

**Daily Roundup from the XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto, Canada
Wednesday, August 16, 2006**

Today, achieving universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment was a major focus at XVI International AIDS Conference in Toronto. And the World Health Organization's HIV/AIDS Director Kevin De Cock reported significant increases in antiretroviral therapy coverage or ART.

"Of the global total of 38.6 million persons living with HIV, approximately 6.8 million in low- and middle-income countries currently require antiretroviral therapy," explained De Cock. "WHO estimates that by end June 2006 some 1.65 million persons in need were accessing ART with an overall coverage of 24%."

More than one million sub-Saharan Africans now receive ART, but the vast majority of people there are not getting HIV drugs. And with the number of people in need of treatment on the rise, De Cock noted treatment access must expand more quickly.

While a recent study showed that ART has saved an estimated 3 million years of life in the United States, Anthony Fauci of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease said current efforts to broaden treatment availability are falling short.

"But that's where we start getting in trouble because that is not enough," said Fauci. "And the reason it's not enough is that a large portion of the world has still not yet gotten the advantage of those scientific advances."

Fourteen percent of new HIV infections globally are in children under age 15 years and most contract it from their mothers. According to the WHO, an estimated 800,000 children around the world are in need of HIV treatment, but fewer than 100,000 are receiving it.

Ruth Nduati of the University of Nairobi talked about the situation in sub-Saharan Africa, where most of the world's infected children live. "This epidemic is evolving in the midst of a chronic crisis of child health and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa," explained Nduati. "And the problems of poverty aggravate the HIV epidemic and the HIV epidemic in turn aggravates the poverty."

Born HIV positive in the U.S. 22 years ago and told she wouldn't live beyond her 5th birthday Hydeia Broadbent told parents to communicate with their children.

"I think it is important that everyone know, your kids, we're the future. We really are," said Broadbent. "And if we're not educated, we're not going to have a bright future."

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