



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Six Expert HIV and TGNC Health Organizations Launch ‘Your Body, Your Life, Your PrEP’ Campaign to Increase PrEP Uptake

PrEP has proven to be 99 percent effective in preventing HIV transmission, but usage lags for TGNC communities hardest hit by HIV



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New York, NY (October 24, 2023) - Today, Amida Care, Colectivo Intercultural Transgrediendo, Community Healthcare Network (CHN), Destination Tomorrow, New Pride Agenda and TransLatinx Network announced a comprehensive effort to increase awareness and usage of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) focusing on transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) communities disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS. The six organizations launched the “Your Body, Your Life, Your PrEP - #PrEPforYourLife (Tu Cuerpo, Tu Vida, Tu PrEP - #PrEPporTuVida)” year-long campaign as part of the fifth annual PrEP Aware Week, an effort by the New York State Department of Health to increase uptake of the treatment to help end the HIV epidemic.

PrEP is a game-changing medication that has proven 99 percent effective in preventing HIV transmission. While PrEP usage overall has increased in recent years, progress has been uneven, particularly among communities of color and among TGNC individuals. A 2021 [CDC report](#) of trans women found that only 36% of HIV-negative individuals were using PrEP. The same report found striking racial and ethnic disparities: Sixty-two percent of Black transgender women and 35% of Hispanic/Latina transgender women had HIV, compared to 17% of white transgender women.

Studies have shown that the TGNC community faces significant barriers to accessing HIV prevention tools, such as PrEP, as a result of discrimination faced in health care settings and a lack of providers who are trained in culturally-responsive care. Other barriers include concerns about how PrEP might interact with hormones that some people are taking for gender affirmation. Despite these concerns, the CDC maintains that there are no known drug-on-drug interactions, and there is currently no reason why PrEP and hormones cannot be taken together.

A new, long-acting injectable version of PrEP was recently awarded a Grade A rating from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) – a crucial step towards getting this form of PrEP in the hands of those who need it. Long-acting injectable PrEP is a much needed option for those who experience challenges taking daily pills, such as those who are experiencing housing insecurity and economic hardships.

“Increasing PrEP among persons at the highest risk for HIV— including communities of color and TGNC communities —is vital to our efforts to end the epidemic,” said **Doug Wirth, President and CEO of Amida Care**. “While we continue to have conversations in communities about the importance of PrEP, we need to make sure that everyone who can benefit from PrEP has access to it – too many people are facing barriers, including stigma, lack of awareness, and cost, in trying to access this life-saving preventive treatment. With long-acting injectable PrEP on the horizon, we must center those who rely on Medicaid to ensure that those who can benefit the most from this groundbreaking medication have the access they need.”

“For transgender and gender non-conforming individuals in the Latinx community, inequalities in PrEP usage persist. We need to empower individuals with the knowledge and resources they need for HIV prevention, including PrEP. Let's shatter the stigma, embrace PrEP – Tu Cuerpo, Tu Vida, Tu PrEP,” said **Liaam Winslet, Executive Director of Colectivo Intercultural Transgrediendo,**

“While overall awareness of PrEP has increased, most of the progress has been among white MSM. We all have a part to play in ensuring that the communities that have been disproportionately impacted by new cases of HIV, including TGNC individuals and women, are prioritized in our prevention efforts. We all have a part to play to promote PrEP as an HIV prevention tool,” said **Freddy Molano, Vice President of Infectious Diseases and LGBTQ Programs at Community Healthcare Network (CHN)**.

“Together, we are breaking down barriers and making a powerful statement - 'Your Body, Your Life, Your PrEP.' Through this campaign, we can ensure people in communities disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS are having conversations with their health providers about PrEP,” said **Yahaira Gonzalez, Director of Outreach at Destination Tomorrow**.

“We are proud to join forces with our partners in this vital campaign to address the disparities in PrEP usage,” said **Elisa Crespo, Executive Director of the New Pride Agenda**. “By participating in the PrEP Aware Week campaign, we aim to raise awareness about PrEP and provide culturally responsive care to those who need it the most. Together, we are committed to ensuring equitable access to this game-changing HIV prevention medication.”

“Latinx people of trans experience are being diagnosed with HIV at alarming rates. It is essential that we provide the right services and support so they are aware of, and have access to, PrEP. This campaign will move us in the right direction,” said **Cristina Herrera, CEO & Founder of TransLatinx Network**.

***Amida Care Inc.** is a not-for-profit health plan that specializes in providing comprehensive health coverage and coordinated care to New Yorkers with complex conditions, including HIV and behavioral health disorders, and people who are of transgender experience or who are homeless (regardless of HIV status). Amida Care has a wide network of health care providers throughout New York City and is the largest Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP) in New York State. For more information, visit www.amidacareny.org.*

***Colectivo Intercultural Transgrediendo (CITG)** is an organization that works to promote and defend human rights and access to comprehensive health care for TransGNB, QBIPOC and Sex Workers, by strengthening the social and cultural expression of diverse gender and gender expansive, and intersex communities in New York City, we seek to guarantee our well-being and the right to a life free from all types of violence. Learn more: <https://www.ourvoicesarefree.org/>*

***Community Healthcare Network (CHN)** is a not-for-profit organization providing access to affordable, culturally-competent and comprehensive community-based primary care, dental, nutrition, mental health and social services for diverse populations throughout New York City. CHN serves more than 65,000 individuals a year who would otherwise have little or no access to critical health care. CHN is composed of 14 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) along with a fleet of mobile vans that bring health services to underserved people in need throughout New York City. To learn more about CHN visit our website at www.chnny.org.*

***Destination Tomorrow** is a grassroots agency and the LGBTQ+ center of the Bronx borough. It is our belief that no individual should have to leave his, her, or their neighborhood to access LGBTQ+ specific services. Learn more: <https://destinationtomorrow.org/>*

***The NEW Pride Agenda (NPA)** is a advocacy and education, community based organization that provides culturally competent and community relevant programming by establishing safe, creative, and empowering spaces for queer and trans people of color who live at the margins within New York State. NPA intends to increase the number of BIPOC LGBTQ advocates across the state to build statewide power and combat anti-LGBTQ+ hate. For more information, visit: www.newprideagenda.org*

***Translatinx Network** has both a local and national focus, with a mission to promote the healthy development of trans people through the delivery of a wide range of information and services. Through promotion, outreach in education, and capacity-building, we encourage and strengthen the creation of safe and productive environments for TGNC+ community members. Learn more: <https://translatinxnetwork.org/>*

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