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Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of HIV-positive consumers and HIV public health, health policy, and clinical professionals everywhere, we are pleased to introduce the Medical Monitoring Project (MMP). MMP is a new HIV surveillance initiative sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and your state and local health department, and is broadly endorsed by a wide array of national organizations. Select HIV health care providers and their patients across the United States are being invited to take part in MMP.

More than twenty-five years after the first reported AIDS cases, public health continues to partner with communities to answer increasingly complex questions about better ways to curb—and eventually end—HIV transmission. The knowledge we hold represents the shared experiences of millions of people affected by the epidemic, and the HIV/AIDS case surveillance system is an example of how our collective effort can be harnessed to forecast risk, propose prevention interventions, and allocate resources. To date, however, HIV/AIDS case surveillance has not provided sufficiently detailed, representative information to guide the public health response, and many vital questions remain unanswered. Unanswered questions about unmet medical and social needs, access to medical care and services, clinical outcomes, and the impact of prevention counseling appear as missing pieces of a puzzle; filling in these gaps will help further our collective effort to decrease preventable HIV transmission, disability, and death among the HIV-infected population.

MMP uniquely advances the puzzle's completion by providing comprehensive clinical and behavioral information from a patient sample carefully selected to represent everyone receiving medical care for HIV in the U.S. Because MMP's national estimates will be scientifically representative, the answers provided may be used by prevention planning groups, Ryan White consortia, policy leaders, and clinicians to highlight disparities in care and services and advocate for new interventions and additional resources.

A surveillance system of this scope has never before been undertaken, but it is a project whose time has come. While support is broad, MMP's true success depends upon the endorsement of HIV-positive persons and HIV health care providers like you. We invite you to visit CDC's website at http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/treatment/mmp/index.htm for additional details about participating. MMP data are collected under the same Federal security and confidentiality guidelines that govern HIV/AIDS surveillance activities and are protected under CDC's Federal Assurance of Confidentiality.

Together, we can answer the most challenging questions that remain and advocate in the best interest of our communities and one another.

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