Importance of Racial & Ethnic Minority Participation in HIV Vaccine Trials

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Ronald Johnson, Deputy Executive Director, AIDS Action Council
HIV/AIDS is still a critical issue in the United States

- 1.1 million people are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS in the United States (50 states, D.C. and dependent areas, as of 2007).
  - Racial and ethnic minorities represent 67%
- 56,300 people are estimated to have been newly infected with HIV in 2006.
  - Racial and ethnic minorities represent 65%
  - Black women accounted for 61% of estimated new infections among women
- 21% of people infected with HIV do not know their status.

HIV/AIDS is still a critical issue in the United States

- **Lifetime risk of HIV diagnosis (2004-2005)**

  - 1 in 16 black men
  - 1 in 30 black women
  - 1 in 35 Hispanic men
  - 1 in 114 Hispanic women
  - 1 in 104 white men
  - 1 in 588 white women

Source: Hall et al. JAIDS. 2008; 49: 294-297
HIV/AIDS is still a critical issue in the United States

- HIV prevention is essential to changing the course of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the U.S.

- Reducing new HIV infections 1st of 3 primary goals of the developing National HIV/AIDS Strategy called for by President Obama.
HIV vaccine as a tool for HIV prevention

- There likely will never be a single solution to HIV and AIDS.

- Vaccines are one of the most effective public health tools in fighting diseases.

- The development and distribution of a safe and effective HIV vaccine is widely considered to be essential to stopping the spread of HIV globally.
HIV vaccine as a tool for HIV prevention

- To create an effective vaccine for all people, the types and numbers of HIV vaccine research participants must reflect each group’s level of risk and HIV infection rates.

- In clinical trials conducted by the HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN), 30.6% of participants were black and 5.3% were Hispanic.
HIV vaccine as a tool for HIV prevention

- There is an urgent need to increase African American and Hispanic participation in HIV vaccine trials in order to make sure that a vaccine will work for the people who are most in need.

Source: HIV Vaccine Trials Network Web site: www.hvtn.org/legacy
HIV vaccine as a tool for HIV prevention

- Need to overcome myths and fears
  - “AIDS was created to kill off black and Hispanic people.”
  - There already is a vaccine that can prevent the spread of HIV but no one wants to invest in it.
  - AIDS is a problem in Africa but not in the U.S.
  - You can get an HIV infection from an experimental vaccine.

Source: HIV Vaccine Trials Network Web site: [www.hvtn.org/legacy](http://www.hvtn.org/legacy)
HIV vaccine as a tool for HIV prevention

Need to break a legacy of silence and mistrust and establish a legacy of communicating accurate information and building trust.
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