



ADAP Advocacy Association

aaa+

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ADAP Advocacy Association Issues Call to Action on ADAP Crisis; President Obama, Majority Leader Reid, Speaker Pelosi and Congressional Black Caucus Urged to Eliminate Expanding ADAP Waiting Lists Nationwide

Call to Action includes ADAP Crisis Letter Endorsed by 126 Groups Sent to Obama, Reid & Pelosi

For Immediate Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. (September 16, 2010) – The [ADAP Advocacy Association](http://www.adapadvocacyassociation.org), also known as **aaa+**, today issued a ‘Call to Action’ to President Barack Obama, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Members of the Congressional Black Caucus, pleading with them to eliminate the expanding waiting lists under the AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (“ADAPs”). **The appeal urged them to put partisan politics aside for the greater good of improving access to care for people living with HIV/AIDS!**

“Ryan White programs serving people living with HIV/AIDS who are uninsured or underinsured – especially ADAPs – have long enjoyed bipartisan support,” summarized **Brandon M. Macsata**, CEO of the ADAP Advocacy Association. “Unfortunately, ADAPs nationwide are surviving on life-support with thousands of patients are being forced onto waiting lists, or from the program entirely with eligibility restrictions, but partisan gridlock in Washington, DC is preventing the crisis from being solved! We don’t care how it is done, or who gets the credit, we simply want patients linked to the care that they need, and deserve.”

aaa+ spearheaded a national sign-on letter asking that President Obama, Majority Leader Reid and Speaker Pelosi to find the missing \$101 million needed to alleviate the ongoing ADAP crisis. The letter was endorsed by 126 national, state and local groups spanning 31 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. Upon submission to the Office of National AIDS Policy (“ONAP”), **aaa+** thanked ONAP Director Jeff Crowley for all of his hard work, and expressed hope that he would continue to facilitate the discussions on solving the crisis facing 3,423 Americans living with HIV/AIDS on waiting lists as of September 10th.

The letter read, in part: “*The perfect storm confronting the nation’s ADAPs is growing worse by the day, and more people are being put into harm’s way without the immediate infusion of federal funds into the program. We urge you to put politics aside and move swiftly to enact the “Addressing Cost Containment Measures to Ensure the Sustainability and Success of the ADAP Act” (S.3401), otherwise known as the ACCESS ADAP Act. If that is not a feasible option, at least find the additional \$101 million that the advocacy community identified early this year as being needed in FY 2010. The President’s reprogrammed \$25 million for ADAP is deeply appreciated, but will not be enough stop the deteriorating access to treatment on ADAP for people living with HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, it will not stop the waitlists from climbing, reductions in ADAP drug formularies, or eligibility limitations.*”

[CLICK HERE](#) to download the ADAP Crisis Sign-On Letter.

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The ADAP federal need number for FY2010 is currently an increase of \$126 million, which is a conservative estimate needed to eliminate existing waiting lists. While President Obama has already allocated \$25 million in emergency funding, it falls far short of the necessary funding to address the escalating waiting list crisis in eleven states facing nearly 3,500 Americans.

The problem is fueled, in large part, by inadequate federal funding which has not kept pace with demand over the last several years. Unfortunately, Democrats and Republicans have been unable to reach consensus on how best to solve the problem.

Presenting earlier today at the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust on HIV/AIDS during the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Annual Legislative Conference, Macsata summarized how nearly eighty-seven percent (86.6%) of the ADAP waiting list patients reside in the South, which is disproportionately impacting communities of color. According to the National ADAP Monitoring Project, fifty-nine (59%) of ADAP recipients are either African-American (31%), Hispanic (26%) or Multi-Racial (2%).

“Extrapolating the data from NASTAD’s annual report, it doesn’t take much to see that this ADAP crisis is also disproportionately impacting communities of color – especially in the South,” Macsata said during his remarks at the Congressional Black Caucus event. “I know that every CBC member is equally alarmed, but the time has come to stop talking about the problem and solve it; whether it is an emergency supplemental, or passing something similar to S.3401 – your constituents living with HIV/AIDS are calling out for leadership now!”

With ADAP waiting lists now spanning across eleven states, an increasing number of Americans living with HIV/AIDS are being forced to take a patchwork approach to accessing their healthcare. There are numerous factors fueling the ongoing crisis – including rising unemployment, greater testing initiatives leading to increased enrollment and state budget cuts – but none as detrimental as the perpetual under-funding by the federal government.

Said **William Arnold**, **aaa+** board president and Executive Director of the [Community Access National Network](#): “The underlying concern is that the delay in restoring the cash-strapped AIDS Drug Assistance Programs equates to an increased risk of health declines for HIV-positive Americans, thus placing an even larger burden on the nation’s health care system. Aside from denied treatment violating the very principles of proper medical ethics, it also poses unique problems in that it is contrary to everything we’ve learned over the years about this potentially deadly disease. By ignoring the ADAP waiting lists crisis, lawmakers are hampering peoples’ willingness to get tested for fear that they won’t have to care, as well as potentially contributing to the spread of the disease with heightened viral loads. We can’t wait any longer!”

To learn more about the ADAP waiting lists or the ADAP Advocacy Association, please contact Brandon M. Macsata by phone at (305) 519-4256 or email at info@adapadvocacyassociation.org.

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