

BE THE GENERATION

TO END THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

BTG News

2018 Edition, Issue 1

From the Editors

How would you rate your knowledge of HIV prevention research? Put your knowledge to the test with our online quiz, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)! Then visit our [Facebook page](#) and let us know how you did.

In this issue of *BTG News*, we'll help you brush up on the latest in HIV prevention research with updates from the HIV Prevention Trials Network, HIV Vaccine Trials Network, Microbicide Trials Network, and Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination. From conference presentations to HIV vaccine developments to “the delights of douching,” the HIV prevention research agenda is off to an exciting start in 2018! We would also love to have you join the conversation in our upcoming webinars, like this one on the importance of having HIV treatment and prevention options for women throughout all phases of life, including pregnancy and lactation: [It's Time to Deliver: Including Pregnant and Lactating Women in Clinical Research](#).

Enjoy the issue and, as always, thank you for all you do to be the generation to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Your friends,

Brian Minalga &
Louis Shackelford

btg@hanc.info



HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN)

The National AIDS Education and Services for Minorities (NAESM) conference was held January 18-21 in Atlanta. The HPTN co-hosted and co-sponsored a research literacy workshop along with the HVTN, Legacy Project, and MTN, titled, “Getting Your HIV Science Fleeky.” The workshop focused on the purpose, process, and value of HIV research. Speakers also provided the latest updates in biomedical HIV prevention research and advocacy. For the March 4-7 Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Boston, HPTN researchers will present study-related abstracts covering HPTN studies [052](#), [065](#), [067](#), [068](#), [074](#), and [075](#).

HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN)

It is an exciting and busy time in the HVTN, including conference presentations, publications, and lots of clinical trials!

In December 2017, the HVTN partnered with the Microbicide Trials Network (MTN) to host a workshop at the NMAC Biomedical HIV Prevention Summit entitled, “Future Offerings for HIV Prevention and Care.” The summit was held in New Orleans, LA and drew more than 1,000 public health professionals from around the United States. This session focused on the basics of HIV vaccinology and current antibody mediated HIV prevention studies, as well as an overview of microbicide research and future considerations.

In January 2018, the HVTN, HPTN, MTN, and Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC) hosted a 3-hour research literacy workshop at the [NAESM](#) Conference entitled, “Getting Your HIV Science Fleeky: A research literacy workshop.” The HVTN and HPTN also hosted a breakfast plenary to provide a brief overview about vaccines, antibody mediated prevention, and pre-exposure prophylaxis, and to update attendees on the current progress of some of the major studies in the field from both Networks. This conference was held in Atlanta, GA and drew more than 400 community stakeholders and public health professionals from around the United States. The NAESM Conference is the largest national conference focused on the health and wellness needs of Black men who have sex with men.

The latest issue of HVTN Community Compass has been released and is available in four languages (English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese) on our website: <http://www.hvtn.org/en/community/community-compass.html>

It's also an exciting time scientifically. For the first time in the history of preventive HIV vaccine research, there are 4 efficacy trials open and enrolling, all being conducted by the HVTN! Two of these trials are testing different approaches for vaccine regimens (HVTN 702 and HVTN 705/HPX2008), and two trials studying antibody mediated prevention are being conducted with our HPTN partners (the AMP Studies: HVTN 703/HPTN 081 and HVTN704/HPTN 085), which will inform future design and development of preventive vaccines and other prevention strategies. All together, these 4 trials will be enrolling 12,500 study volunteers! And as exciting as that is, there is no slowing down on new ideas in smaller, early phase studies either. The HVTN currently has:

- 8 Phase I vaccine studies open for enrollment
- 2 Phase I broadly neutralizing antibody studies open for enrollment
- 11 Phase I studies that have completed enrollment and are following the enrolled volunteers for the planned study visits.

These 21 trials represent over 1,700 volunteers already enrolled out of a projected 2,700 who will be involved in our Phase I work around the globe. And there are even more concepts still in the early stages of development!

In this busy time, we are grateful to the communities who support our work!

Microbicide Trials Network (MTN)

In February, a stakeholder consultation was held in Kisumu, Kenya for the [MTN-034/IPM 045](#) (REACH) study of the dapivirine vaginal ring and oral PrEP in adolescent girls and young women. It was the final meeting of a series of in-country consultations as MTN prepares for the launch of REACH (**R**eversing the **E**pidemic in **A**frica with **C**hoices in **H**IV prevention) in mid-2018. MTN partnered with AVAC; International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM), a non-profit organization that developed the dapivirine ring; and the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) to conduct the meeting. During the meeting, young women and teens shared their views about the upcoming study and learned about the study design, products, and timelines. In anticipation of the launch of the REACH study in Kenya, CDC Kenya and KEMRI also celebrated the opening of a new adolescent clinic, which will serve as a site for the REACH study and provide a safe place for youth to participate in HIV research. In addition to Kenya, the REACH study is

taking place in South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, and will enroll 300 young women and girls—100 girls ages 16-17 and 200 young women ages 18-21.



Young women and teens in Kenya share their views about the REACH study.

A workshop hosted by the MTN in January at the 2018 NAESM conference addressed where rectal microbicide research is heading and why on-demand, non-systemic products may represent important options for HIV prevention through anal sex. Attendees of the workshop, *Flirt, Insert & Squirt: Developing rectal microbicides for YOUR sex life*, participated in a group activity to develop messaging around three potential HIV prevention products (rectal douches, suppositories, and inserts) whose acceptability will be explored as placebo products in an upcoming MTN study. The study, MTN-035, is expected to launch later in 2018.

MTN's Annual Meeting will be held March 19-20 in Bethesda, Maryland at the [Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center](#). Topics covered at the meeting will include MTN's journey with the dapivirine ring, young MSM and transgender perspectives on HIV prevention, the path forward to developing a multi-purpose vaginal ring, reaching young cisgender women in Africa with HIV prevention options, the ethics of evaluating HIV prevention products among pregnant women, and the "delights of douching" (related to the development of on-demand rectal microbicides). In addition to these topics, MTN will be pilot-

testing a new training tool developed by the NIH Division of AIDS Cross Network Transgender Working Group. The training session consists of two modules: “An Introduction to Transgender Communities” and “Creating a Gender-Affirming Research Environment.” The session will be held on Sunday, March 18 from 3 to 6 p.m. and is open to all MTN Annual Meeting attendees. To [register for the MTN Annual Meeting](#) and access the [draft meeting agenda](#), visit www.mtnstopshiv.org.

Stay tuned as the MTN will soon be announcing a major web site update!



Flirt, Insert & Squirt! NAESM attendees discuss rectal douches, suppositories, and inserts.

Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC)

Please join the Women’s HIV Research Collaborative, Treatment Action Group, Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, and Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine for Part 2 of their webinar series, “It’s Time to Deliver: Including Pregnant and Lactating Women in Clinical Research.” The webinar airs on Wednesday, March 14 at 7 a.m. Pacific / 10 a.m. Eastern / 5 p.m. South African Standard Time. Please register to attend by clicking [here](#). If you missed Part 1 of the series, the recording is available [here](#).

The HANC Legacy Project is also preparing another webinar series, “Outreach and Marketing Fundamentals in HIV Research.” This series will take place in three parts, airing on March 15, April 5, and May 3. Please check our [Facebook page](#) for updates and registration information.