Mixed messages and how to untangle them

RECOMMENDATIONS

Make These Your Messages

1. **Systemic prevention (such as long-acting injectable antiretrovirals or a vaccine) is a prevention priority—but not a standalone solution.**

   **Stop saying:** Long-acting injectable options are what's needed because people can't or won't use other options.

   Funders and decision-makers involved in prevention research need to develop products that people will want and use. This means asking people—via well-designed, human-centered research—and acting on the answers. Who's accountable? Many groups—including the US NIH’s Division of AIDS, which is reevaluating its trials network structure and scientific priorities. (See page 7 for more.)

2. **Daily oral PrEP as a prevention tool is struggling in some contexts and soaring in others.**

   **Stop saying:** Lots of people don’t want to take oral PrEP, so it’s failing.

   People using PrEP are the ones whose “non-adherence” is counted, but there are other defaulters to pay attention to, including governments and funders who are advancing disjointed programs without involving civil society, including the people most in need, such as young women and key populations. When these programs falter, it’s not the user’s fault.

   When the people who need it feel ownership of the product and the program, any strategy—including PrEP—can work. Oral PrEP definitely isn’t for everyone, but many people who might want it still need a chance to try. (See page 21 for more.)

3. **We’re on track to epidemic control if and only if the funding gap is closed, rights infringements and violations are addressed, civil society is involved and comprehensive prevention and research are prioritized in a way that it has never been before.**

   **Stop saying:** A country or community’s progress to date is the same as its future path.

   Today there are only a few countries that are even possibly on track to achieve epidemic control. This good news leaves raging epidemics elsewhere, particularly in places where human rights are in shambles and HIV is concentrated in key populations. This isn't the kind of partial progress we can settle for. (See page 31 for more.)