



Contact
Nikki Heider
Marketing/PR Manager
Denver Public Health
303-602-3718

For Immediate Release

Treatment as Prevention Acknowledged as Key Factor in Ending Epidemics of HIV Stigma and HIV

Denver Public Health Joins “Undetectable = Untransmittable” Movement in Recognition of World AIDS Day

DENVER, CO (November 29, 2017) – Just before World AIDS Day (Dec. 1), Denver Public Health added their support to the [Prevention Access Campaign’s Undetectable = Untransmittable \(U=U\) movement](#), an initiative acknowledging the fact that people living with HIV on effective treatment do not sexually transmit HIV.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention acknowledges [treatment as prevention](#), and [several studies](#) have shown that when a person living with HIV takes their medication as prescribed, it reduces copies of the HIV virus in their blood to such low levels that they cannot give HIV to another person. Managing HIV viral loads is also important to keep a person living with HIV healthy.

“Most people, including many people who are living with HIV, do not know that they cannot give HIV to other people if their viral loads are undetectable,” said Bill Burman, MD, executive director, Denver Public Health. “The U=U movement is really special. In addition to helping us educate all people about the importance of knowing one’s HIV status—and following treatment plans if needed—this movement may also help reduce stigma many people living with HIV experience around the possibility of transmission.”

Denver Public Health data shows that about 65 percent of people living with HIV and on treatment are virally suppressed in the Denver metro area. Denver committed to ending the HIV epidemic in Metro Denver and around the world when it [joined the Fast Track Cities Initiative](#) to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030. In doing so, it set a goal (among others) that 90 percent of people on anti-retroviral therapy be undetectable by 2020.

One strategy Denver Public Health is using to help people living with HIV become and stay undetectable is coaching them about how to read and access lab results via their electronic medical records.

“We teach patients the importance of numbers,” said Philip Doyle, retention outreach worker, Denver Public Health. “We do this because we believe it is empowering to be able to see how your medication is working to keep you, and your sexual partner(s), healthy.”

[Free HIV and STD tests](#) are routinely offered throughout the Denver metro area in clinical, community, and social locations. It is recommended that all people be tested for HIV at least once in their lifetime. More frequent testing is suggested for people at higher risk for getting HIV, including gay, bi-sexual and men who have sex with men; people who have sex without a condom; transgender people, especially transgender women; and people who share injection drug equipment.

About Denver Public Health

[Denver Public Health](#) provides a wide range of services that evaluate, promote and protect the health and well-being of the residents of Denver and beyond. Denver Public Health monitors the health of Denver and responds to disease outbreaks and other emergencies, as well as works with many partners to prevent health problems by decreasing injury, preventing tobacco-related illnesses and promoting health eating and active living. Clinical services include: STD screening and treatment, family planning, immunizations, tuberculosis screening and care, birth and death certificates, and HIV/AIDS care.

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