



Importance of Racial & Ethnic Minority Participation in HIV Vaccine Trials

**2010 CBC Spring Health Braintrust/National Minority Quality
Forum 7th Annual Leadership Summit**

Washington, DC

June 18, 2009

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**



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.**



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.**



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.



Acknowledgments:

Staff, AIDS Action Council

Donna Crews, Director of Government Affairs

William McColl, Political Director

Staff, HIV Vaccine Trials Network Legacy Project

Steven Wakefield, Legacy Project Director

Kaijson Noilmar, Legacy Project Coordinator

NIAID HIV Vaccine Research Education Initiative (AED)

Cornelius Baker, Project Director

Russell Brewer, Program Manager-Partnerships

Ronald Johnson, Deputy Executive Director, AIDS Action Council

rjohnson@aidsaction.org , 202-530-8030 ext 3094