

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the Webinar, “Washington State PrEP: An Update on Promoting Utilization”

Background:

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) Office of Infectious Disease staff presented two webinars (April 9 and April 13, 2015) on current and planned HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) promotion activities. The webinar covered:

- What is HIV PrEP?
- PrEP as a priority in the [HIV Strategy Framework](#) and [End AIDS Washington campaign](#),
- Current and expanded efforts to promote PrEP,
- Other PrEP activities and
- Audience question and answer.

The Washington State HIV Strategy Framework (Framework) is an evidence-based strategic guidance from the state’s [HIV Planning Steering Group](#). DOH currently uses the Framework to develop and implement HIV prevention, care and treatment programs. End AIDS Washington is a campaign launched by Governor Jay Inslee on World AIDS Day 2014 that calls on our state to reduce the rate of new HIV infections in Washington by half in the next five years. In support of the Framework and End AIDS Washington, DOH and its partners have prioritized four strategies:

- Getting people insured,
- Getting people tested,
- Getting at-risk HIV-negative people on PrEP and
- Getting persons living with HIV on treatment.

As presented in the webinar, DOH is currently supporting PrEP promotion efforts on several fronts – with communities and individuals, with healthcare providers, with public health practitioners and with public and private insurance plans. Following the recommendations outlined in the Framework, and to meet the End AIDS Washington goal, DOH continues to scale up PrEP utilization among the state’s highest risk population – gay and bisexual men of all races / ethnicities. Some DOH PrEP promotion activities benefit all Washington State residents.

Frequently Asked Questions:

The following questions were asked during the PrEP webinars. These written responses are being shared to reiterate and clarify the answers DOH provided during the webinars. *Italics* in the questions, found in parentheses below, are editorial and meant to clarify audience questions.

Q 1: What are you doing to ensure that an effective (*PrEP*) campaign targeting MSM is coming out as soon as possible?

A 1: We are currently working with community-based and public health partners to develop a multi-media PrEP awareness campaign targeting gay and bisexual men and transgender persons in the Puget Sound. The campaign will be part of We-Are-1.com, a DOH-supported campaign brand aimed at promoting health and wellness among gay and bisexual men and transgender persons in King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties. Formative work on the PrEP awareness campaign will begin this spring, and the campaign will launch in fall 2015.

Q 2: What are you doing to specifically do (*PrEP*) education for women?

A 2: We routinely provide information about PrEP, including the information shared in the PrEP webinars, to our partners. By educating our partners, including medical case managers, disease intervention specialists and HIV prevention providers, we hope to disseminate important information and education to a wide-range of communities across our state. At the same time, we are working to build the capacity of healthcare providers to prescribe and manage PrEP for at-risk persons, including at-risk women. Through our [PrEP Drug Assistance Program \(PrEP DAP\)](#), we also pay for Truvada® for at-risk individuals who need financial assistance.

Q 3: Does the term MSM, for WADOH, include transgender men who may participate in MSM behavior and/or identify as gay or bisexual?

A 3: The term men who have sex with men (MSM) generally refers to gay and bisexual men and other cisgender men who have sex with men. When referring to transgender persons, we typically use the terms transgender persons, transgender women and transgender men. The distinction between gender identity and sexual orientation is one of the important factors that will inform the development and implementation of our upcoming PrEP awareness campaign.

Q 4: What is your effort to increase PrEP education in African American communities?

A 4: As described in our response to question 1, DOH will be working with partners to develop and launch a PrEP awareness campaign later this year. African American gay and bisexual men and transgender persons will be specifically targeted with PrEP-related messages in this campaign. DOH also routinely provides information about PrEP to partners that serve communities across the state, as described in our response to question 2.

Q 5: Of the 273 PrEP DAP participants, are you identifying any emerging barriers or (unknown) challenges to maintaining a PrEP prescription, or their needs/interest in ongoing risk reduction, that is after the provider's/CBO's initial consult session?

A 5: We routinely analyze barriers to maintaining clients on PrEP as part of PrEP DAP evaluation. Overall, the biggest access barrier identified has been some insurance company's unwillingness to cover PrEP. In these cases PrEP DAP pays for Truvada® at 100 percent and advises clients to work with their insurance plan to cover PrEP medical and laboratory costs.

Q 6: Is there any clarity about the ability to use both PrEP DAP and the Gilead copay?

A 6: At this time, individuals who receive patient assistance for Truvada® through Gilead are not eligible for PrEP DAP.

Q 7: Is there a current plan for undocument(ed) spouses of HIV positive clients we have to be on PrEP?

A 7: Undocumented persons are eligible for PrEP DAP if they meet the minimum criteria.

Q 8: How long do you expect the funding to continue for this program (PrEP DAP)?

A 8: PrEP is a priority in both the Framework and End AIDS Washington. DOH will continue to prioritize funding for this program and other PrEP promotion tools as long as sufficient state general-fund resources are available. DOH cannot use federal funds to support PrEP DAP.

Q 9: It was stated that 50% were expected to be uninsured for PrEP but only about 15% are. Any thoughts on why that is. Is it that uninsured people are having a hard time being seen by a participating provider to have the HHSI form completed?

A 9: The 50 percent insured rate was a conservative estimate used in initial planning for PrEP DAP. In reality, access to health insurance through the Affordable Care Act via expanded Medicaid and the Washington Health Benefits Exchange proved to be greater than anticipated for PrEP DAP participants.

Q 10: What efforts are being made to bring them (Infections Limited) into the (PrEP) fold?

A 10: DOH is working with the Northwest AIDS Education Training Center (NWAETC) and local health jurisdictions to build the capacity of healthcare providers to screen for, prescribe and manage PrEP for their patients. Up to this point, DOH has not actively reached out to specific providers to encourage them to prescribe PrEP, including Infections Unlimited.

Q 10: Will you please tell us the name of the pharmacy in Seattle that is now providing PrEP?

A 10: Kelley-Ross Pharmacy, housed within the Polyclinic in Seattle, is the first program in Washington to offer PrEP service in a pharmacy setting. The “One Step PrEP” program allows clients to make an appointment (or walk-in) to receive the recommended point-of-care PrEP screenings and labs, receive counseling and education and get PrEP medication all in one location. For more information, please contact the pharmacy at 206-324-6990 or visit <https://www.krrph.com>.

Q 11: Has there been any PrEP interest from providers in Yakima County?

A 11: Yes. Planned Parenthood in Yakima has started offering PrEP. For an updated list of PrEP providers, please visit the [PrEP DAP webpage](#).

Q 12: Are there PrEP pamphlets available for provider (s)?

A 13: Yes. The DOH [PrEP DAP webpage](#) has a link to a printable PrEP brochure from prepfacts.org to help educate clients about PrEP and strategies for talking with their clinician about PrEP.

Q14: Is this slide presentation (*webinar*) available for us?

A 13: Yes. The webinar is available on the DOH [PrEP DAP webpage](#).

For people with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY call 711)