

RISE ABOVE

SERVING THE **WHOLE PERSON**

- Sept 15-Oct 28 Eliada Corn Maze
- Sept 22 Young Voices, fundraiser for Youth Outright WNC
- Sept 24 Empty Bowls, fundraiser for MANNA Foodbank
- Sept 27-Oct 7 Cleveland County Fair
- Sept 29 Blue Ridge Pride Festival

RISE ABOVE WORD SEARCH

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|---------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| ENGAGE | LIFESTYLE | RESOURCES | VOTE |
| PARTICIPATION | RESEARCH | ELECTIONS | SUPREME COURT |
| TRUVADA | ACA | PREP | LOVE |
| SELF CARE | HIV SPEAKS | DEPRESSION | MEDICAID |

R H S N D E E S U I A S M F I U H R Q T I V O T E
 G Q G O E H L R I Y Z K B Q X R I W E Y A W I A B
 B P J B F O Y V W H N A P S T B O R C S D K V V G
 S T R D V X T M W H T E L I E R P Q F D E B C N B
 S O A E Q T S F V X M P M E S V U I W R X A K R J
 A Z T E K W E Z A X Z S I S E I F V A E Q Y R E D
 G A K H Y E F J G U N V F R C L D A A S U W U C T
 T E X X D T I W P I R I B Z R F N C Z D P M G F H
 N T G K U R L H E F H H K U U E L J C C A M D E H
 T X C M L G L Y B A C H P O O F A Y N D C M M R K
 B H G U O U D A D E P R E S S I O N X C A J B Y T
 V D Y N V G J C E E S U P R E M E C O U R T C F Q
 F J D P E E N G A G E J Q S R P J W V F L Q U B D
 A Y N Q L F V P P G D P A R T I C I P A T I O N P
 G W E B E P U X H T S J I K Y H S C P O B A E E R
 Z T E L E C T I O N S D H Z T K P A D A R E H B Z
 E V H F E H B G N X N Q O N F R Z J E V Q P I Z I
 U H P R E P H Y Q N U O O X E X Z M S S X T C G T
 A M X I R M E D I C A I D U C S E L F C A R E F I
 O N H W J Z T H W J S C Z Q A U A W M D T V F T O



- Oct 18-21 Fall Leaf Festival
- Nov 6 Voting Day! (Midterm Elections)

NEXT ISSUE
NOVEMBER 2018
Our Holiday Edition!

ASK MISS WINNIE...

Dear Miss Winnie...
 I was a bad boy last night! I had a few too many and wound up having unprotected sex with a cute guy from the pub. I don't know if he was HIV+ or not, but I don't want to take any chances....what should I do?
 - Freaking Out in Franklin

Dear Freaking...
 It's a good thing Miss Winnie checks her email often.....time is of the essence! Call Amanda Wood at WNCAP at once (828.252.7489)...she will walk you through your options. The CDC recommends morning after "PEP" treatment (<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/pep.html>) within 72 hours of possible exposure. Don't worry if you do not have a doctor or insurance. There are all sorts of programs out there...just call right now and WNCAP will guide you through it all. Good luck!

Have a question for Miss Winnie?
 Email MissWinnie@wncap.org and put your mind at ease!

Questions, Comments, Criticisms?
 Contact RISE ABOVE:
riseabove@wncap.org
 (828) 252.7489
 P.O. Box 2411 · Asheville, NC · 28802

PrEP 101

What is PrEP?
 "PrEP" stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis and is a **safe way to prevent HIV when taken as prescribed**, which includes: taking one pill (Truvada) once a day, every day, and receiving regular HIV testing and screenings for sexually transmitted infections. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend PrEP for:

- **HIV-negative individuals who are in a sexual relationship with an HIV-positive partner.**
- **People who have injected drugs** within the past 6 months and shared needles or works.
- **Individuals who fall within high-risk categories** and/or demonstrate behaviors which may put them at risk for HIV (see additional details and risk factors at www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/pep.html).

When taken daily, PrEP can reduce the risk of HIV transmission from sex by more than 90%, and HIV transmission from injecting drugs by more than 70%. ... continue on next page



Midterm Elections & HIV Speaks on Jones Street

This fall's elections aren't just for federal candidates. **Every state lawmaker is up for election in 2018.** As HIV Advocates, we have a responsibility to stay informed and support continued resources for people living with HIV, as well as affordable access to health care for everyone, regardless of income, location, or HIV status.

On June 12th, 2018, a delegation of WNCAP staff and volunteers traveled to Raleigh to fight for people living with HIV throughout North Carolina. The annual event, called **"HIV Speaks on Jones Street"** is organized by the **North Carolina AIDS Action Network (NCAAN)**. The main policies HIV Advocates were fighting for on Jones Street this year included : ... continue on next page



"PrEP 101" ...How does someone start PrEP?

PrEP is available by prescription only. Your initial appointment will include a test for HIV; once your HIV-negative status is confirmed, PrEP will be provided for 30 days. After one month: your provider will assess your experience on PrEP which should include: medication adherence, side effects, and commitment to continue taking PrEP. At that point you may receive a new prescription to continue taking PrEP with a three month check-up required. **HIV testing and assessments are repeated every three months, and you'll receive a prescription every 90 days if you test HIV negative and remain adherent.**

Why aren't more people taking PrEP?

Even though Truvada for PrEP was approved in 2012, 6 years ago, there are still a lot of folks out there who don't even know there IS a daily pill approved for HIV prevention. A recent survey of 409 North Carolina voters conducted by Public Policy Polling shows that **only 9% of those who completed the survey knew about PrEP!** Many organizations are now working hard to get the word out. People also learn about PrEP through word-of-mouth, so **it's important to talk to friends, family and neighbors about PrEP when the opportunity arises.**

Some individuals who would benefit from PrEP might be concerned about the costs associated with the medication, medical appointments, and labwork. Fortunately there are patient assistance programs available from the manufacturer to help mitigate the

medication costs for low-income uninsured and insured individuals, and **there are also clinics that prescribe PrEP for those who are uninsured on a sliding scale fee structure** for appointments and labs. **The bottom line:**

It may seem daunting at first, but **accessing PrEP is not as difficult as some may think**, and there are many individuals who would benefit from learning about PrEP and talking to a doctor. **Interested individuals should contact their local AIDS Service Organization (like WNCAP), their county Health Department, an infectious disease doctor, or visit www.preplocator.org to find a PrEP prescriber that will work for them.**

"Midterm Elections/HIV Speaks" ...

- **Full funding for the HIV Medication Assistance Program** so that low-income NC residents can access lifesaving medications
- **Additional funding for Hepatitis C prevention and treatment**
- **Expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act** so that 400,000 additional North Carolinians, including many people living with HIV and HepC, can access health care

The new state budget which has already passed addresses two of the three major policy priorities of HIV advocates. HMAP is fully funded, and an additional \$600,000 has been allocated to Hepatitis C testing in the state. Medicaid expansion remains unlikely given the current legislative composition, but many are predicting the end of the Republican supermajority in the General Assembly.

AIDS United reports that since the 2016 elections, under current immigration policies, **documented and undocumented immigrants have been intimidated out of HIV care**, worried about what will happen to themselves or their loved ones if they visit doctors and information gets out which could lead to themselves or family members being detained or deported. **The results of the 2016 elections have also been felt by women and LGBTQ communities**, as Brett Kavanaugh's nomination to the Supreme Court right after Neil Gorsuch's confirmation could potentially mean the eventual overturning of Roe vs. Wade, as well as backpedaling protections for LGBTQ rights. **As AIDS United so aptly put it, "elections have consequences."**

You can make your voice heard this November by voting to support the rights of communities impacted by HIV!



Read more of what AIDS United has to say in their informative and passionate blog post from Aug 3rd : Why The Midterms Matter to People Living With HIV (www.aidsunited.org/blog/)

Depression & HIV: Fighting the War Within

Besides the physical challenges that often accompany an HIV diagnosis, **there is the psychological component of HIV that can have profound effects upon the health and wellbeing of those dealing with the disease.**

While 5-10% of the general population suffer from depression, **people with HIV have reported depression rates as high as 60%.** Women with HIV are twice as likely as men to be depressed.

Depression, a mood disorder, is sadness or grief that's more intense and lasts longer than it should. It has various causes, including changes in daily life, chemical changes in the brain, and a side effect of medications.

People with HIV who suffer from depression may not stay engaged in their care and may miss appointments or doses of their medications. Depression can increase high-risk behaviors that transmit HIV infection. Overall, depression can make HIV disease progress faster. It also interferes with the ability to enjoy life. **A study in 2012 showed that patients with depression, especially women, were more likely to stop receiving care and not achieve undetectable viral load.**

Symptoms of depression vary. Most health care providers suspect depression if patients report feeling blue or have little interest in daily activities. If these feelings go on for two weeks or longer, and the patient also has some of the following symptoms, they are probably depressed: **Fatigue or feeling slow and sluggish, problems concentrating, low sex drive, problems sleeping, feeling guilty, worthless, or hopeless, decreased appetite or weight loss, overeating.**

Depression can be treated with lifestyle changes, alternative therapies, and/or with medications. Some medications and therapies for depression can interfere with HIV treatment. Your health care provider can help select treatments most appropriate for you. Don't try to self-medicate with alcohol or recreational drugs, as these can have the opposite effect and actually increase depression.

Lifestyle changes can improve depression for some people. These include: Regular exercise, increased exposure to sunlight, stress management, counseling, improved sleep habits, massage and acupuncture and the addition of vitamins and supplements that may be low in some HIV patients. Check with your health care provider prior to starting any supplements.

Some people with depression respond best to medications. Medications must be used under the supervision of a health care provider who's familiar with your HIV treatment plan.

Overall, depression is a common condition for people with HIV. **Taking control of depression can lead to a healthier, longer, more enjoyable life.**



People with HIV have reported depression rates as high as 60%.



ADVOCATE | CELEBRATE | EDUCATE | SERVE

10th Annual Blue Ridge Pride Festival
A Community Caring Together
Saturday, September 29th 2018
Come celebrate our LGBTQ community!
This year's festivities include:
two stages with regional entertainers and musicians, educational opportunities from social justice organizations, plus plenty of good food and fun!!!