GLOBAL AND DOMESTIC INTERSECTION: LESSONS TO INFORM ENDING THE EPIDEMICS
The Global Gag Rule Impacts Hard-Fought Progress On HIV/AIDS Relief

The Trump administration not only reinstated the Global Gag Rule, it expanded it—by 15 times. 

When most people hear about the Global Gag Rule—the harmful U.S. policy that withholds funding from any international NGO that provides services for, information about, or advocacy for abortion, even where it is legal, and even with its own private funds—they often think about the devastating impacts it will have on women’s and girls’ access to reproductive health and family-planning services. And they should, because women lack access to contraceptive services and have more unintended pregnancies, and research shows the policy bumps up abortion rates (mostly unsafe abortions) last time it was enacted while reducing the availability of critical health care services for the world’s most marginalized women and girls. It’s been illegal for U.S. funds to pay for abortion since 1973, so what the Global Gag Rule really does is cut off funding for quality, contraceptive health care, especially in poverty-stricken areas of the world where it’s needed the most.

This time around, the policy is even more destructive. The Trump administration not only reinstated the Global Gag Rule, it expanded it—by 15 times. Now, it applies to all U.S. global health assistance—a total of about $9 billion, including international family planning and reproductive health, which is about $660 million. For the first time, funding to maternal and child health, nutrition, measles, tuberculosis, infectious and tropical diseases, and more is on the line, and providers are forced to choose between offering comprehensive care or receiving critical U.S. funding. Impacts are frightfully high, and the funding affected by the expanded Global Gag Rule is for PEPFAR programs around the world, under the president’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). PEPFAR, created in 2003 by the George W. Bush administration, has received broad bipartisan support since it was created, reaching more than 133 million men, women, and children with lifesaving antiretroviral treatment. The 2018 PEPFAR data also shows significant declines in new HIV diagnoses among adolescent girls and young women for the first time.

What does this all mean for global health leaders on HIV/AIDS? In short: The expansion of the Global Gag Rule will roll back hard-fought progress and longstanding U.S. leadership on HIV/AIDS relief around the world, especially for key populations on the front lines of efforts to fight HIV. It reverses global efforts to integrate HIV and sexual and reproductive health programs and services, a best practice in health care service delivery as there may only be one clinic serving an entire population. While globally, the number of HIV-related deaths has been cut nearly in half since the height of the epidemic, HIV is still a leading cause of death of women of reproductive age in low- and middle-income countries, particularly in Africa.
PrEP
ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY TO END THE EPIDEMICS

UNDETECTABLE=UNTRANSMITTABLE
ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY TO END THE EPIDEMICS

Côte d'Ivoire
Rwanda
Namibia
Botswana
Lesotho
Swaziland
Zimbabwe
Zambia
Tanzania
Kenya
Uganda
Malawi
Namibia
Botswana
Lesotho
Swaziland
Haiti
ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY TO END THE EPIDEMICS

ETE AND 90-90-90 FAST TRACK CITIES
ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY TO END THE EPIDEMICS

Panama
Nicaragua
El Salvador
South Africa
Mozambique
Honduras
United States
Guyana
Trinidad & Tobago
South Africa
Uganda
Ethiopia
Haiti
Guatemala
Gambia
Jamaica
ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY TO END THE EPIDEMICS

POLITICAL REALITIES
Opioids of the Masses

Stopping an American Epidemic From Going Global

In 2016, nearly 90,000 people died of opioid overdoses in the United States, and, per capita, almost as many died in Canada. From 2000 to 2016, more Americans died of overdoses than did in World War I and World War II combined. Yet even these grim numbers understate the impact of opioid abuse. Because for every person who dies, many more live with addiction. The White House Council of Economic Advisers has estimated that the epidemic costs the U.S. economy $504 billion in 2015, or 2.8 percent of GDP.

This public health story is now common knowledge. Less well known is the growing risk that the epidemic will spread across the globe. Facing a backlash in the United States and Canada, drug companies are turning their attention to Asia and Europe and repeating the tactics that created the crisis in the first place. At the same time, the rise of fentanyl, a highly potent synthetic opioid, has made the outbreak even deadlier and begun to reshape the global drug market, a development with significant foreign policy implications. As a result, the world is on the cusp of a global opioid epidemic, driven by the overuse of legal painkillers and worsened by the spread of fentanyl that could make a

Our International Perspective On America’s Response To The Opioid Epidemic

When we were the presidents of our respective countries, Switzerland and Portugal, they were in the grip of serious and chronic epidemics. A lot has been written about the great costs of opioid addiction and overuse, which is now the leading cause of death in Americans under 50. If the epidemic develops only in North America, there are many parallels to situations elsewhere. Countries need to act quickly, and the lessons already learned can serve as a guide in the present crisis.

What we find particularly disturbing is that pharmaceutical companies, including those in our countries, are the engine of this epidemic. Fentanyl is a powerful new drug that can be produced in a lab, and the drug is being implanted not only to pain but in some cases, even to those who do not need it. What is behind the rise is the increasing use of pharmaceuticals for the treatment of chronic pain. The U.S. has been one of the highest consumer states in the world, with 2017 alone seeing an increase of 30 percent.

In Switzerland and Portugal, we have already seen the impact of the drug crisis in our communities and in our hospitals. We have seen patients with severe addiction and a decline in international drug sales. Switzerland and Portugal have taken steps to reduce the price of opioids and to encourage better use.

Is America’s Opioid Epidemic Going International?

Over the last several years, hundreds of thousands of American families have suffered the heartbreak of losing someone they love to a drug overdose. Now, it appears that this usage may begin to cross into other countries as pharmaceutical companies seek growing markets overseas.

For more than a decade, the top drug-taking families in the U.S. has been prescription

J. A. Smith for Graduate Control and Addiction. The recent threats from prescription painkillers.

The opioid crisis. That’s because of the arrival of fentanyl.