EJAF Launches HIV Program to Reach Black Gay Men and Trans People

Another initiative of the Elton John AIDS Foundation will focus on HIV and hep C in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

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The Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF) is funding a new initiative to address HIV among Black gay men and transgender individuals in the United States, according to an EJAF press release. The program hopes to reach 5,000 HIV-positive people by helping them learn their status, get linked to care and remain on treatment. The initiative also plans to offer HIV prevention—including assess to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)—to an additional 10,000 people.

In addition, EJAF is launching the Key Populations Fund for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, focusing on prevention and treatment of HIV and hepatitis C among people most vulnerable to HIV, including sex workers, people who use drugs and gay and bisexual men in that region.

Funding is supported by EJAF and includes contributions from pharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences, which is donating products to cure 5,000 people of hep C.

Over the past three years, EJAF-US has invested more than $6.6 million in groups battling HIV among Black gay and bi men and transgender people—populations that are disproportionately affected by HIV. In fact, as EJAF points out, African American gay and bisexual men account for one in 500 people in the United States but nearly one in four new HIV infections.

EJAF's initiative aims to help communities mobilize and develop programs that:

- Reduce new infection rates through support for innovative community-based programs to increase access to and use of HIV prevention and testing services;

- Reduce AIDS-related illness and death through support for advocacy and community-based service delivery to improve engagement in health care and earlier access to HIV treatment and care;

- Confront racism, homophobia and transphobia as key drivers of HIV infection and disease.

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