



December 16, 2021

The Honorable Tina Smith
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Schiff
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Smith and Representative Schiff,

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and the 133,500 family physicians and medical students across the country we represent, I write to offer our support for the *PrEP Access and Coverage Act of 2021* (S. 3295 / H.R. 6117).

Your legislation would increase access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for HIV by ensuring these medications and associated costs are fully covered by health insurance. This legislation would also support educational public health campaigns on HIV prevention and establish grants for states, community-based organizations, community health centers, and others to provide PrEP and PEP services to people who are uninsured.

When taken as prescribed, PrEP [reduces](#) the risk of getting HIV from sex by about 99 percent and among people who inject drugs by at least 74 percent. Because HIV establishes infection in the body very quickly, often within 24 to 36 hours of exposure, easy and immediate [access](#) to PEP is critical. Current barriers of high out-of-pocket costs and prior authorizations reduce the ability of these medications to work as intended.

Any individual at risk of contracting HIV should have timely and affordable access to preventive medications. The AAFP applauds the provisions prohibiting prior authorization requirements for HIV prevention drugs and prohibiting denial of coverage or increased premiums for disability insurance, long-term care insurance, or life insurance policies for people taking medication for HIV prevention. Prior authorizations are burdensome for primary care physicians and can result in significant impacts on patient care caused by delays in the start and continuation of medication and treatment for the prevention of HIV. We [believe](#) family physicians and other qualified clinicians in the primary care team should be able to prescribe and/or order these medications based on appropriate clinical knowledge, training, and experience without being subject to prior authorizations. In turn, this will reduce disparities and increase equitable access to these effective medications to protect individuals against HIV.

The AAFP [opposes](#) discrimination against patients receiving sexually transmitted infection (STI) specific therapies, such as PrEP and PEP for HIV, in obtaining health-related services and life, health, or disability insurance. We also recognize the need for continued public and professional education about STIs, with an emphasis on prevention.

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Thank you for introducing legislation to ensure all persons have access to important preventive medication. The AAFP stands ready to partner with you to support the passage of the *PrEP Access and Coverage Act*. If you have questions, please contact Erica Cischke, Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs, at ecischke@aafp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ada D. Stewart, MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ada D. Stewart, MD, FAAFP
Board Chair, American Academy of Family Physicians