

Appendix A.1
Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health
(OWH)

Overview of OWH's HIV/AIDS Programs

Between 1985 and 2005, the proportion of AIDS cases among adolescent and adult women reported in the U.S. grew more than three-fold, from seven percent in 1985 to 26 percent in 2005¹. HIV/AIDS is now the fifth leading cause of death for U.S. women ages 25-44. Among African America women ages 23-34, AIDS was the leading cause of death in 2004².

In 1991, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) established the Office on Women's Health (OWH) as the focal point for women's health issues. OWH works to redress inequities in research, health care services, and education that have historically placed the health of women at risk. OWH also coordinates women's health efforts within DHHS to eliminate disparities in health status and supports culturally sensitive education programs that encourage women to take personal responsibility for their health and wellness. As such, OWH has implemented programs and activities to address the marked increase in HIV infections among U.S. women. These programs and activities include: the Women and HIV/AIDS Prevention Strategies Workgroup, the Regional Women and HIV/AIDS Workshops, and the OWH Minority AIDS Fund. This document provides an overview of each program and activity.

Women and HIV/AIDS Prevention Strategies Workgroup

Since its inception in 2003, this workgroup holds annual face-to-face meetings and monthly teleconferences to assist OWH in developing clear strategies that will assist women in preventing HIV infection. This workgroup also assists OWH in developing strategies that will help decrease complications and disease progression for women already living with HIV/AIDS. One activity developed by the workgroup is the "Count-Down-To-World AIDS Day" event calendar³. This calendar of events is a strategy for widespread distribution of information about efforts focusing on women and HIV/AIDS prevention education, advocacy, community based organizations offering gender specific services, and events celebrating the lives of women living with HIV/AIDS.

Regional Women and HIV/AIDS Workshops

OWH's regional women's health coordinators from across the United States work to promote a greater focus on women's health issues through programs and activities at the regional, state, and local levels. In collaboration with the regional women's health coordinators, OWH develops forums in the public health service regions to facilitate discussions around issues related to women and HIV/AIDS.

OWH Minority AIDS Fund

¹ See <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/women/resources/factsheet/pdf/women.pdf>

² See <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/women/resources/factsheet/pdf/women.pdf>

³ See <http://www.4woman.gov/events/WAD/events.htm> for the events calendar.

In response to the Congressional Black Caucus's efforts to focus on the impact of HIV/AIDS in minority communities, OWH developed demonstration programs to address the persistent gaps in HIV/AIDS health care needs and services for women. Program areas covered by these demonstration projects are listed below (including the names and locations of funded programs).

- *Incarcerated and Newly Released Women with or risk for HIV/AIDS/STD's Program*
These demonstration projects are for HIV/AIDS continuum of care services provided for incarcerated and newly released minority women.
- *HIV/AIDS and Women in the Rural South Program*
These demonstration projects are for women-based organizations that provide primary and secondary HIV/AIDS services to women living in the rural south. .
- *Prevention of HIV/AIDS among Young Women Attending Minority Institutions Program*
This national HIV/AIDS/STD prevention education program is designed to increase knowledge, promote prevention, and reduce the risk of HIV infection among minority women ages 18-25 attending Tribal Colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic Serving Institutions. The institutions, by type, are listed below.
- *HIV Prevention for Women Living in the U.S. Virgin Islands*
These projects target women at risk for acquiring HIV with culturally competent, gender-specific approaches.
- *HIV Prevention for HIV + Women Living in Puerto Rico*
These projects develop and implement culturally competent, secondary HIV prevention education addressing gender-specific issues, stigma shame, and access to care.
- *Intergenerational Approaches to HIV/AIDS Prevention Education for Women Across the Lifespan Pilot Program*
These projects develop and pilot cross-generational approaches to HIV/AIDS prevention education for minority women and their female family members.
- *In Community Spirit – HIV Prevention for Native/American Indian and Alaska Native Women Living in Rural and Frontier Indian Country*
These projects integrate the traditions, values, culture and spirituality of the indigenous populations to provide gender-specific HIV prevention education.
- *HIV Prevention and Support Services for Women Partners of Incarcerated/Recently Released Males.*

Gender specific demonstration projects for HIV/AIDS continuum of care and prevention services for incarcerated and newly-released women disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS.

- *HIV/AIDS-Related Services for Survivors of Domestic Violence*
Under this project, organizations will develop and implement programs to address the intersection between domestic violence and the increased risk for contracting HIV/AIDS. The project will primarily target female survivors/victims of domestic violence. It is designed to train domestic violence counselors to incorporate HIV/AIDS risk reduction strategies in to their service delivery. This year the project includes a cross-training component for HIV/AIDS service providers.
- *Straight Talk on Preventing HIV*
The Straight Talk on Preventing HIV Program (multi-year for 3 years) will develop gender and age-specific, culturally and linguistically-appropriate HIV/AIDS prevention education to reach at-risk racial/ethnic minorities specifically African American, Latina/Hispanic, and Native American females ages 12 – 18 and female adults in the family.
- *Prevention and Intervention AIDS-Related Services for Girls at Risk for Juvenile Delinquency*
This program oversees the development of prevention and intervention programs for adolescent girls that are at high risk for gang involvement and STD/HIV infection. The organizations providing services under this project title are:
 - Demoiselle 2 Femme, NFP; Chicago, IL
 - Family Services Unlimited, Inc.; Shreveport, Louisiana
 - Messages of Empowerment Productions, LLC; Atlanta, GA
 - Orange County Bar Foundation; Santa Ana, CA
 - Research and Evaluation Solutions, Inc. (REESSI); Alexandria, VA
 - Sage Associates, Inc.; Houston, TX
 - Visionary Vanguard Group, Inc.; Orlando, FL
 - WestCare Foundation, Inc.; Fresno, CA
 - Women Accepting Responsibility; Baltimore, MD
 - Youth In Action, Inc.; Panama City, FL

Sources:

1. <http://www.4woman.gov/owh/hiv.htm>

2. "U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health-Division of Policy and Program Development: HIV/AIDS Program, An Overview of Programs" U.S. Department of Health Humans Services, Washington, D.C. (2004)
3. <http://www.4woman.gov/hiv/programs>
4. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/women/resources/factsheet/pdf/women.pdf>