



NEWS

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COMPELLING NEW RESEARCH LINKS HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT TO HOUSING

-- *The National AIDS Housing Coalition Releases Groundbreaking Report* --

Washington, DC, November 30, 2005 –On the eve of *World AIDS Day*, December 1, 2005, The National AIDS Housing Coalition has released a groundbreaking study concluding that housing helps reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS and increases access to needed medical care.

A result of the National Housing and HIV/AIDS Research Summit held last June, the report, entitled *Housing is the Foundation of HIV Prevention and Treatment*, supports the development and implementation of a new HIV prevention and care strategy in the US based upon the proven effectiveness of and primary importance of housing as a structural HIV prevention and treatment intervention.

“These powerful findings provide the basis for a public health response to the housing needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS, and of persons whose homelessness places them at heightened risk of HIV infection,” said Nancy Bernstine, Executive Director of the National AIDS Housing Coalition (NAHC). “The report should be the basis for new comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention strategies on all levels of government.”

“This growing evidence refutes the predominant ‘risky person’ model for understanding the co-occurrence of homelessness, HIV infection, and poor health outcomes among persons living with HIV/AIDS who lack stable housing,” said summit researcher, Angela Aidala, PHD and a professor at Columbia University’s School of Public Health. “It is not the homeless or unstably housed person who is risky, but the person’s situation.”

Key public policy imperatives outlined in *Housing is the Foundation of HIV Prevention and Treatment* include:

- *First Imperative:* Make subsidized, affordable housing (including supportive housing for those who need it) available to all low-income people living with HIV/AIDS
- *Second Imperative:* Make housing homeless persons a top prevention priority, since housing is a powerful HIV prevention strategy
- *Third Imperative:* Incorporate housing interventions as a critical element of HIV healthcare
- *Fourth Imperative:* Continue to collect and analyze data to assess the impact and effectiveness of various models of housing as an independent structural HIV prevention and healthcare intervention

“Housing can be an effective and cost-effective prevention intervention, and a key gateway to HIV care,” states another summit researcher, David Holtgrave, PHD, department head at Johns Hopkins University and a prominent healthcare economist. “The cost to the public of providing supportive housing may be offset by reduced use of more expensive public services such as emergency health care, inpatient services, emergency shelters and prisons.”

“These findings validate the notion that the future starts with a place to live for people with HIV/AIDS,” said former NAHC president Regina Quattrochi, CEO of Bailey House, New York’s oldest AIDS housing provider. “As people with HIV/AIDS continue to live longer, the need for housing will grow. It’s crucial that public-policy makers on all levels address this issue.”

The entire text of the report is available online at: www.nationalaidshousing.org.

The National AIDS Housing Coalition (NAHC) was founded in 1994 with the belief that persons living with HIV/AIDS have a fundamental right to decent, safe, affordable housing and supportive services. The purpose of the NAHC is to ensure that the diverse voices of those infected and affected by HIV are heard and their needs are met. The organization educates legislators and public policy makers about the need for housing programs that assist persons living with HIV/AIDS and encourages new initiatives and better coordination between federal agencies. NAHC is financed by member dues, foundation grants, and individual donations. NAHC does not receive any government funding.

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