



National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day 2014 Statement from the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network, Inc.

February 8, 2014: On February 7, 2014, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network, Inc., and its members across the country engaged in activities to educate Black Americans about the significant and persistent impact HIV and AIDS continues to have on our community.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Black Americans account for almost half of all new HIV infections in the United States each year (44 percent) as well as almost half of all people living with HIV. Comparing 2008 to 2010, new HIV infections among Black women decreased 21 percent (from 7,700 to 6,100); however, we account for 13 percent of all new HIV infections and the majority (64 percent) of all new infections among women overall. The HIV incidence rate for Black women remains 20 times as high as that of White women, and almost five times that of Hispanic women [1]. Among Black men, the majority of new infections occur among men who have sex with men (MSM). Young Black MSM are severely affected and now account for more new infections (4,800 in 2010) than any other subgroup of MSM by race/ethnicity and age. The rate of new HIV infections for Black men is more than six times as high as the rate among White men, and more than twice that of Hispanic men [2].

"While we have witnessed tremendous breakthroughs in HIV prevention, care and treatment that can help change the course of this epidemic in the Black community, we can no longer talk about HIV and its impact on Black women without including the voices of Black men, gay and straight. For far too long we have attempted to go our separate ways when we know that our collective voice will undoubtedly bring about the change in this epidemic that we have separately fought to achieve. It is now time to come together" said Barbara Joseph, Chair.

Throughout our history we have demonstrated a resilience and ability to combat severe threats to our survival. The HIV epidemic is such a threat and we must recognize it as such. It will take all of us to change the community norms that promote unsafe behavior to norms that celebrate health strategies that promote good health.

Today, we have a National HIV/AIDS Strategy that directs the nation to focus its prevention efforts on communities at greatest risk and we have the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which will help millions of Americans gain access to affordable health insurance markets including subsidized health insurance for many uninsured and underinsured individuals, expand Medicaid coverage to those whose income is at or below 133% of the federal poverty level (subject to state participation), and expand patient protections that prevent discrimination and denial of coverage for pre-existing conditions. The ACA is an essential step toward advancing health care equality for Black Americans living with HIV and AIDS by ensuring greater access to prevention, treatment, and care as well as life sustaining drugs.

The National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network, Inc. is committed to continuing its works 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, Inc. The National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN) 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:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Fact Sheet: New HIV Infections in the United States, December, 2012.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Fact Sheet: HIV Among African Americans, February, 2014.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Fact Sheet: HIV and AIDS Among African American Youth, May, 2014.