



March 3, 2014

Dear Colleague,

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is just around the corner, on March 10. Since 2006, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health (OWH) has led efforts to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS among women and girls and to encourage people to take action against HIV/AIDS.

Each year, as part of National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, OWH focuses on HIV testing and prevention of the infection. This year, we are going one step further by encouraging women and girls who are HIV-positive to get proper care and treatment.

According to CDC, about [275,700](#) American women are living with HIV/AIDS, and not all of those women are getting ongoing care and treatment. According to a recent study, only about [42 percent](#) of HIV-positive women receive the treatment necessary to reach viral suppression. We must do better and save more lives. Please visit our [website](#) for resources that can help women overcome barriers to care.

The good news is that one barrier has been removed: the inability to secure health insurance. Under the [Affordable Care Act](#), a woman with a pre-existing condition, such as HIV/AIDS, can no longer be denied insurance because of her health status. Now women can get the ongoing care and treatment they need. People with low and middle incomes may be eligible for tax subsidies that will help them buy coverage from new state [Health Insurance Marketplaces](#). Spread the word. Open enrollment ends March 31.



On National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, OWH calls on individuals and organizations across the country to take action and bring attention to the impact HIV/AIDS has on women and girls. You have the power to educate others, change behaviors, and help shape the future for women and girls. Together we can:

- Encourage women and girls to get tested and know their status.
- Help decrease the number of women who are HIV-positive.
- Increase awareness of safe practices to prevent HIV infection.
- Help people become aware of the levels of care and treatment.

Once again, this year's National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day theme is "Share Knowledge. Take Action." You can support the observance by:

1. Registering National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day events. Throughout the month of March, register an event or promotional activity through [Meetup Everywhere](#). Meetups give you an opportunity to organize events that empower women to "Share Knowledge. Take Action." Even if you cannot host your own Meetup, you can encourage your networks to attend Meetups organized by others.
2. Joining OWH on March 10, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. EDT, for the National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day [webinar](#), "Ongoing Care and Treatment: Women with HIV/AIDS."



3. Publishing a blog post in support of the awareness day, or using one of our sample newsletter articles for your organization's newsletter or group email messages. There are English and Spanish materials available.
4. Engaging in social media activities with OWH.
 - Join our National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day social media [Thunderclap](#). If enough people sign up in support of our message, Thunderclap will blast out a timed Tweet or Facebook post on Monday, March 10, creating a wave of attention. [Sign up today](#).
 - Post one of our [social media messages](#) on Facebook and Twitter. On Twitter, use the hashtag #NWGHAAD and ask your followers to join the conversation as well. You can also update your Facebook cover photo throughout the month of March or update your social media profile pictures with a [Twibbon](#) on March 10.

Please visit [our website](#) for resources and more information in support of National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day 2014. Help us encourage women and girls to get tested, know their status, prevent new infections, and seek care and treatment if they are HIV-positive. I look forward to hearing about your [Meetups](#) or other promotional activities on National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, and throughout the month of March.

Sincerely,

[/Nancy C. Lee/](#)



Nancy C. Lee, M.D.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for

Health — Women's Health

Director, Office on Women's Health