

Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA)
Conference Call Summary
November 22, 2011

PACHA Members Present

A. Cornelius Baker
Dawn Averitt Bridge
Douglas Brooks, M.S.W.
Humberto Cruz, M.S.
Patricia Garcia, M.D., M.P.H.
Robert Greenwald, J.D.
Kathie Hiers
David Holtgrave, Ph.D.
Michael Horberg, M.D., M.A.S., FACP, AAHIVS
Ejay L. Jack, M.S.W.
Naina Khanna
Mario J. Perez
Rosie Perez
Rev. Vanessa D. Sharp, M.Div.
Phill Wilson

Staff Present

Christopher Bates, M.P.A., Executive Director, PACHA
Melvin Joppy, Committee Manager

Other Participants

Chris Norwood, Executive Director, Health People
Chris Collins, Vice President and Director of Public Policy, amfAR

Purpose of Call

Christopher Bates informed participants that the purpose of the call with the full Council was to discuss, in the presence of the public, the draft World AIDS Day Statement created by three PACHA members and previously circulated among PACHA members. The draft was available on the PACHA Web site and in the Federal Register. Two members of the public signed up to provide comments.

Suggested Revisions to Draft by PACHA Members

Dawn Averitt Bridge facilitated discussion of the draft statement.

Robert Greenwald

Mr. Greenwald was the first presenter. He recommended that Item 4 be changed to read as follows. (Changed words are in bold type.)

“A pledge to move forward on ending the AIDS epidemic in the **United States** by continuing to implement the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) with a commitment of resources for HIV prevention, care and treatment **services** to meet the NHAS targets, and forcefully defending **full implementation of** the Affordable Care Act, including the federal commitment to the Medicaid program, with its potential to greatly enhance prevention and treatment of HIV.”

Mr. Greenwald also suggested the following editorial changes:

- First paragraph:
 - Capitalize “administration” in the second line.
 - Capitalize “president” and “administration” in the second line.
 - Change the final sentence to read “We stand ready to publicly support **the President’s** leadership and commitment to several realistic actions:”
- Item 3: The dashes should be consistent—one is a double hyphen, and the other is not. The item will then read:

“A challenge to donor and affected countries to increase investments in the response to HIV/AIDS and to join the United States in a “step up” effort to scale-up high-impact efforts—from condom distribution to antiretroviral treatment access—that can greatly reduce both deaths and new infections.”

- Concluding paragraph:
 - Change the first sentence to read “Leadership on these important initiatives must be grounded in a human-rights based approach that responds to the prevention and treatment needs of all people, including key affected populations **such as** women and girls...” so that “including” is not used twice.
 - Third sentence: Change to “By fully implementing the tools that **United States-funded** research has brought us...”

Phill Wilson

Mr. Wilson called for a change in the final paragraph to include Black Americans, given their disproportionate impact on the AIDS domestic epidemic. He suggested placing “Black Americans” before “women and girls” to read “including key affected populations such as **Black Americans**, women and girls....”

Kathie Hiers

Ms. Hiers suggested a change in Item 4, to read:

“A pledge to move forward on ending the AIDS epidemic in the United States by continuing to implement the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) with a commitment of resources for HIV prevention, care, treatment, and **housing** services...”

Robert Greenwald suggested it be worded “prevention, care, treatment **services**, and housing...” Ms. Hiers agreed.

Humberto Cruz

Mr. Cruz would like to amend the above to read “prevention, care, treatment, housing **and other support services**...” Mr. Greenwald was agreeable to this amendment.

Concerns About Suggested Revisions

Ms. Averitt Bridge asked members if they had any concerns about or modifications to the above suggested revisions. A discussion about the placement of “Black Americans” in the final paragraph ensued. Dr. Holtgrave suggested including Black Americans in Item 4 instead of the final paragraph, as follows:

“A pledge to move forward on ending the AIDS epidemic in the United States **and to address disparities, including the disproportionate impact of HIV on Black Americans**, by continuing to implement the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS)....”

Members agreed to this change.

Mario Perez suggested a further change to the final paragraph, to read:

“Leadership on these important initiatives must be grounded in a human-rights-based approach that responds to the prevention, care and treatment needs of all people, including key affected populations, such as women and girls, children, men who have sex with men, **transgender persons**, sex workers and injection drug users...”

Members agreed to this change.

There was considerable discussion about whether the statement was strong enough. Dr. Holtgrave responded by suggesting that the next-to-last sentence in the first paragraph be revised to read:

“We respectfully urge the President and his Administration to make a bold announcement on World AIDS Day about these important scientific advances and the potential they bring toward achieving zero new infections, zero AIDS-related deaths and zero discrimination, **and to commit the resources necessary to make this promise a reality.**”

Mr. Greenwald suggested making the addition parenthetical by using a dash instead of a comma at the beginning, so that it will read “**—and to commit the resources necessary to make this promise a reality.**”

This was agreeable to everyone.

Public Comments

Chris Norwood

Ms. Norwood is Executive Director of Health People in the Bronx, New York.

Item 4

Ms. Norwood suggested changing Item 4 to read:

“A pledge to move forward on ending the AIDS epidemic in the United States by continuing to implement the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) with a commitment of **localized and community-based** resources for HIV prevention, care, treatment, housing and other support services to meet the NHAS targets, **employing and empowering local HIV affected/infected populations**, and forcefully defending full implementation of the Affordable Care Act, including the federal commitment to the Medicaid program, with its potential to greatly enhance prevention and treatment of HIV.”

Item 6

Ms. Norwood’s suggested change for Item 6 was as follows:

“A call for new investments in research, **including new treatment approaches now in development**, coupled with public-health driven research and development incentive mechanisms and policies to make new tools and technologies available that will help bring an end to the AIDS crisis.”

Chris Collins

Mr. Collins is Vice President and Director of Public Policy for amfAR. He voiced his strong support for the World AIDS Day Statement and urged PACHA members to incorporate the edits and send the statement to White House staff that day.

Discussion by PACHA Members

Item 4

Following some discussion of Ms. Norwood’s suggested changes to Item 4, Michael Horberg requested that these amendments not be included in the statement for two reasons: “one, I think it just makes it way too long; two, I think the focus here is supposed to be national and international, and I actually think that there is a recognition that local organizations and local communities need to be involved in the fight.”

There were two other comments from members in favor of not including these amendments in the statement.

Item 6

Ms. Averitt Bridge believes that the suggested change was encompassed in “A call for new investments in research” and therefore not necessary to add to the statement. Other members thought that Ms. Norwood made good points but did not think it was necessary to include them in the World AIDS Day Statement.

Other Comments

Mr. Greenwald suggested that U.S. be spelled out to United States every time it appears. Dr. Holtgrave reminded everyone that the World AIDS Day Statement is directed to the public and acknowledges the role of the President and the Administration.

Roll Call Vote

Mr. Bates took a roll call vote; everyone was in favor of the statement as revised.

Next Steps

After some discussion, it was decided that Mr. Greenwald would send the revised draft to Mr. Bates, Ms. Averitt Bridge, and Melvin Joppy for final review.

Mr. Wilson asked whether another level of permission was required to circulate the statement; Mr. Bates responded in the negative. The statement will be sent to the Secretary, but it does not have to wait for her response. The Department of Health and Human Services public affairs office will be working with PACHA to circulate the statement.

Ms. Averitt Bridge asked how long it would take to get the statement ready to send out. Mr. Bates responded that it would be posted on the PACHA Web site the next day.

Ms. Hiers asked about dates for the next PACHA meeting; Mr. Bates responded that he hopes to have an answer to this the first week of December.

The final statement as posted on the PACHA Web site follows.

The 2011 theme for World AIDS Day is “Getting to Zero.” The Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS commends the Obama Administration on its leadership and investment in the domestic and global AIDS epidemics and for maintaining the previous administration’s commitment to prioritize global HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment. Not only has the United States’ leadership saved the lives of millions, American-funded research has identified interventions that, if effectively implemented, hold the promise of ending the AIDS pandemic in our lifetime. We respectfully urge the President and his Administration to make a bold announcement on World AIDS Day about these important scientific advances and the potential they bring toward achieving zero new infections, zero AIDS-related deaths and zero

discrimination—and to commit the resources necessary to make this promise a reality. We stand ready to publicly support the President's leadership and commitment to several realistic actions:

1. An announcement on World AIDS Day 2011 that science has made it possible for us to begin to end the AIDS pandemic, and that we as a nation are committed to this goal.
2. Based on research establishing that AIDS treatment is also HIV prevention, a commitment to scale up AIDS treatment to cover six million people by 2013 along with other evidence-based, combination prevention interventions through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).
3. A challenge to donor and affected countries to increase investments in the response to HIV/AIDS and to join the United States in a "step up" effort to scale-up high-impact efforts— from condom distribution to antiretroviral treatment access—that can greatly reduce both deaths and new infections.
4. A pledge to move forward on ending the AIDS epidemic in the United States and to address disparities, including the disproportionate impact of HIV on Black Americans, by continuing to implement the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) with a commitment of resources for HIV prevention, care, treatment, housing and other support services to meet the NHAS targets, and to forcefully defend full implementation of the Affordable Care Act, including the federal commitment to the Medicaid program, with its potential to greatly enhance prevention and treatment of HIV.
5. A commitment to defend global health budgets including a bold commitment to fund PEPFAR, the administration's multi-year Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria pledge, and domestic HIV research, prevention, care and housing programs in appropriations and debt negotiations in fiscal year (FY) 2012 and beyond.
6. A call for new investments in research coupled with public-health driven research and development incentive mechanisms and policies to make new tools and technologies available that will help bring an end to the AIDS crisis.

Leadership on these important initiatives must be grounded in a human-rights based approach that responds to the prevention, care and treatment needs of all people, including key affected populations such as women and girls, children, men who have sex with men, transgender persons, sex workers and injection drug users. It is our sincere belief that the end of AIDS is within our grasp and that we can get to zero. By fully implementing the tools that United States-funded research has brought us, we could radically change the course of this epidemic in our lifetime. We urge President Obama to seize this moment of opportunity and publicly declare his support for and commitment to this goal.