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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES COLLABORATIVE "GETTING TO ZERO" INITIATIVE
THAT SEEKS TO EFFECTIVELY ELIMINATE NEW HIV INFECTIONS BY 2027**

*Aggressive campaign advocates use of HIV prevention and treatment medications through
social marketing and provider education*

CHICAGO – Today, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced his support for a new collaborative effort to finally eliminate new diagnoses of HIV in Chicago and throughout the state in just ten years. The new "[Getting To Zero](#)" (GTZ) initiative includes two key tenets: first, increasing the use of prevention medications among those most vulnerable to the disease; second, ensuring that 70% of all people living with HIV receive the necessary medication to reduce their viral load, which significantly reduces the risk of transmission. GTZ is a collective effort of the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and 10 community organizations and hospitals.

"We are more equipped than ever to fight HIV," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "With the aid of strong community health care partnerships, new treatments and the increased availability of medication to vulnerable populations we have a real chance at stopping the spread of HIV once and for all."

GTZ is a statewide effort of CDPH, IDPH, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Alexian Brothers Housing and Health Alliance, Center on Halsted, Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus, Howard Brown Health, Illinois Public Health Association, Lake County Health Department, Northwestern University, Ruth M. Rothstein CORE Center and University of Chicago. The plan was developed following models from Washington State, San Francisco and other jurisdictions to use existing resources and building on effective programs that provide the greatest potential for reducing HIV transmission. Scientific modeling suggests that by increasing the utilization of PrEP, the daily pill that reduces the risk of becoming infected with HIV by more than 90 percent, from 20 percent to 40 percent, and also increasing adherence to antiretroviral treatment among those living with HIV from 50 percent to 70 percent, HIV in Chicago will reach a point where it can no longer sustain itself, or "functional zero."

Chicago has made significant progress over the years reducing the spread of HIV. There have been fewer than 1,000 new HIV cases annually since 2013, down from a high of 1,850 new cases in 2002. In Chicago, 48 percent of people living with HIV are virally suppressed, meaning they are less likely to transmit the virus. Even though this number is on par with the national average of 49 percent, there is still room for improvement to ensure more people living with HIV are healthy and are less likely to transmit the virus. CDPH currently offers PrEP in the Austin and Lakeview STI Specialty Clinics and is training staff to ensure that all STI Specialty Clinics are equipped to prescribe PrEP similar to partners citywide. Last year, CDPH invested \$3 million in community partners to increase education and access to PrEP for communities most at risk, especially gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM) of color and transgender women.

GTZ will particularly focus efforts in communities hardest hit by new diagnoses. In 2015, African Americans accounted for 54 percent of all new HIV diagnoses. African American men who have sex with men (MSM) continue to be affected more by HIV than any other group and account for 46 percent of new HIV infections among gay, bisexual and other MSM.

“Together, our state has made great strides in curbing HIV, but data telling us that one in two Black gay men will contract HIV in their lifetime reminds us of how far we have yet to go,” said Erik Glenn, Executive Director, Chicago Black Gay Men’s Caucus. “So it’s with a moral imperative that we move forward with creating a plan to capitalize on recent scientific advancements like PrEP and treatment as prevention.”

Community feedback has been a cornerstone of the development of the GTZ framework and over the next several months, CDPH and its partners will continue to gather input on implementation through a series of town halls. The town hall schedule and an online survey will be available on the [Getting to Zero website](#).

“We know that access to prevention, diagnosis and treatment is a health equity issue, and we are committed to reaching vulnerable populations across the city,” said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. “We are seeing progress because we have worked with members of the community. Continued partnership with the community and organizations that serve them is how we ensure the long-term success of this initiative.”

GTZ is a comprehensive initiative also supported by a strong social marketing effort called PrEP4Love, developed by the Chicago PrEP Working Group to connect HIV negative Chicagoans to PrEP services, HIV testing and other prevention resources.

“If we are really going to “get to zero” in Illinois, we have to improve PrEP awareness and access in Chicago and beyond for the communities who are most vulnerable to HIV,” said Jim Pickett, Senior Director of Prevention Advocacy and Gay Men's Health, AIDS Foundation of Chicago. “The Chicago PrEP Working Group applauds the city for supporting the third ‘wave’ of the PrEP4Love marketing and community mobilization campaign, with a very robust presence across CTA trains and stations.”

Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. announced the GTZ framework alongside John Peller, President/CEO AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Erik Glenn, Executive Director, Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus and Elijah McKinnon, model and advocate, PrEP4Love, at a press conference today where the citywide PrEP4Love campaign was highlighted. PrEP4Love is an awareness campaign encouraging the use of PrEP throughout all communities in Chicago, but particularly among those who are most vulnerable to HIV and can be seen on the CTA Red, Green, Blue and Brown trains and platforms until mid-November.

GTZ builds upon the work of CDPH to improve health disparities and reduce the burden of HIV as outlined in the citywide public health plan, Healthy Chicago 2.0. As part of their ongoing work, CDPH invests more than \$40 million annually to provide HIV prevention, care and housing programs to residents. Last year, Mayor Emanuel and CDPH partnered with Howard Brown Health and the University of Illinois at Chicago to expand care at two primary care clinics for residents living with HIV. In the first year of the partnership, more than 3,600 HIV-positive residents received care, more than four times the number served in the previous year.

For more information on GTZ and to read the framework [click here](#).

For more information on PrEP4Love visit www.PrEP4Love.com.

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