

# Ending the HIV Epidemic *white paper*

## Abstract:

HIV has been a continual public health concern across the United States and on a global scale. To fight against the HIV epidemic there are several needs that are crucial to be met. These needs include awareness, accessible medical care, medications, support care, and diminishing associated discrimination. The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program was created to provide support in ending the epidemic by meeting each of these needs.

A challenge that is being continually faced is to extend the knowledge of the program in order to reach more individuals especially those who are of low income and underserved. To know what resources are out there to utilize individuals will seek those resources.

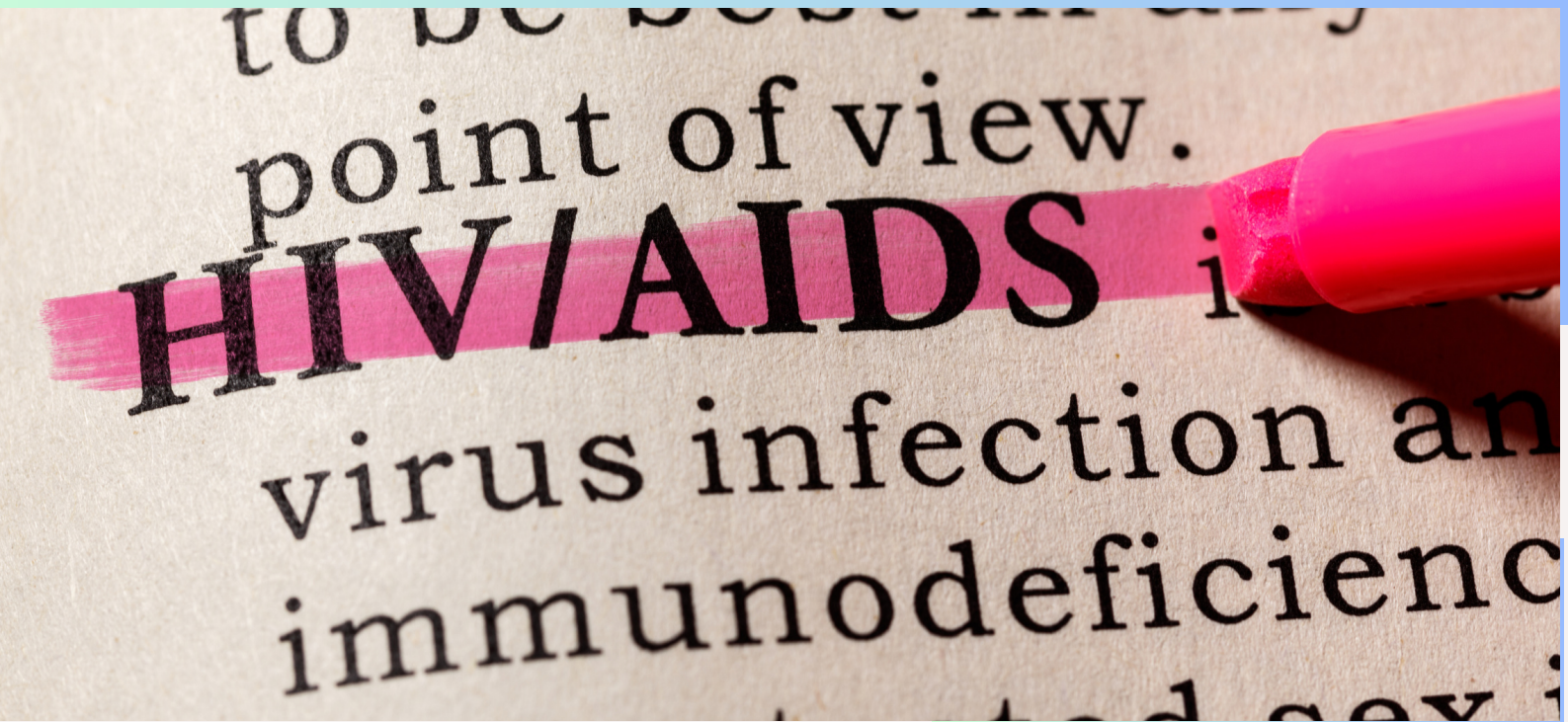
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Experience

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# Background



The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program was created to combat rising cases of transmission, related discriminatory views, and breaking down barriers that vulnerable populations face. The program is designed to provide support to individuals who are living with HIV or AIDS by helping diagnose, treat, prevent, and respond to the HIV epidemic. The program funds grants to cities, states, counties, and community-based groups in order to reach as many individuals as possible (Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, 2021).. Dallas County has a department specifically for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program located at the Dallas County Health and Human Services office. It covers 12 counties throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth area (Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, 2021).

Individuals seeking to receive assistance from the program need to meet the criteria to be eligible. This includes a diagnosis of HIV or AIDS, low-income status, and not having health insurance or health insurance that does not cover the care needed. The program is a great resource for individuals to receive the support and care that they need, however, is everyone aware that this is a source they can use?



# Solution



According to the Dallas County Health and Human Services, in 2017, an estimated 18,073 people were living with HIV in the Dallas County area and there was an estimated 814 new HIV diagnoses (DCHHS | HIV and STI Profiles, 2015). Taking a look at the national level, in 2017, approximately one million individuals living with diagnosed HIV (Klein et al., 2020). It's crucial to educate individuals on the resources that are available to them. In order for individuals who are seeking education on prevention or seeking care with a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS through the Ryan White Program there needs to be resources readily accessible for individuals to learn about the program.

This can be done by creating a program to focus on education and awareness for the program, an example of this can be creating infographics or flyers with information printed in different languages to lessen any potential language barriers. It's also important to reach all individuals in different geographical areas, especially in rural areas where there is a prominent presence of underserved individuals (Thielemann, 1999). This can also be done virtually through social media and broadcasts in order to reach different audiences. With a partnership with the Dallas County Health and Human Services, these resources can be provided through surrounding community assets. These assets can include hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, schools, non-profit organizations, community-based groups, and/or community centers.

# Conclusion



The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program provides support to communities across the country. The program was first established in 1990 and was derived from the CARE Act, however, not everyone knows the program exists. In order to provide them with the medical care and support services they need to practice prevention and live a long full life with a diagnosis of HIV/AIDS. Creating a program to spread awareness and education about HIV/AIDS and the Ryan White Program to the residents of the covered communities will have a significant impact on reaching more individuals. It's crucial to communicate the information in different mediums and languages to ensure understanding of the material. A factor in ending the HIV epidemic is ensuring justice and equity amongst the communities so individuals know they are not alone and they have a support system they can rely on to get them back on their feet. A diagnosis of HIV or AIDS should not alter an individual's life in a negative way.

# References

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