



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
NOVEMBER 2, 2009

CONTACT: Andrea Ewin Turner  
615.741.3111 (office)  
615.708.9384 (cell)

## **WAITING LIST ESTABLISHED FOR STATE AIDS DRUG ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

*Program Funding Reaches Capacity*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The state AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) has reached enrollment capacity and must establish a waiting list for services effective immediately, the Tennessee Department of Health announced today. As of June 2009, program enrollment had reached 3,367 with funding at \$25.3 million. Last year at the same time, enrollment totaled 2,706.

“Like other states, Tennessee is experiencing a demand for HIV and AIDS drug assistance that is currently outpacing program funding,” said Veronica Gunn, MD, MPH, chief medical officer for the state Department of Health. “The impact of these funding limitations is disheartening, and we empathize with people who will have to wait to receive these much needed services and the financial assistance this program provides.”

Tennessee joins eight other states that currently maintain a waiting list for ADAP: Arkansas, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

The state will seek additional federal supplemental funding to contend with the increased demand. As funding becomes available and as program enrollment decreases, individuals will be enrolled in order according to their placement on the waiting list. Access to temporary emergency ADAP services will be extended to pregnant women and infants.

In the meantime, eligibility requirements will remain unchanged, and current clients will continue to receive all services. Those placed on the ADAP waiting list will receive medical services and be assisted by medical care managers and case managers to access HIV medications through pharmaceutical-sponsored patient assistance programs.

The program has experienced a recent increase in demand for services due to increased testing efforts; rising unemployment among the HIV-infected; growing number of uninsured; and increasing costs of antiretroviral medications.

The Ryan White Part B federal grant provides medical services, medications and support services to low-income HIV-infected individuals who are uninsured or underinsured. The ADAP earmark in the grant encompasses both the HIV Drug Assistance Program, a program providing medications for eligible individuals, and the Insurance Assistance Program, which provides assistance to pay for health insurance premiums, co-payments, and/or deductibles for eligible individuals.

– more –

**CORDELL HULL BUILDING, 3RD FLOOR  
425 FIFTH AVENUE NORTH  
NASHVILLE, TN 37243  
WWW.TENNESSEE.GOV/HEALTH**

Federal funding for the program, which has increased only 2 percent since 2005, is \$12.6 million. State dollars to ADAP total \$7.1 million. The program also benefits from drug rebates and Part A contributions in the amount of \$5.6 million.

To be eligible to participate in ADAP in the state, individuals must provide proof of HIV-infection; prove Tennessee residency; be ineligible for TennCare or Medicare benefits; receive income less than or equal to 300 percent of the federal poverty level; have less than \$8,000 in liquid assets; and lack a third party prescription coverage for drugs. To maintain ADAP services, a Ryan White recertification application must be submitted every six months.

In Tennessee, the number of individuals living with HIV or AIDS continues to rise. The total number was 14,901 in 2008, up 28 percent from 2003. In 2008, 1,071 people were newly identified as living with HIV or AIDS, an increase of 11 percent since 2003.

For more information on ADAP or the Ryan White program, go to the Web site at <http://health.state.tn.us/STD/ryanwhite.htm> or call the AIDS hotline at 1-800-525-2437.

###

This news release can be accessed online at <https://news.tennesseeanytime.org/taxonomy/term/30>.