Immunizations Discontinued in HIV Vaccine Study

April 26, 2013—The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has stopped a large-scale HIV vaccine trial after an independent scientific review board determined that the vaccine did not prevent HIV infection and did not reduce the amount of HIV in the blood. The study, known as HVTN 505, began in 2009 and had enrolled 2,504 volunteers in 19 U.S. cities. The study population consisted of men who have sex with men and transgender people who have sex with men.

The Phase IIB study, conducted by the HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN), was designed to determine whether the vaccine regimen could prevent HIV infection and/or reduce the amount of virus in the blood of vaccine recipients who became infected with HIV. While there were no safety concerns with the immunizations, the study was stopped because of futility. The review board determined that the vaccine showed no better protection than the placebo.

“The HPTN applauds the HIV Vaccine Trials Network for undertaking this important study. While the results are disappointing, we must remain steadfast in our search for an HIV vaccine which is critical to any long term strategy for HIV prevention,” said HPTN Principal Investigator Dr. Myron Cohen.

HPTN Principal Investigator Dr. Wafaa El-Sadr added, “The search for an effective HIV vaccine remains a critical component of ongoing HIV prevention research. It is important to build upon what was learned in the HVTN 505 study and to identify further research strategies.”

NIAID and the HVTN 505 study team are continuing to analyze the study data to better understand why the vaccine did not work and to guide future vaccine development efforts.