



National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network
Commemorates National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

March 10, 2013: As we commemorate the eight annual National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN) urges Black women across the United States to join us as we confirm our commitment to reduce the burden of morbidity, mortality and stigma of HIV/AIDS and other health disparities associated with gender, social, and economic inequities among Black women and girls.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Black women accounted for 13 percent of all new HIV infections in the United States in 2010 and nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of all new infections among women. While the CDC reports that new infections among black women remain high, for the first time this analysis found indications of an encouraging trend. While the decline in HIV incidence is encouraging, the new data show that black women continue to be far more affected by HIV than women of other races.

The rate of new HIV infections among black women in 2010 was 20 times that of white women and nearly 5 times that of Hispanic women. This indicates an even greater disparity than shown in CDC's previous incidence analysis, in which the HIV infection rate among black women was 15 times that of white women and more than 3 times that of Hispanic women. Twenty three percent (23%) of new infections occur among Black women 13-24 years old.

Despite these statistics many of the programs designed to provide services to women will soon experience devastating cuts due to sequestration. The Sequester will result in automatic across the board cut of 5% to most non-defense discretionary programs including Ryan White, HIV prevention, HIV research, AIDS housing, and prevention and treatment programs for people with substance abuse problems. Specifically, cuts to the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) could result in 7,400 fewer patients having access to life saving HIV medications, and approximately 424,000 fewer HIV tests could be conducted by Centers for Disease Control (CDC) State grantees nationwide. In addition, these across the board cuts will impede this nation's ability to reduce the rate of new HIV infections, improve access to care and address the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on Black women and girls.

"These cuts threaten the very programs intended to improve access to care and health outcomes for Black women living with and at risk of HIV. It is hard to imagine how these programs will continue to provide services when they are facing additional budget cuts." said Barbara Joseph, Chair of NBWHAN.

The National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network is committed to continuing its' work so that our goal of ending the HIV epidemic in the Black community, particularly among Black women and girls, is one day realized.

About the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN)

The National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN or "the Network") is organized to provide leadership and expertise in the prevention and spread of HIV/AIDS and other health disparities that affect black women and girls nationally and internationally. The mission of the NBWHAN is to reduce the burden of morbidity, mortality and stigma of HIV/AIDS and other health disparities associated with gender, social, and economic inequities among Black women and girls.

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References

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- 2 Prejean J et al. Estimated HIV incidence in the United States, 2006-2009. *PLoS ONE* 2011;6(8):e17502.
- 3 CDC. Monitoring selected national HIV prevention and care objectives by using HIV surveillance data – United States and 6 U.S. dependent areas – 2010. *HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report* 2012;17(No. 3). Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/>. Published June 2012.