

BE THE GENERATION

TO END THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

BTG News

2018 Edition, Issue 3

From the Editors

Welcome to another issue of *BTG News*, your quarterly publication bringing you the latest information in biomedical HIV prevention research. In this issue, the HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN) brings us news on the PrEP front. Will an injectable drug prevent HIV when given just once every two months? How does oral PrEP hold up when taken not daily, but before and after sex, or twice weekly with a dose after sex? Is a new drug formulation of oral PrEP as safe and effective as Truvada for women and men who have sex with men? Read on and check out the links for more on PrEP and other efforts by the HPTN.

Also in this issue, the HIV Vaccine Trials Network provides us with a stimulating collection of community-focused articles related to efforts to find a safe and effective HIV vaccine. The Microbicide Trials Network follows with a report on HIV prevention research using novel technologies: a rectal gel, douche, insert, and suppository, as well as the vaginal ring, which is currently on a journey toward licensure. All three research networks and the Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination have exciting events coming up, so please join us as we trek the US—and the world—as part of the generation to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Thank you for being part of the movement.

Your friends,

Brian Minalga &
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HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN)

The HIV Research for Prevention (HIVR4P) conference will be held October 21-25 at the Marriott Auditorium Hotel in Madrid, Spain. HPTN researchers will present 14 abstracts (nine posters and five oral presentations) covering [HPTN 067](#) (testing non-daily versus daily oral PrEP), [HPTN 069](#) (testing a different drug formulation of oral PrEP), [HPTN 074](#) (testing an intervention for people with HIV who inject drugs), [HPTN 075](#) (testing the feasibility of recruiting men who have sex with men in sub-Saharan Africa), [HPTN 077](#) (testing an injectable drug as PrEP), [HPTN 078](#) (testing a strategy to engage men who have sex with men in HIV prevention) and the AMP studies ([HVTN 703/HPTN 081](#), [HVTN 704/HPTN 085](#), testing the infusion of antibodies for HIV prevention). In addition, the HPTN and the HVTN will jointly host a satellite session titled, “State of the Art of HIV bNAbs for Prevention of HIV Infection.” Myron Cohen, MD, HPTN co-principal investigator and Larry Corey, MD, HVTN principal investigator, will co-chair the session.

HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN)

The HVTN has a wide array of community-focused articles available through its *Community Compass* publication. The [current issue](#) gives a brief history and overview of HIV biomedical research, and past issues tackle topics ranging from [broadly neutralizing antibodies](#) to [historical trauma and resilience](#) among communities of color in the US. Check out the [Community Compass](#) on HVTN’s website.

Microbicide Trials Network (MTN)

MTN is excited to announce the completion of participant enrollment in [MTN-026](#), a Phase I rectal microbicide study testing whether dapivirine is safe as a gel when used in the rectum. The study enrolled 27 participants at two clinical sites in the US (Birmingham, AL and Pittsburgh, PA), and at an international site in Bangkok, Thailand. Results are anticipated in the first quarter of 2019.

MTN presented a satellite session on anal sex and anal health at the recent AIDS 2018 meeting in Amsterdam. The session, “Anal Sex From Top to Bottom: Beliefs, behaviors and policies for better health,” engaged attendees in a discussion about anal health and hygiene, as well as how to improve anal health in communities most vulnerable to HIV. Partners on the session included AVAC and IRMA, as well as international organizations that included the European AIDS Treatment Group (Belgium), Anova Health Institute (South Africa), APCOM (Thailand), GayLatino

(Paraguay), and UHAI EASHRI (Kenya). An important message from the session included a desire to change the global discourse about anal sex from one of stigma and shame to celebration. MTN also presented on the dapivirine vaginal ring at several interactive and educational workshops in the global village, and as part of other general meeting sessions. MTN photos from AIDS 2018 are available on [MTN's Facebook page](#).



Panelists engaging in discussion about the MTN-led AIDS 2018 satellite session, *Anal Sex from Top to Bottom*

MTN's Regional Meeting will be held September 22-27 at the Westin Cape Town Hotel in Cape Town, South Africa. Topics covered at the meeting will include new studies on the dapivirine vaginal ring in pregnant and lactating women, and the implementation of the REACH study (MTN-034) – a Phase IIa study that will evaluate how adolescent girls and young women use the monthly dapivirine vaginal ring and Truvada as daily PrEP and their preferences for either or both approaches. The meeting will also address the implementation of MTN-035, a study to assess the acceptability, tolerability, and adherence to placebo rectal

microbicides in three formulations: a douche, a fast-dissolving rectal tablet (insert), and a rectal suppository. For those unable to attend, presentation slides from the meeting will be made available on [MTN's website](#).



AIDS 2018 attendees learning about the dapivirine vaginal ring in the meeting's Global Village

Experts from the MTN will be presenting at two sessions at the upcoming United States Conference on AIDS on Friday, September 7. They include, "You Down With GPP? Engaging young MSM in HIV prevention," scheduled for 9-11 a.m., and a WHRC-led session, "Can We Deliver? HIV research among pregnant and breastfeeding women," scheduled for 4:15-6:15 p.m. We hope to see you there!

Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC)

The HANC Legacy Project and Women's HIV Research Collaborative will be well-represented at the United States Conference on AIDS in Orlando, FL, September 5-9. Come participate in these sessions that we look forward to hosting!

Wednesday, September 5 | 8:30 to 5 p.m. [USCA Faith Pre-Conference](#).

Thursday, September 6 | 2 to 4 p.m. [“The Urgency for Intersectionality in HIV Prevention for Women.”](#)

Friday, September 7 | 9 to 11 a.m. “You Down With GPP? Engaging young MSM in HIV prevention.”

Friday, September 7 | 4:15 to 6:15 p.m. [“Can We Deliver? HIV research among pregnant and breastfeeding women.”](#)

Friday, September 7 | 4:15 to 6:15 p.m. “Engagement of Latino MSM in HIV Clinical Trials.”

The Legacy Project also had a proposal accepted as a 90-minute workshop to the Union World Conference on Lung Health, taking place in The Hague, The Netherlands, October 24-27. The workshop, "In Solidarity: research and advocacy to decriminalize HIV and TB," will take place in the conference Community Space from 4:15 to 5:45 p.m. on October 24. The proposal was submitted in collaboration between Brian Minalga (Legacy) and Brian Citro from the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, and the workshop will involve the following speakers: Allan Maleche, Dean Lewis, John Stephens, Karabo Rafube, and Robert Suttle.

The Legacy Project has new webinar recordings for your viewing convenience, including “The Next Health Disparity Fault Line? Opioids, Race, Geography, and Infectious Disease” as well as a three-part series, “Outreach and Marketing Fundamentals in Clinical Research.” You may view these and all other Legacy webinar recordings on our [Facebook page](#).

The HANC-facilitated Youth Prevention Research Working Group hosted a satellite symposium at AIDS 2018. The symposium, “Prevention Solutions for the Next Generation: Highlighting Adolescent Research in the NIH HIV/AIDS Clinical Trials Networks and the Adolescent Trials Network” was held on July 25. Dr. Connie Celum ([HPTN 082](#)), Dr. Kenneth Ngunjiri ([MTN 034](#)), Ruth N. (a former [ASPIRE](#) Trial participant), Dr. Lynda Stranix-Chibanda ([IMPAACT 2009](#)), and Lisa Hightow-Weidman ([ATN iTech](#)) presented.