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THE COMPREHENSIVE SOURCE

Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS Report

Politics and Policy | CDC Needs Additional \$4.8B To Reduce Annual Number of New Infections, Officials Say [Sep 17, 2008]

CDC officials on Tuesday at a [House Government Reform and Oversight Committee](#) hearing said they would need an additional \$4.8 billion dollars over the next five years to reduce the annual number of new HIV infections in the U.S., [CQ HealthBeat](#) reports (Stanchak, *CQ HealthBeat*, 9/16).

According to the [Los Angeles Times](#), the hearing came after CDC released a [study](#) last month that found that about 56,300 new HIV infections occur annually in the U.S. (Dizikes, *Los Angeles Times*, 9/17).

CDC Director Julie Gerberding based on the new estimates the agency would need an additional \$877 million in 2009 to reduce the number of new HIV infections. According to the *Times*, the fiscal year 2009 budget request for HIV prevention funding is \$892 million, which includes \$752.6 million requested by CDC. Waxman said that he would try to work with the [House Appropriations Committee](#) to increase funding for domestic HIV prevention efforts but added that he is "not very optimistic" the Bush administration will increase funding (*Los Angeles Times*, 9/17).

Gerberding; Kevin Fenton, director of CDC's [National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention](#); and Anthony Fauci, director of the [National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Disease](#), told the committee that although the additional amount of money requested is high, it could reduce the HIV transmission rate by 50% over 12 years. In addition, the increased funding could help reduce the number of HIV-positive people who are unaware of their status by 50% and help reduce racial disparities.

Gerberding said that the agency would use the increased funding to expand HIV testing, research new prevention techniques and evaluate prevention programs. Fauci added that increased funding also would allow research into new areas of HIV prevention research, such as preventing coinfection with other sexually transmitted infections, providing antiretroviral drugs to HIV-negative people as a preventive measure, testing microbicides and vaccine development.

Although the \$4.8 billion request is a significant amount of money, it would be more expensive not to treat HIV, Fauci said. A "[professional judgment budget](#)" (.pdf) released by the panelists noted that each HIV infection costs more than \$1 million in treatment and lost productivity and that if CDC can prevent 4,800 new infections over five years, the programs established with increased funding would be "cost saving to society."

Gerberding said the request is "not just about funding, it's about needing new tools," adding, "AIDS is a social disease as well as a viral disease ... if we don't address the underpinning issues, we'll never get to where we need to be" (*CQ HealthBeat*, 9/16). She said that the U.S. "need[s] to do so much more than we're doing right now" to prevent new HIV infections, adding that public health workers "need to get AIDS back on the radar screen" because HIV/AIDS "is still posing a threat to college students and to young men and women across our nation's fabric."

Panelists also called for additional HIV prevention and education programs that target blacks, Hispanics and men who have sex with men. George Ayala of [AIDS Project Los Angeles](#) told committee members that only four of CDC's 49 recommended intervention programs specifically target MSM and only one targets minority MSM. He said, "Serious HIV-related health disparities, often fueled by stigma and discrimination, continue to undermine HIV prevention efforts in communities of color" (*Los Angeles Times*, 9/17).

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