

Immediate ART Available to All People Living With HIV in HPTN 071 (PopART) Zambia Communities

In Partnership with Zambian Ministry of Health, Government Clinics to Offer ART Irrespective of CD4 Count

The HPTN 071 (PopART) study team, in partnership with the Zambian Ministry of Health will now provide antiretroviral therapy (ART) irrespective of CD4 count or clinical stage to all HIV-infected individuals living in the study communities, in line with recent World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines. Through this change, HPTN 071 (PopART) will contribute to a national pilot program being conducted by the Zambian Ministry of Health that offers ART to all people living with HIV in selected areas of the country. Transition to ART irrespective of CD4 count in study communities in South Africa, the other country where the study is being conducted, is expected in the coming months.

The HPTN 071 (PopART) study is investigating the effectiveness of a package of interventions that combines universal household-based HIV testing, linkage to HIV care and promotion of other known prevention strategies to prevent the spread of HIV. The community component of the study is delivered door-to-door by the study's Community HIV-care Providers (CHiPs). The recent protocol change will offer initiation of ART to all people living with HIV attending health care facilities, irrespective of CD4 count or clinical disease stage, whereas previously this was offered only in one study arm.

HPTN 071 remains uniquely positioned to answer the critical questions about the impact of combination prevention strategies in limiting the HIV epidemic, including:

- Whether yearly, universal, community-based HIV testing, coupled with linkage to immediate, universal ART, adherence support and other prevention interventions, can lower HIV incidence.
- Whether such an intervention can be delivered sustainably with high coverage and high quality, and what it will take to deliver such an intervention.
- Whether such an intervention is successful in reaching the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets.
- The cost and cost-effectiveness of such a strategy.

Mathematical modeling and early study data indicate that following the changes in design, HPTN 071 will remain well powered to answer these critical questions. The change in design means that results from the study (anticipated in 2018) will be of maximum value to government officials, funders and policy makers at a time when many countries will have moved to providing ART to all people living with HIV irrespective of CD4 count or disease stage, in line with the WHO recommendation.

About HPTN

The HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN) is a worldwide collaborative clinical trials network that brings together investigators, ethicists, community and other partners to



develop and test the safety and efficacy of interventions designed to prevent the acquisition and transmission of HIV. HPTN studies evaluate new HIV prevention interventions and strategies in populations and geographical regions that bear a disproportionate burden of infection. The HPTN research agenda is focused primarily on the use of integrated strategies: use of antiretroviral drugs (antiretroviral therapy and pre-exposure prophylaxis); interventions for substance abuse, particularly injection drug use; behavioral risk reduction interventions and structural interventions.

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