

BE THE GENERATION

TO END THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

BTG News

2021 Edition, Issue 2

From the Editor

June 5, 1981: the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published the first report of a condition that would soon become known as AIDS. It is now forty years later. Let that sink in. Forty years of struggle, loss, grief. Forty years of community, advocacy, solidarity. Forty years of research, and we are still working to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Today in the US, about 100 people will contract HIV. Most of them will be among the most marginalized and disenfranchised people in our society. For forty years, HIV has shown us how we, as a society, value and devalue our neighbors' lives. The last 9 years have shown us that even a pill that prevents HIV cannot hold up against an epidemic rooted in social injustice. If we are to end this epidemic, the future of HIV prevention research must account for social inequity. And that future is here. Read on to learn more about how our research networks are innovating to center those who need HIV prevention most.

As always, share our [resources](#) and [stay in touch](#). Have a reflective "AIDS at 40" and a very happy Pride!

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The Legacy Project

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HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN)

Dr. Beatriz Grinsztejn received the 2021 Ward Cates Spirit Award during the 2021 virtual HPTN Annual Meeting. As the STD/AIDS Clinical Research Laboratory director and principal investigator of the FIOCRUZ HIV Prevention and Therapeutic Clinical Trials Unit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, she was recognized for her outstanding commitment, leadership, and scientific excellence in promoting health among groups vulnerable to HIV. Dr. Grinsztejn currently serves many roles in the Network, including [HPTN 083](#) protocol co-chair, HPTN Scientific Committee member, HPTN CTU and CRS principal investigator, and HPTN Scholars mentor. The award honors the legacy of Dr. Willard (Ward) Cates Jr., a dedicated steward of the HPTN scientific and research programs and a respected scientist who contributed to groundbreaking contraceptive and HIV prevention research.



Dr. Beatriz Grinsztejn, winner of the HPTN's 2021 Ward Cates Spirit Award



HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN)

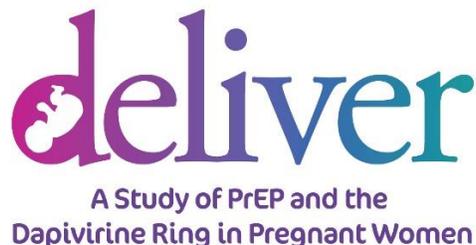
[Dr. Michele Andrasik](#) coauthored a manuscript in the New England Journal of Medicine describing the background of vaccine hesitancy in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, and important considerations to be addressed. This publication provides important steps necessary to take in order to

build and maintain trust, partnership, and reciprocity. Check it out here: [Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy in BIPOC Communities — Toward Trustworthiness, Partnership, and Reciprocity](#)



Microbicide Trials Network (MTN)

MTN is excited to share that the [DELIVER](#) study (MTN-042) of the dapivirine vaginal ring and Truvada as PrEP in pregnancy has completed enrollment of the first group of 150 participants who were 8-9 months pregnant when they joined the study. Provided there are no safety concerns, the study will proceed with enrolling the next group of participants who are 7-8 months pregnant. DELIVER is a Phase IIIb open-label study being conducted in Malawi, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, and the first study of the dapivirine vaginal ring in pregnancy. The ring was recently recommended for HIV prevention by the World Health Organization.



MTN-042 study logo

Relatedly, results of a sub-study of DELIVER, called [MTN-042B](#), were published on March 31 in [PLOS ONE](#). A detailed examination of more than 10,000 medical records at maternity clinics and hospitals in Malawi, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, MTN-042B yielded important insights about pregnancy and neonatal outcomes in these communities as well as the frequency with which different complications occur. The data are invaluable to the DELIVER study of the dapivirine vaginal ring and Truvada as PrEP in pregnant people, and a huge step forward in providing safe and effective biomedical HIV prevention options for use during pregnancy.

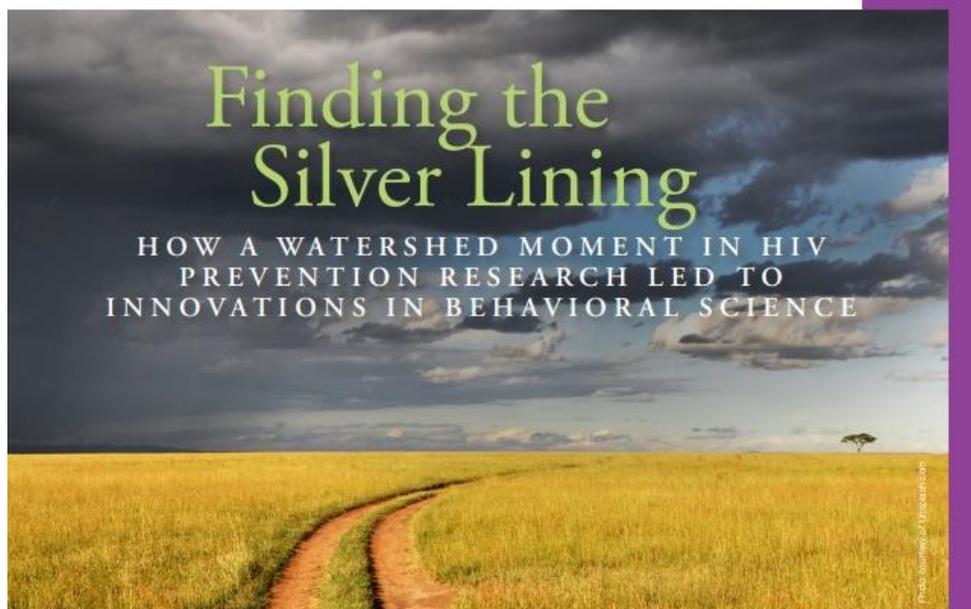
MTN [announced the results](#) of a phase I clinical trial of a 90-day dapivirine vaginal ring at the virtual meeting of the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic

Infections (CROI) in March. The study, known as MTN-036/IPM 047, evaluated two formulations of the ring designed to slowly release the antiretroviral drug dapivirine in the vagina over the course of 90 days. One formulation contained 100 mg of dapivirine and the other contained 200 mg. Both formulations were well-tolerated and delivered targeted levels of drug throughout the three months of use, results that would suggest they may have the potential to provide long-acting and sustained HIV protection.

MTN also offers our congratulations to the [HOPE](#) (MTN-025) team for the long-anticipated publication of the study's [primary results in Lancet HIV](#). HOPE (HIV Open Label Prevention Extension) was an open-label follow-on trial to [ASPIRE](#) (MTN-020) in which former ASPIRE participants were offered the opportunity to use the dapivirine vaginal ring to collect additional information about its safety and how it would be used by women when it was known to reduce the risk of HIV in ASPIRE. HOPE enrolled 1,456 women at 14 sites in Malawi, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Also included in this issue of the journal were the results of a second open-label trial of the ring, the DREAM study, conducted by the ring's developer, the International Partnership for Microbicides. The publication of these studies coincided with the World Health Organization's recommendation of the dapivirine vaginal ring as an HIV prevention method for cisgender women.

In rectal news, the [MTN-039](#) Phase I study of a fast-dissolving rectal insert for HIV prevention has completed follow-up. The first ever study of the tenofovir and elvitegravir insert used rectally, MTN-039 enrolled 23 participants at two sites in the U.S. It was designed to evaluate the safety and acceptability of the insert as well as the degree that each drug concentrates in rectal tissue.

Finally, we are happy to share the latest installment in MTN's "A Look Back..." series. The story, [Finding in the Silver Lining](#), focuses on MTN's journey from the VOICE results in 2013 to a research agenda that fully embraced the importance of social and behavioral science.



An image from the latest installment of the MTN's "A Look Back" series.



Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC)

HANC is pleased to share these webinar recordings, articles, videos, and other resources:

- [Women in HIV Cure-Related Research](#): a free downloadable training
- [Biomedical HIV Prevention for Women](#): a free downloadable training
- [Transgender Training Resources Homepage](#): the Division of AIDS at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases has put all its amazing resources related to research with transgender communities in one place. All resources are free; you may just need to create a free account if you don't have one already.
- [Be the Generation website](#): the best place to go for trustworthy information on biomedical HIV prevention research. Features sections on PrEP, U=U, Microbicides, HIV vaccine research, inspiring videos from researchers and community members, and even a quiz to test your knowledge of HIV prevention research.
- [COVID-19 Community Resources](#): In 2020, HANC formed the COVID-19 CAB Coalition (CCC). The CCC includes folks from the COVID-19 Prevention

Network's Community Engagement Group, ACTG's ACTIV-2 CAB, AVAC's COVID-19 Advocates Advisory Board, The National CFAR Coalition, Stony Brook's COVID-19 CAB, Community Partners, and DAIDS. This resource page includes links to prevention and therapeutic studies, general information on COVID-19, links to webinars, and social media accounts to follow.

- [Webinar Library](#): a collection of over 30 of our webinar recordings on topics such as HIV & race, HIV & women, HIV genetic sequencing, HIV & aging, outreach & marketing, Native Americans & HIV, microbicides research, pregnancy & lactation in HIV research, HIV in the Latinx community, community engagement, and more.

Important Dates

- Wednesday, June 2 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. [Fred Hutch “AIDS @ 40” event](#)
- Saturday, June 5: [HIV Long-Term Survivors Awareness Day](#)
- Tuesday, June 8: [Caribbean American HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)
- Sunday, June 27: [National HIV Testing Day](#)
- Sunday, August 29: [National Faith HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)