Lessons from Twin Pandemics

A LETTER FROM THE CEO

In early 2021, we quickly realized that COVID-19 was going to be with us for the long haul, as the promise of effective vaccines gave way to emerging variants and new case surges. COVID has reminded everyone about three essential public health strategies needed to end a pandemic – strategies we have been using to fight HIV and AIDS for nearly 40 years.

First, COVID taught us that testing must be available, affordable, and frequent. Likewise, testing is the first strategy to ending the HIV epidemic. Today in our area, about 1 in 6 people living with HIV do not know their status. AFH offers HIV/STI testing in-person at our offices, in the community at special events, and in the comfort of one’s home – all at no cost, to ensure that every Houstonian has the opportunity to know their HIV status and take appropriate action.

The second strategy to ending a pandemic is early and effective treatment. While COVID treatment options have been scarce, HIV treatment advances have made today’s medications safer, more effective, and better able than ever to achieve viral suppression. Viral suppression is vital to keeping the immune system healthy, preventing serious illness, and empowering people living with HIV to live long, healthy lives. Viral suppression also means that a person cannot transfer HIV through sex, an important component of prevention.

The third strategy is prevention. With COVID, we learned about practical ways to prevent acquiring the virus – face coverings, cough and sneeze etiquette, physical distancing, isolation, quarantine, and vaccines. While we do not yet have a vaccine for HIV, we do have daily oral PrEP medications and a bi-monthly injectable medication that are up to 95% effective at preventing HIV acquisition through sex. Being tested to know one’s status, seeking treatment early to avoid viral suppression, and taking preventive measures are key strategies to ending the HIV pandemic. But they are not the only strategies. Stigma, fear, discrimination, systemic racism, poverty, lack of affordable health insurance, prior incarceration, homelessness – these realities impact people’s lives every day in Houston. At AFH, we are passionate about ensuring that everyone has equitable access to care and to the services that support making that care possible. That’s why, in addition to prevention education, testing, PrEP, and “rapid-start” treatment, we also provide outreach in Texas prisons and discharge planning for persons exiting incarceration, transportation and food assistance, supportive housing for 300 individuals and families every month, substance abuse and mental health counseling services, a summer camp for children living with HIV, and case management services. Each of these strategies is equally essential to support persons vulnerable to and living with HIV to receive the care they need.

Ultimately, we hope for the day when a safe, effective vaccine is available, and for the day when a cure is finally found. In the meantime, we remain steadfastly committed to the public health strategies and supportive interventions that are moving us toward our mission to end the HIV epidemic in the greater Houston area. Thank you for all of the ways that you support AFH and the Houston community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still a community where HIV is still.

John Huckaby
AIDS Foundation Houston, CEO

VISION
Out our vision is a community where HIV is stigma-free and rare, and people have equitable access to care.

MISSION
Our mission is to end the HIV epidemic in the greater Houston area.

LEADERSHIP TEAM
John Huckaby
Chief Executive Officer
Teryia Richmond, MD, MPH
Chief Medical Officer
Nicole Moore
Chief Operating Officer
Nicholas Williams
Chief Financial Officer
Darryl H. Brown
Chief Development Officer
W. Jeffrey Campbell
Chief Health Officer
Dr. Marcus Bello,
PhD, MSW
Chief Program Officer

AFH Client Demographics

HIV statistics

34,800
New HIV acquisitions in the United States

1,189,700 million
People aged 13+ living with HIV in the United States

27,643
People living with HIV in the Houston area

1,257
People were newly diagnosed with HIV

*Accurate as of 2019

Sources

AFH Client Demographics
Programs

AFH Housing Programs
AFH offers seven permanent housing programs, providing safe affordable living and supportive services to individuals and families impacted by HIV. To help individuals develop a stable, healthy and productive future, all AFH housing programs provide intensive case management, community and social support.

319
received housing in 2021

11
graduated into independent living

73%
linked to care

72%
with income less than $10,000

10%
with income between $10,000 and $30,000

Prevention and Education

HIV/STI Testing
Provides free HIV/STI testing and treatment, sexual health education and patient navigation to link to care. Testing and education provided on-site or in the community.

Clinical Services
Provides on-site via telehealth, free HIV/STI testing, STI testing and treatment, PEP and same day PEP, and dPEP.

Mistr/Sistr
Provides access to at-home HIV/STI testing from the comfort of home including PrEP delivery.

Support Services

Case Management and Client Navigation
This support program offers case management of clients and access to transportation for medical appointments and other community-based services as needed.

Somebody Cares
This program is designed to help individuals plan for living with HIV after their release from incarceration, providing access to post-release resources and services that increase adherence to treatment and medication.

START Now (Strategic, Targeted, Anti-Retroviral Treatment)
Allows individuals recently diagnosed with HIV to get on anti-retroviral treatment within 30 days of their diagnosis.

START Now

I learned most of my survival skills from learning to cope with living with HIV. I was not always undetectable and untransmittable as the slogan goes. I was not always unafraid and unashamed. Three years ago, I was homeless and unemployable. Early on medical professionals said in order to survive, I must adhere to a strict medication regimen. However, I couldn’t because I and my child had no stable living arrangement. Because of the medical support and guidance from AFH, I no longer worry about being able to keep up with and taking multiple medications and have found a regime that is easy and keeps me healthy. Thanks to the AIDS Foundation, I now have my own apartment and I can be sure where I will lay my head each night.

-- Client Quote

As a transgender female who entered the BRI program under Transitional Short-term services, I initially received social security as my main source of income. However, after three months of ongoing services and support from the program, I was able to be hired full-time at a delivery company, purchase a car and afford household expenses. I was linked to care, received routine counseling, and health medications. Overall, I completed 12 months of Transitional Short term Housing services and was approved to move into a unit as the first client who received Permanent Housing Placement Services.

-- Client Quote

 Programs

Wall Talk
We offer a peer-based education program (virtually and in-person) about HIV, STIs, human trafficking, and sexual violence for those incarcerated.

Bridge ReEntry Initiative (BRI)
AFH offers transitional housing for persons living with HIV who have been recently released. The clients are also case managed through the Somebody Cares program.

Incarcerated and/or Recently Released Outreach

88%
participation rates within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice system

85
peer educators trained in 2021

Stone Soup
Provides food assistance for persons with food insecurities and offers nutrition food from our on-site food pantry.

20K+
Pounds of food distributed through the Stone Soup Food Pantry

682
Clients served

The Youth Enrichment Center
This program provides education support for children and youth impacted by HIV and living at our housing community for families.

177
youth participation

Youth Programs

Camp Hope
Established 26 years ago, Camp Hope was the first safe place for children living with HIV in Texas. The camp serves kids and their siblings (ages 7 to 18) from marginalized and underserved communities. These amazing kids are given the opportunity to develop life, education, work and other important skills that are needed to help manage a life living with HIV in a safe, healthy and a secure environment.

765
clients tested for HIV and received PEP education

19
individuals linked to care/treatment within less than 30 days of new diagnosis*

*This does not include START Now

Incarcerated and/or Recently Released Outreach

Support Services

Project C.O.R.E. (Coordination of Resources and Employment)
This program helps improve HIV health outcomes through coordinated strategies, a medical clinic and connects clients to employment services, housing and HIV medical care.

Mental Health and Substance Disorder Counseling
These much-needed services are provided to our housing clients, both by AFH staff and referrals to outside partner agencies for mental wellness.

Case Management and Client Navigation
This support program offers case management of clients and access to transportation for medical appointments and other community-based services as needed.

HIV/STI Testing

Clinical Services

Mistr/Sistr

The Power of Coming Together

"As we prepare to enter our 40th year serving the greater Houston area, we are committed to creating a future where HIV is stigma-free and rare, and everyone has equal access to care."

It’s been yet another unprecedented year and I have never been prouder of the perseverance shown by our staff, volunteers, and financial supporters. Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, AHF spent 2021 investing in and delivering on our mission to end the HIV epidemic and support our community in the greater Houston area. We would not have been able to continue this critical work without the support of our corporate, individual, foundation, and community donors.

With ViiV Healthcare’s new investment, we will be able to provide a Teen Leadership Institute for our graduates of Camp Hope, preparing them for life beyond high school. Along with ViiV’s continuing support of our discharge-planning program for people living with HIV and exiting incarceration, ViiV is enabling a new program dedicated to the prevention and care needs of African American cisgender and transgender women.

Through expanded outreach, increased testing, access to PrEP and rapid-start treatment, more supportive housing, and a cadre of essential support services, AHF will ensure that care is available and accessible to our vulnerable neighbors who deserve equitable health outcomes.

In our quest for innovative strategies to end the HIV epidemic, we are thankful for the considerable ways you support our mission. And while we look toward a future where the COVID-19 pandemic is in the rear view, we will not rest until HIV is no longer an epidemic. Please continue to pledge your time, your financial support, and your passion to AHF. Together with your ongoing commitment, we boldly proclaim that Houston can one day extinguish HIV.

With our deepest gratitude, Kyle Pierce

AIDS FOUNDATION HOUSTON FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Total income $18,030,100
Fundraising expenses $877,352
Admin expenses $721,959
Program expenses $12,406,743
Net Assets $7,280,300

NOTE: The data is based on the 2021 unaudited financials. Our 2021 audit will be conducted in the summer of 2022.