

“HIV/AIDS” Is Now “HIV” at Two Federal Health Agencies

The removal of “AIDS” from the names of two CDC HIV agencies coincides with structural changes.

October 4, 2021 By [Trent Straube](#)

What’s in a name? Or, in this case, what’s not in a name? On October 1, the federal government’s Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention was rechristened the Division of HIV Prevention (DHP). Similarly, the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention became the National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP). The leaders of both agencies announced the updated names along with structural changes within the DHP in a [“Dear Colleague” letter](#).

Demetre Daskalakis, MD, MPH, is the director of the DHP, and Jonathan H. Mermin, MD, MPH, is the director of the NCHHSTP.

“The decision to remove AIDS from our titles was not made lightly, and it is the result of several years of discussion about the core mission of our organization and was informed by partner discussions over the past decade,” states the letter. “We believe our new titles more accurately reflect the organization’s focus on high impact [prevention](#) of [HIV](#)—by preventing new HIV infections, improving health outcomes for persons with HIV, and reducing HIV-related disparities and [health inequities](#).”

As of October 1, we are now the Division of HIV
Prevention ([@CDC_HIV](#)).

Our new title more accurately reflects our focus on high-
impact prevention of [#HIV](#).

Find out more: <https://t.co/3MEy7uTTLf>
pic.twitter.com/teHZ8JWOSm
— CDC HIV (@CDC_HIV) [October 1, 2021](#)

The Division of HIV Prevention is a division of the NCHHSTP, which in turn is part of the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

These aren't to be confused with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, led by Anthony Fauci, MD, which spearheads much HIV research and treatment and is part of the larger [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#). However, both the NIH and the CDC are federal agencies within the Department of Health and Human Resources.

The structural and organizational changes at the Division of HIV Prevention were undertaken, [according to CDC.gov](#), "to foster enhanced collaboration between scientific and programmatic activities to drive meaningful, lasting change in communities affected by HIV. With its new structure, DHP is positioned to adapt to innovations in HIV prevention and continue to accelerate progress toward achieving the goals of the 'Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. Initiative.'"

A graph illustrates how the federal Division of HIV Prevention is organized as of October 1, 2021. Courtesy of CDC.gov

The agency's reorganization is illustrated in the chart above and listed in the text below:

Office of the Director

- Division Director: Demetre Daskalakis, MD, MPH
- Principal Deputy Director: Vacant
- Deputy Director for Program Management and Operations: Renáta Ellington, PhD
- Chief Medical Officer: John Brooks, MD
- Associate Director, Office of Health Equity: Vacant
- Associate Director, Office of Informatics and Data Management: Vacant
- Associate Director, Office of Performance Improvement: Norma Harris, PhD (Acting)
- Associate Director, Office of Policy, Planning, Partnerships, and Communications: Laura Landers Eastham, MPH
- Associate Director, Office of Science: Irene Hall, PhD

Branches

- Branch Chief, Behavioral and Clinical Surveillance Branch: Buzz Prejean, PhD
- Branch Chief, Detection and Response Branch: Vacant
- Branch Chief, HIV Prevention Capacity Development Branch: D. McNaghten, PhD

- Branch Chief, HIV Research Branch: Athena Kourtis, MD, PhD
- Branch Chief, HIV Surveillance Branch: Angela Hernandez, MD, MPH
- Branch Chief, Laboratory Branch: Walid Heneine, PhD
- Branch Chief, Prevention Communication Branch: Jo Stryker, PhD
- Branch Chief, Program Development and Implementation Branch: Stanley Phillip, DHA
- Branch Chief, Quantitative Sciences Branch: Cindy Lyles, PhD
- Branch Chief, Translation and Evaluation Branch: Lisa Belcher, PhD

In their letter, Daskalakis and Mermin state that the new structure “modernizes our organization and better positions us to address our key priorities with renewed energy, direction, and focus. These priorities include:

- Accelerating the Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) initiative by using HIV prevention indicators to direct programmatic improvement and jurisdictional support;
- Centering health equity in all internal and external DHP activities;
- Expanding jurisdictional support to provide grantees with the technical assistance and tools they need to address their HIV prevention priorities, such as HIV-related inequities and syndemics;
- Enhancing the research-to-practice cycle to translate the latest evidence to programs and use programmatic priorities to inform HIV prevention science;

- Leading national efforts to identify HIV clusters and outbreaks and supporting timely and community-responsive tailored action; and
- Conducting multidisciplinary research to generate the data, evidence, surveillance and tools needed to apply the best science to HIV prevention and treatment efforts.

For profiles on Daskalakis, see [“The Activist Doctor”](#) and [“Meet the ‘Queer Health Warrior’ Who’ll Lead Federal HIV Prevention Efforts.”](#)

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<http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/hivaids-now-hiv-two-federal-health-agencies>