



## RESOLUTION: U=U

**WHEREAS**, the Undetectable=Untransmittable (“U=U”), also known in Spanish as Indetectable=Intransmisibile (“I=I”), campaign was born in the United States of America in 2016 as a result of scientific evidence that unequivocally demonstrates that when taken as prescribed, HIV medications reduce the amount of HIV in a person’s blood to a very low level, such that a standard lab test can’t detect it. With sustained viral suppression (defined as having a viral load of less than 200 copies of HIV per milliliter of blood) meaning that the amount of virus is “undetectable” –there is zero risk of sexual transmission (“untransmittable”).<sup>1</sup> The implications of these findings are that routine testing coupled with treatment can eliminate HIV transmission and should be the basis for many public health efforts nationally and internationally including people aging with HIV

**WHEREAS**, U=U has been accepted by the global medical and scientific community, including the World Health Organization (WHO), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and National Institutes of Health (NIH)<sup>i</sup>. Additionally, U=U education is now a condition of funding by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and The Global Fund. This has yielded remarkable viral suppression rates in PEPFAR supported countries in sub-Saharan Africa; four countries report viral suppression rates greater than 85% and five other countries report viral suppression rates greater than 75%.<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, viral suppression rates in the U.S. are reported at 65% nationally, with disparities along geographical and racial lines.<sup>3</sup> Improved viral suppression rates is a critical milestone towards national and regional progress in ending the HIV epidemic in the United States. Data show that promoting the U=U message is a critical tool for advancing each of the four strategic pillars of the Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. (EHE) initiative:

1. Diagnose – Including U=U education in testing outreach has been shown to increase HIV testing rates.<sup>4</sup>
2. Treat – Knowledge of U=U motivates people living with HIV to stay on treatment and stay engaged in care.<sup>5</sup>
3. Prevent – Knowledge of U=U is associated with higher viral suppression rates,<sup>6</sup> and achieving and maintaining viral suppression. is the most effective form of HIV prevention, estimated at 100% by the CDC,<sup>7</sup> and confirmed “zero risk” by the WHO.<sup>8</sup>
4. Respond – U=U improves contact tracing because it has been shown to increase comfort in sharing one’s HIV positive status.<sup>9</sup>

*Passed Unanimously on December 12, 2024*

**WHEREAS**, U=U is also a critical tool in advocacy to end discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, including HIV criminalization, many of which are not based in the science of U=U or other evidence. These often act as structural barriers to prevention and care and promote stigma and discrimination.<sup>10</sup> U=U has been described by UNAIDS as one of the most effective and historic counter-narratives to HIV stigma.<sup>11</sup>

**WHEREAS**, despite the proven, data-driven impact of U=U education in transforming lives and accelerating each of the four strategic pillars of the EHE initiative, significant gaps in awareness, understanding, and implementation persist across the country.

**WHEREAS**, with persistent HIV stigma and over 500,000 people living with HIV not reaching undetectable viral loads in the US, there is an urgent need to expand awareness and utilization of U=U in clinical settings, health communications, and advocacy efforts to fully realize its potential in ending the HIV epidemic.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, PACHA recommends the U.S. follow the “Multinational Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) Call-to-Action” (MUCA),<sup>12</sup> issued by the U.S. and Canada in July 2022, and since joined by the governments of Vietnam and Australia, by intentionally and specifically incorporating U=U into national efforts to prevent, diagnose, and treat HIV across all ages, including those aging with HIV.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, for HHS to formally recognize and collaborate with a community-led multi-sector national U=U National Task Force to follow the action steps outlined in the MUCA issued by the U.S. and Canada including:

1. Develop national strategies for sustainable and effective countrywide U=U programs that are informed by the communities and individuals most impacted;
2. Dedicate resources to support U=U education and programming;
3. Integrate U=U science into HIV guidelines and official communications;
4. Include U=U as a mandatory component of existing HIV prevention, care, and treatment services, policies, and programs (such as incorporating in the Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. initiative);
5. Use U=U in health education and promotion efforts to generate demand and increase utilization of testing, prevention, care, and related services;
6. Conduct U=U awareness campaigns for key populations and the general public to decrease stigma;
7. Train, support, and encourage the HIV prevention and care workforce, including clinicians, peers, and others to deliver accurate and concise U=U messages during service delivery.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that PACHA recommends that HHS takes the following specific short-term actions:

- A. Conduct a landscape analysis to document current U=U efforts in the U.S. and assess gaps in current knowledge, understanding, and utilization.

- 79 B. Integrate U=U into official communications including 2024 World AIDS Day  
80 Communications.  
81 C. Conduct a 2025 Summit at the White House with representatives from leading U=U  
82 countries for bi-directional learning.  
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84 U=U is an effective intervention and rallying cry in many parts of the world to treat people with  
85 HIV with dignity; dismantling stigma and in doing so, breaking barriers to access treatment and  
86 care to save lives and end new transmissions.  
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88 The HIV global response has embraced, endorsed, and mandated U=U. It is time for the U.S.  
89 domestic response to take bold action to fully realize the promise of U=U to reduce stigma,  
90 improve quality of life, and accelerate progress toward our EHE targets.

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## References

<sup>1</sup> HIV.gov, “Viral Suppression and Undetectable Viral Load: What Do They Mean?” <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/staying-in-hiv-care/hiv-treatment/viral-suppression>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.state.gov/annual-reports-to-congress-on-the-presidents-emergency-plan-for-aids-relief/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/director-letters/cdc-publishes-new-hiv-surveillance-reports.html>

<sup>4</sup> Smith, Philip, et al. “Undetectable=Untransmittable (U=U) Messaging Increases Uptake of HIV Testing Among Men: Results from a Pilot Cluster Randomized Trial,” *AIDS and Behavior* (2021) 25:3128-3136, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-021-03284-y>

<sup>5</sup> Okoli, Chinyere, et al. “Undetectable equals untransmittable (U=U): awareness and associations with health outcomes among people living with HIV in 25 countries,” *Sexually Transmitted Infections* (2021) 97:18-26, <https://sti.bmj.com/content/sextrans/97/1/18.full.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Okoli, Chinyere, et al. “Undetectable equals untransmittable (U=U): awareness and associations with health outcomes among people living with HIV in 25 countries,” *Sexually Transmitted Infections* (2021) 97:18-26, <https://sti.bmj.com/content/sextrans/97/1/18.full.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> CDC, “Effectiveness of Prevention Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Acquiring or Transmitting HIV,” <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/estimates/preventionstrategies.html>

<sup>8</sup> WHO, “The role of HIV viral suppression in improving individual health and reducing transmission: policy brief” <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/360860>, 2023

<sup>9</sup> Okoli, Chinyere, et al. “Undetectable equals untransmittable (U=U): awareness and associations with health outcomes among people living with HIV in 25 countries,” *Sexually Transmitted Infections* (2021) 97:18-26, <https://sti.bmj.com/content/sextrans/97/1/18.full.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/policies/law/criminalization-ehe.html>

<sup>11</sup> UNAIDS, Report by the NGO Representative, “Undetectable=Untransmittable=Universal Access (U=U=U) a foundational, community-led global HIV health equity strategy,” [https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\\_asset/PCB51\\_NGO\\_Report\\_Final\\_112322.pdf](https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/PCB51_NGO_Report_Final_112322.pdf), 2022

<sup>12</sup> Governments of the United States and Canada, “Multinational U=U Call-to-Action,” (Retrieved from Prevention Access Campaign’s website) <https://preventionaccess.com/multinational-uu-call-to-action>, 2022