state and territory-based leadership, expertise, and advocacy and bring them to bear in reducing the incidence of HIV infection, and in providing care and support to all who live with HIV/AIDS. NASTAD’s vision is a world free of HIV/AIDS. For more information, visit www.NASTAD.org.

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