

MEDIA RELEASE

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Action for AIDS Singapore Welcomes Decline in HIV Cases, and Reiterates Concerted Actions to Reduce Late Diagnoses, Improve Early Diagnosis and Promote PrEP Access

SINGAPORE – Action for AIDS (AfA) Singapore notes the recent announcement from the Communicable Diseases Agency reporting a significant drop in new HIV diagnoses to **151 cases in 2024** (from 209 in 2023). This is the lowest annual figure since 1998. This is a clear indicator of progress and reflects the impact of sustained HIV education and prevention programmes and relentless promotion of HIV testing.

However, the 2024 data show self-initiated testing in HIV diagnosis remains too low. Of the 151 cases reported, only 15.9% (24 cases) were detected through individuals choosing to get tested on their own. While 23% (20 out of 87) of cases among men who have sex with men (MSM) were diagnosed via self-initiated screening, only 6.9% (4 out of 58) of heterosexual cases were found this way.

It is also of concern that **more than 50% of new diagnoses in 2024 were at a late stage**. Late diagnosis often leads to poorer clinical prognosis and greater risk of transmission of infection. It underscores the continuing need to normalise HIV testing, reduce HIV related stigma and discrimination, and improve access to early diagnosis and care.

“The latest figures show that progress is possible but also remind us of the urgent need to close the gaps,” said **Professor Roy Chan**, President of AfA. “Too many individuals are still being diagnosed when their immune systems are already compromised. We must do more to encourage early, regular and stigma-free testing particularly targeting the most vulnerable and marginalised communities. Ending HIV transmission by 2030 is possible, but only if we act decisively and inclusively to increase testing and prevention.”

The Case for a National PrEP Programme

AfA is calling for the **implementation of a national PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) programme** as part of a comprehensive HIV prevention strategy. PrEP is a proven, highly effective biomedical intervention that can reduce the risk of HIV acquisition by up to 99% when taken consistently.

“A national PrEP programme will be a game-changer in Singapore’s HIV response,” Professor Chan added. “It will improve access to this proven biomedical strategy. It is about time that we move from piecemeal activity to a properly funded and coordinated model for prevention.”

Such a programme would ensure equitable access to PrEP, reduce new infections, and bring Singapore in line with global best practices as advocated by UNAIDS and the World Health Organization.

Call to Action: Implement strategies in the Community Blueprint

As outlined in the midpoint report of the **Community Blueprint to End HIV and AIDS in Singapore**, AfA urges immediate and sustained action in the following areas:

- **Normalise HIV testing** via routine and (ramping up) self-testing approaches
- **Expand community-based outreach**, especially to underserved and key populations – at risk heterosexual men and MSM
- **Ensure easy access to HIV prevention tools**, including **PrEP**, and **PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis)**
- **Eliminate HIV-related stigma and discrimination** in all sectors and especially towards key populations
- **Invest in comprehensive sexuality education and sexual health literacy**

We urge all stakeholders viz. government agencies, medical professionals, educators, public health researchers and community organisations, to work together to turn the tide against HIV. With the right strategies in place, **zero new infections, zero AIDS-related deaths, and zero discrimination** are not just aspirations, they will be achievable goals.

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The Community Blueprint was updated in a mid-point report released in 2024. You can read this at http://afa.org.sg/blueprint_midpointreport