Today there are an estimated 850,000–950,000 HIV-positive individuals living in the United States—the largest number ever—according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Of these, 180,000–280,000 people do not know they are infected, and thus are suffering from a lack of treatment, while at the same time may be unknowingly spreading the virus. About 225,000 more who do know their status aren’t getting the care they need. These numbers will continue to grow unless everyone takes decisive action against the disease.1

HIV/AIDS is taking a devastating and disproportionate toll on people of color in the United States. Community leaders and organizations can play a critical role in fighting the disease in their neighborhoods, and The Leadership Campaign on AIDS (TLCA) is dedicated to helping them do it.

TLCA: Fighting HIV/AIDS in Communities of Color!

Within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of HIV/AIDS Policy’s The Leadership Campaign on AIDS (TLCA) is working externally and internally to support the fight against HIV/AIDS in communities of color. TLCA reaches out to community leaders and local and national organizations to improve education, awareness, and action against the disease. TLCA wants to help minority leaders fight the stigma, fear, and denial that exacerbate the problem, and to help build partnerships that will promote education, prevention, testing, vaccine awareness, and treatment. TLCA also reaches inwardly to help improve the coordination, information-sharing, communication efforts, and effectiveness of the Department’s HIV/AIDS initiatives and programs.

Did you know?

- Of the estimated 886,575 Americans that have been diagnosed since the beginning of the epidemic through 2002, 159,271 of those occurred in adult/adolescent females. Black and Hispanic women account for roughly 78 percent of those cases, and Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaska Native women comprise nearly 1 percent of those cases.2

- The proportion of AIDS diagnoses among women, especially among women of color, has increased since the beginning of the epidemic. Women represent 26 percent of new AIDS diagnoses in 2002,2 compared to only 11 percent of new AIDS cases reported in 1990.3

- Black and Hispanic women accounted for 82 percent of new AIDS diagnoses in 2002 among women.4

- Women of color account for 80 percent of all women estimated to be living with AIDS, with Black women making up 59 percent of the total alone.4

- Women across racial/ethnic groups most commonly report heterosexual contact or injection drug use as their primary modes of exposure to HIV.2

- HIV/AIDS was the leading cause of death among African American women ages 25–34 and the third leading cause for ages 35–44 in 2001. HIV/AIDS was also the fourth leading cause of death for Hispanic women ages 35–44.5

Know the facts and Educate, Motivate, and Mobilize against HIV/AIDS!
• An estimated 886,575 Americans have been diagnosed with AIDS from the beginning of the epidemic through 2002. Of the 42,136 estimated new diagnoses in 2002, 74 percent were male and 26 percent were female. Less than 1 percent were children under 13.\(^5\)

• African Americans account for 39 percent of total estimated AIDS diagnoses through 2002,\(^5\) though they make up only 12.7 percent of the population.\(^8\) They also represent an estimated 54 percent of persons newly diagnosed with HIV in 2002.\(^5\)

• Hispanics account for 18 percent of total estimated AIDS diagnoses through 2002,\(^5\) though they make up only 13.4 percent of the population.\(^8\)

• The number of Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indian/Alaska Natives living with AIDS continues to rise, with an approximately 10 percent increase each year over the past 5 years.\(^5\)


\(^8\) U.S. Census Bureau, “National Population Estimates, Characteristics (June 2003).”


Note: The models shown are for illustrative purposes only.