

Federal AIDS Policy Partnership Convening Group and Working Group Co-Chairs

October 14, 2010

Howard Koh, MD, MPH
Assistant Secretary for Health
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Assistant Secretary Koh,

The Federal AIDS Policy Partnership (FAPP) and its affiliated working groups would like to commend the Administration for its leadership in developing and setting forth the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS). President Obama's leadership has been laudable and we hope he will stay at the visible forefront of this effort going forward.

As a community of organizations working to further federal policy and to secure sufficient resources to support HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care, we believe the NHAS represents an important step forward. As federal agencies develop operational plans, we urge the Administration to reach toward a bold initiative that goes beyond current investments – both financial and programmatic – and seeks systemic change. Greater coordination of efforts across agencies is certainly needed, but it alone will not lead us to a reduction in new incidence.

To this end, the affiliated working groups of FAPP have each developed their own priorities for what ought to be operationalized as the NHAS moves forward. You will find each group's plans under this cover. In brief:

- On **prevention**, it is clear that a 25% reduction in new infections will not be achieved without a greater focus on those populations most disproportionately impacted by infection. Prevention efforts must be targeted and driven by the epidemiological data.
- On **care**, while healthcare reform holds out hope to address many issues related to care, a planned focus on ensuring that those living with HIV/AIDS have access to Medicaid or high-risk insurance pools must occur before 2014 to ensure continuity of coverage and care. Also, we must continue to view the Ryan White program as a key safety net program for those who need it – even after 2014. Finally, the ADAP crisis is fundamentally a crisis of resources that continues to deny too many people access to life sustaining drugs. It requires a permanent solution.
- On **housing**, we need a comprehensive solution to ensure that those living with or are affected by HIV/AIDS have high-quality housing. Housing is essential to maintaining treatment adherence, keeping people in care, and remains a proven structural intervention.
- On **research**, we need implementation research to evaluate and test programs and their effectiveness in achieving the goals of the NHAS. Additional research is necessary to develop and improve interventions to engage the populations prioritized for HIV prevention and improved access to care under the NHAS.

Each of these areas is expanded upon in the following pages. We also, however, reiterate broad community consensus that successful implementation and ongoing leadership for the success of the NHAS *must* be accompanied by a scale up in financial resources. It is not acceptable to ask agencies what they can do with existing resources to meet the NHAS goals

and objectives. **Instead, what must be asked is what agencies need in terms of resources to meet the goals and objectives of the NHAS.** Without additional financial resources, the goals and objectives of the NHAS will not be achievable.

The community of groups within FAPP, its affiliated working groups, including people living with HIV/AIDS, are partners with you in achieving the Strategy's goals. Consequently, we look forward to seeing the agency operational plans and working with you to develop appropriate and complimentary roles for national, state and local groups.

Finally, accountability must be a key factor in achieving the goals and objectives of the NHAS and a regular process to ensure accountability of all agencies' commitments in operational plans must be systemized.

Again, we want to thank you for your continuing commitment to combat HIV/AIDS in this country and we look forward to working with you to ensure the vision of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy is achieved.

Sincerely,

Members of the FAPP Convening Group

Nancy Bernstein, National AIDS Housing Coalition, Housing Working Group Co-Chair and Liaison

Christopher Brown, Chicago Department of Health

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Julie Davids, Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (CHAMP)

Kevin Fisher, AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, Research Working Group Liaison

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Kathie Hiers, AIDS Alabama, FAPP Treasurer

Ernest Hopkins, San Francisco AIDS Foundation

Paul Kawata, National Minority AIDS Council, FAPP Co-Chair

Naina Khanna, Women Organized to Respond to Life-threatening Diseases (WORLD) and U.S. Positive Women's Network

Matthew Lesieur, VillageCare and the National Association of People With AIDS (NAPWA)

Kali Lindsey, Harlem United, Housing Working Group Co-Chair

William McColl, AIDS Action, Ryan White Working Group Co-Chair and Liaison

Jennifer Redner, Good Works Group, Global AIDS Roundtable Liaison

Carl Schmid, The AIDS Institute, HIV Prevention Action Committee (HPAC) Co-Chair and Liaison

William (Bill) Smith, National Coalition of STD Directors (NCSA), FAPP Co-Chair

Rona Taylor, The Ms. Foundation

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Additional Co Chairs of FAPP Affiliated Working Groups

Lola Adele-Oso, National AIDS Housing Coalition, Housing Working Group Co-Chair

Robert Greenwald, Treatment Access Expansion Project, Harvard Law School, HIV Healthcare Access Working Group Co-Chair

Coco Jervis, Treatment Action Group, Research Working Group Co-Chair

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