



Combatting HIV, Hepatitis C (HCV), and the Opioid Epidemic in MA \$35M Needed in FY'18 for HIV/AIDS/HCV Line Item (4512-0103)

Project ABLE requests **the HIV/AIDS/HCV Line Item (4512-0103) is funded at \$35M** to prevent new infections, improve health outcomes, and save money and lives. Recent budget cuts threaten the progress Massachusetts has made to curtail the HIV/AIDS/HCV epidemic. Restoration of funding is needed for the following areas:

- **HCV Prevention, Screening, and Health Navigation.** Increased funding for health navigation to cure readiness and reducing the spread of new infections through education, outreach, and syringe exchange.
- **HIV Prevention.** Increased funding for HIV prevention work including education and outreach on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and syringe exchange.
- **HIV/AIDS Support Services.** Increased funding for case management for the growing population of people living with HIV to keep people living independently in their homes and reduce transmission of the virus.

Massachusetts has had tremendous success preventing new HIV infections and improving health outcomes for people living with HIV/AIDS. Out investment in HIV/AIDS prevention and care has saved lives and money. It is estimated that for every dollar spent, the state saves four dollars in near-term health care costs. Since 2000, new HIV diagnoses in Massachusetts have declined by 47%, saving Massachusetts more than \$1.7B over that time-period.

We have more tools and opportunities than ever before to continue this progress, including Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis to prevent new HIV infections, new medications that can cure HCV, and syringe access programs to engage injection drug users in care and reduce the transmission of infectious diseases.

The opioid epidemic also presents a significant threat to the progress we have made. While HIV infections attributed to injection drug use have dropped by 92% in Massachusetts in the past ten years, injection drug use still accounted for 7% of new HIV infections between 2011 and 2013 and it is likely this number will continue to rise.

Nearly 21,000 people are living with HIV and an estimated 200,000 people are infected with HCV in Massachusetts. Thousands more are unaware they are infected with these viruses. There continue to be significant health disparities. African-Americans and Hispanics are impacted disproportionately by significantly higher rates of HIV.

In December, the Getting to Zero Coalition, which includes Project ABLE, released the “Massachusetts Comprehensive Plan to Eliminate HIV Discrimination, AIDS Related Deaths, and New HIV Infections” <http://www.gettingtozeroma.org/>. None of the goals outlined in the report are possible without restoration of funding to the HIV/AIDS/HCV Line Item.

**Please support \$35M for the HIV/AIDS/HCV Line Item (4512-0103)
Getting to ZERO infections in Massachusetts is possible with investment in programs that work!**

For more information, contact HIVProjectABLE@aol.com or 617-797-8488

Website: <http://projectablema.org/>

Data source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health

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