



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HHS launches innovative digital storytelling project to support federal HIV response

Personal stories encourage HIV prevention, testing and treatment

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services today released [Positive Spin](#), a comprehensive digital educational tool that uses personal storytelling to promote the importance of getting people with HIV into treatment. The project, which was developed by [AIDS.gov](#) with input from federal agencies, health care professionals, persons living with HIV and community-based HIV organizations, is available at <https://positivespin.hiv.gov>.

Positive Spin features the personal experiences of five HIV-positive, gay black men who have successfully navigated the HIV care continuum, from diagnosis to treatment and, ultimately, to viral suppression, which helps those with HIV stay healthy, live longer and dramatically reduce their chances of passing the virus to others.

Black gay and bisexual men are disproportionately affected by the domestic HIV epidemic. [According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), black men account for almost one-third (31 percent) of all new HIV infections in the United States, and young black gay and bisexual men now account for more new infections than any other subgroup of gay and bisexual men by race/ethnicity and age.

The CDC [estimates](#) that, in 2011, 86 percent of HIV-infected individuals in the United States were diagnosed, but only 40 percent were retained in care, and only 30 percent achieved the ultimate goal of viral suppression. Positive Spin is part of a comprehensive federal effort to increase the proportion of HIV-positive individuals who are diagnosed, treated and virally suppressed.

Federal, state and local agencies use data on the HIV care continuum to identify gaps in HIV services, develop strategies to improve engagement in care, determine how best to prioritize and target available resources, and monitor progress in their response to HIV.

HHS Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell said that a key goal of the project is to promote and demonstrate digital storytelling as a tool for HIV outreach. "These compelling and emotionally engaging stories will serve as an important tool in helping to counter the misconceptions, stigma and discrimination that continue to create significant barriers to HIV testing and treatment for all populations."

“We hope the personal narratives in Positive Spin will inspire more people who are living with HIV to get tested and treated, so that they can protect their health and the health of their partners,” added Miguel Gomez, AIDS.gov director.

Positive Spin is specifically designed to provide information that is easily readable on a mobile device. The video stories are accompanied by user-friendly information about the care continuum, including easy-to-understand infographics and links to federal resources.

Positive Spin supports President Obama’s [HIV Continuum Initiative](#), the [National HIV/AIDS Strategy](#), and the [Digital Government Strategy](#).

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