



AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
Strategic Vision 2005-2007

Founded in 1985 by community activists and physicians, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago is a local and national leader in the fight against HIV/AIDS. We collaborate with community organizations to develop and improve HIV/AIDS services; fund and coordinate prevention, care, and advocacy projects; and champion effective, compassionate HIV/AIDS policy.

## AIDS TODAY

In Illinois, more than **35,000** individuals are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS. An estimated **1,600** new HIV infections are reported in Illinois each year, **1,000** of which occur in the city of Chicago.

Mirroring national trends, the AIDS epidemic in Chicago continues to disproportionately affect **African Americans**, who represent one-third of the city's population but account for more than half of those living with HIV/AIDS.

**HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death** for African-American women aged 25-34 in the United States.

Since 1981, nearly 150,000 **Latinos** have been diagnosed with AIDS in the United States and more than 80,000 have died.

**Men who have sex with men** account for nearly half of all living AIDS cases in Chicago.

At least half of all new infections in the United States occur among **young people** under age 25; the vast majority of these young people are infected sexually.

Low-income communities continue to be severely affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic, while at the same time experiencing other barriers to care, including **homelessness** and **lack of health insurance**.

**Substance abuse** and **mental illness** are both risk factors for new HIV infections and are prevalent among people living with HIV/AIDS.

One in four Americans living with HIV/AIDS has a history of **incarceration**.

As more people live longer with HIV/AIDS, there is an urgent need to increase HIV/AIDS funding for prevention and care services that are **science-based** and promote individual empowerment.

Persistent **AIDS complacency** and **stigma** slow progress against the epidemic and put people at increased risk for infection and poor health outcomes.

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago is to lead the fight against HIV/AIDS and improve the lives of people affected by the epidemic.

## OUR VISION

In 2005-2007, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago will utilize the experience and commitment of people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS, advocates, service providers, policymakers, researchers, donors, and community members to improve HIV/AIDS services and stem the spread of new infections.

- : We will deepen community ties and promote individual empowerment among African Americans, Latinos, women, youth, and men of all races who have sex with other men to reduce HIV transmission and improve HIV/AIDS services.
- : We will maximize scarce resources to meet the changing needs of people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS and ensure that the HIV/AIDS prevention and care services we coordinate and fund are of the highest quality.
- : We will advocate locally, statewide, and in the nation's capital for increased government resources for HIV/AIDS services, science-based HIV prevention strategies, and public policies and laws that help decrease AIDS stigma and protect the rights of people living with the disease.

: **We will deepen community ties and promote individual empowerment among African Americans, Latinos, women, youth, and men of all races who have sex with other men to reduce HIV transmission and improve HIV/AIDS services.**

IN 2005-2007, WE WILL:

**Address the HIV/AIDS crisis in communities of color by raising awareness, new funds, and a sense of urgency.** We will strive to reduce new infections and improve health outcomes among people of color. By targeting grants to African-American and Latino organizations and by strengthening partnerships with lawmakers, minority-owned businesses, religious organizations, and minority-focused media, AFC will address substance abuse, homophobia, homelessness, and other factors that impede access to HIV/AIDS healthcare and social services.

**Advocate for prevention and care services tailored to women living with and at risk for HIV.** We will support national and international efforts to develop affordable, accessible, and effective female-controlled prevention methods, including microbicides. We will collaborate with community partners to promote access to HIV prevention, counseling, and voluntary testing for women and girls, with a special emphasis on pregnant women; and ensure that case management, housing, and other treatment and care programs meet the specific needs of women and their families.

**Advocate for science-based HIV prevention and care services to meet the needs of youth.** We will advocate locally and nationally to expand comprehensive school-based sexuality and HIV prevention education that is accurate and age appropriate. We will support increased government funding for science-based HIV prevention, healthcare, housing, and other social services tailored to runaways, homeless, and at-risk youth. We will engage young people in our grassroots advocacy activities and work to expand private funding for HIV/AIDS projects targeting youth.

**Strengthen efforts throughout Illinois to reduce HIV infections among men who have sex with men.** We will work with partner organizations to address substance abuse, promote harm-reduction and risk-reduction efforts, fight homophobia and stigma, and bolster projects serving young men who have sex with men (MSM) and those run by and for MSMs of color.

**Be an organization that reflects those most affected by the epidemic to improve our programs and services.** We will ensure that people living with HIV/AIDS play a critical role in AFC's policy and program development. In addition, we will actively recruit and promote people with HIV/AIDS, people of color, and women to become leaders throughout the organization, including the board, staff, and Service Providers Council.

**Support our Service Providers Council (SPC) to be a national model for HIV/AIDS service coordination, planning, networking, training, and coalition-building.** We will ensure that the skills and experiences of the service provider community inform and drive AFC's program and policy activities. We will also draw on SPC contacts and expertise to identify best practice models, collaborative opportunities, and partnerships among non-HIV-specific entities—especially substance abuse treatment and mental health providers—to benefit those affected by HIV/AIDS.

: We will maximize scarce resources to meet the changing needs of people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS and ensure that the HIV/AIDS prevention and care services we coordinate and fund are of the highest quality.

IN 2005-2007, WE WILL:

**Remain the Midwest's largest source of philanthropic giving for HIV/AIDS community-based organizations.** Through proactive and responsive grantmaking, we will continue to provide financial support to local HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and advocacy projects—especially those based in and serving communities of color.

**Conduct effective fundraising to expand private support for HIV/AIDS projects and services.** With committed staff, board, and volunteers, we will sustain the work of the organization by producing high-quality, profitable events; implementing a major gifts program; and securing new sources of individual, corporate, and foundation support.

**Restructure the HIV/AIDS case management system to respond to evolving client needs, increased caseloads, and reduced government resources.** Working with funders and community agencies, we will transform case management services by empowering people living with HIV/AIDS to obtain medical and support services, better manage their illness, and achieve a higher quality of life. In addition, we will advocate for increased government support for HIV/AIDS care and treatment services.

**Develop and coordinate model housing programs for individuals and families struggling with HIV/AIDS, homelessness, and substance abuse.** We will work locally and nationally to maximize scarce housing and care resources and advocate for increased government funding for supportive housing services for people with HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses.

**Respond to the unique needs of people over 50 who are living with or at risk for HIV.** Working with the National Association on HIV Over Fifty and other groups, we will ensure that our advocacy, grantmaking, and case management-related programs address the complex prevention and care challenges facing this population.

**Collaborate with government entities and organizational partners to help people with HIV/AIDS pursue economic independence.** We will advocate for expanded government programs that help people with HIV/AIDS enter or return to the workforce without putting their healthcare in jeopardy. We will also collaborate with organizations to provide disabled individuals meaningful ways to contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS as volunteers and interns.

**Expand upon our role as the leading HIV/AIDS fiscal and contract management entity in Illinois to improve the system of care.** We will implement improved quality assurance activities for subcontractors and grant recipients to ensure that client services meet the highest professional standards. We will also pursue new public and private funding opportunities to serve as the lead agency for coordinated prevention and care projects in order to lessen administrative burdens on community-based agencies, improve services for clients, and assure timely and adequate reimbursement for the services provided.

: We will advocate locally, statewide, and in the nation's capital for increased government resources for HIV/AIDS services, science-based HIV prevention strategies, and public policies and laws that help decrease AIDS stigma and protect the rights of people living with the disease.

IN 2005-2007, WE WILL:

**Raise visibility about the HIV/AIDS pandemic to counter apathy and mobilize action.** Through expanded media communications, marketing, special events, and community education, and in partnership with our Service Providers Council and other community coalitions, we will continue to inform decision makers, opinion leaders, community members, and the media about current and emerging HIV/AIDS issues and improve individual and systemic responses to the HIV/AIDS crisis.

**Advocate for healthcare access, high-quality medical and social services, and care systems that empower and benefit people with HIV/AIDS.** Working at the local, state, and national levels, we will press for policy reforms that improve healthcare access through the Ryan White CARE Act, Minority AIDS Initiative, Medicaid, Medicare, and other public programs.

**Play a leadership role locally and nationally in efforts to advance science-based HIV prevention policy and support the development of effective, local HIV prevention programs.**

Through our public education, grassroots advocacy, and grantmaking programs, we will support risk-reduction services that effectively reach people with and at risk for HIV, with a special emphasis on programs geared toward people of color, women, youth, and men who have sex with men. We will also support expanded access to voluntary, rapid HIV testing—accompanied by comprehensive counseling and referral services—and continue to study the best use of this technology.

**Conduct local, state, and national advocacy to reduce the spread of HIV among substance users, their partners, and family members.** We will promote the availability of sterile syringes and sharps containers at pharmacies for injection drug users in order to reduce the spread of HIV and hepatitis C. In addition, we will advocate for increased funding of substance abuse treatment, prevention, and other harm reduction services, and support strategies that address HIV and drug use.

**Advocate for policies and programs that reduce HIV transmission and improve healthcare for incarcerated populations and affected communities.** We will work with state and federal officials and community partners to promote science-based HIV prevention programs in jails and prisons as well as improved healthcare in correctional facilities. In addition, we will pursue funding opportunities to provide prevention and care services to formerly incarcerated individuals with HIV/AIDS who are returning to community settings.

**Support allied organizations in their efforts to address the global HIV/AIDS pandemic.** Through public education, advocacy, and partnerships with local, national, and international HIV/AIDS service organizations, we will share expertise and best practices to stem the spread of the pandemic both domestically and abroad.

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) thanks the more than 150 individuals who helped shape our strategic vision. We gratefully acknowledge the members of our Service Providers Council, people living with HIV/AIDS, public health and medical professionals, advocates, policymakers, faith leaders, donors, researchers, and others for sharing their invaluable insight and ideas regarding AFC's role in the fight against the epidemic. We also thank facilitator Pat Moten Marshall and the Michael Reese Health Trust for their generous support, and Board Members Isiaah Crawford, Ph.D. and Joseph Stokes, Ph.D. for chairing the planning process.

**AIDS Foundation**  
**OF CHICAGO**