ENDING THE HIV EPIDEMIC — SUPPORTING ALL PEOPLE WITH HIV AND REDUCING NEW TRANSMISSIONS

DATA MODERNIZATION IS NEEDED FOR A SYNDEMIC APPROACH TO FIGHTING HIV

IN MANY COMMUNITIES, HIV exists as part of a syndemic that also encompasses other infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, poverty, unemployment, substance use disorders, and systemic discrimination. Our national approach to monitoring discrete health conditions is outdated making it difficult to adopt syndemic strategies for improving community health.

INTEGRATED DATA SYSTEMS CAN LEAD TO MORE EFFECTIVE RESPONSES TO HIV

The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated shortcomings of our current data systems. New public investments in data modernization, however, are now being implemented. Policy action is needed to:

ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS IN DATA MODERNIZATION INITIATIVE (DMI) IMPLEMENTATION

HIV community voices are especially critical to these efforts because of their history of marginalization and experiences with some health departments discriminating against individuals and communities for their sexual and drug using behaviors and other facets of their lives.

BROADEN THE VISION FOR THE DMI TO INCLUDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION WITH OTHER HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS

To maximize the success of the DMI, it should encompass both workforce development and integration with other social services programs including housing, employment and other services.

MAKE SYNDEMIC APPROACHES MORE CENTRAL TO THE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Modernized data systems could better meet community needs such as addressing COVID-19 transmission and adverse outcomes among people with HIV, tackling drug use and the growing crisis of congenital syphilis, and responding to meningitis among people with HIV and MSM.

ENHANCE DATA PROTECTION STANDARDS AND RESTRICT LAW ENFORCEMENT'S ACCESS TO PUBLIC HEALTH SURVEILLANCE DATA

A critical step in implementing the DMI should be to incentivize states and other state, tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) partners to enact laws or policies to prohibit disclosures of surveillance data to law enforcement and modernize HIV criminal laws.

BUILDING A PUBLIC HEALTH DATA SUPERHIGHWAY

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM RIGHT NOW?

Data are needed to identify emerging infectious diseases, promote the health of individuals and communities, and inform how the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), other federal agencies, and their state, tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) partners set priorities, fund programs, and carry out their missions to improve the health of the public. Large amounts of data are available, but data sets are often either incomplete, duplicative, not shared appropriately across programs, or simply not used strategically.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO MODERNIZE OUR NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH DATA SYSTEMS?

The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) and a coalition of related associations have advocated for a comprehensive and focused approach called the Data Modernization Initiative (DMI). In FY 2020, Congress appropriated $50 million for the DMI; the CARES Act (COVID-19 relief legislation) provided $500 million. CSTE and its partners are asking Congress for $250 million in the FY 2022 budget and to complete the total $1 billion investment in subsequent years, as well as $100 million in annual funding to sustain these investments.

HOW IS THE CDC APPROACHING DATA MODERNIZATION?

The CDC is organizing the DMI around three thematic areas:

- Data Sharing Across the Public Health Ecosystem to automate data collection and allow multi-directional data flow across federal, state, local and tribal partners.

- Enhancing CDC Services and Systems for Ongoing Data Modernization to adopt enterprise-wide infrastructure for data sharing, analysis, and visualization.

- New Standards and Approaches for Public Health Reporting to test new standards for accessing data in electronic health records and assess the policy implications of these standards.

The DMI aims to strengthen the whole public health surveillance infrastructure. Critical data systems include:

- Syndromic Surveillance System
- Electronic Case Reporting
- Notifiable Diseases System
- Electronic Laboratory Reporting
- Vital Records

SOURCES: *Data: Elemental to Health,* Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) (Sep. 2021), https://www.cste.org/page/DM-2021. *Data Modernization Initiative,* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, https://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/surveillance-data-strategies/data-IT-transformation.html (last reviewed April 9, 2021).

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http://bit.ly/USHIVpolicyproject

BIG IDEAS IN BRIEF