



Heeding Community Advocates' Calls, CDC Funds PrEP Pilot Program, Allows Funds to Pay for Generic Medications

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Tuesday, August 6th, 2024 – For the first time ever, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will allow for funding to pay for generic PrEP medications as part of a [new supplemental funding opportunity](#) aimed at quickly scaling up equitable PrEP access in four jurisdictions. Advocates have been calling for such an initiative to serve as a pilot for a [National PrEP Program](#) for un- and underinsured individuals; a key component of which would involve the implementation of a user-friendly *PrEP Pass* that could eliminate cost and complexity as a barrier to medications, HIV testing, necessary lab work, and provider visits.

Along with a previous decision by CDC allowing for grant [funds to go toward ancillary PrEP services](#), this initiative marks the first time that jurisdictions will be able to purchase affordable, high quality generic medications—priced at less than \$20 per month—to create a common sense public health approach to PrEP scale up that avoids navigating complex, fragmented coverage options.

The initiative will also fund coordinators within health departments to advance the project in partnership with community partners and empower them to conduct a comprehensive review of insurance barriers to PrEP coverage.

Leading advocacy organizations for a National PrEP Program, including PrEP4All, AVAC, HIVMA, and the PrEP in Black America coalition, enthusiastically support the initiative and urge eligible health departments to apply before the August 31st deadline.

“This is a real opportunity to make an impact in our national efforts to scale up PrEP and end HIV as an epidemic. The entire advocacy community, after years of building an evidence base for this sort of approach to equitable uptake, is ready to take the successes and lessons learned from this initiative to Congress to advocate for a national program.” explains John Meade, Senior Program Manager for Policy at AVAC and co-founding member of PrEP In Black America.

Although both the application and project implementation timelines are short, advocates are hopeful that health departments will apply to be part of this historic initiative.

“We think it’s important for any department thinking of applying to note that the notification of funding opportunity (NOFO) specifically includes selection criteria prioritizing jurisdictions in the Deep South and states that have not expanded Medicaid- meaning that it’s well worth it for those priority jurisdictions to get an application in. Also, there is flexibility on the timeline for



grant implementation through 2026, so the short window shouldn't discourage anyone." says Michael Chancley, Communications and Mobilization Manager for PrEP4All and co-founding member of PrEP In Black America.

"Our organizations want to sincerely thank CDC for listening to our advocacy for this pilot and for also affirming that expanding PrEP infrastructure can help scale up novel sexual health interventions like doxy PEP. In particular, we really appreciate the efforts of Dr. Robyn Neblett Fanfair, who as the Director of the Division of HIV Prevention has undoubtedly worked hard to get this NOFO released after Congressional delays in passing the FY24 complicated matters further," added Colleen Kelley, MD, MPH, FIDSA, HIVMA Chair-Elect.

In addition to the *PrEP Pass*, advocates have called for the initiative to expand prescriber access points throughout communities, including through leveraging innovative use of telehealth, and to develop campaigns made by and for PrEP users and potential PrEP users from underserved communities.

"This initiative aligns squarely with what the PrEP advocacy community has identified as what's needed. Our organizations are ready to work with health departments to help provide context on how this grant opportunity came to be and why it is so important in advancing our movement for a National PrEP Program. We look forward to doing everything we can to support the innovative public health leaders who are ready to take full advantage of this opportunity." says Jeremiah Johnson, MPH, PrEP4All Executive Director.