The new face of HIV/AIDS in the United States is that of the African American (AA) woman. Although women in general account for thirty percent of new HIV infections as well as a growing share of new AIDS cases, women of color, particularly AA women, have been especially hard hit and represent the majority of new infections among women. Currently, HIV is the number one cause of death for AA women ages 25 to 34.

Advances in treatment have not been experienced equitably. Almost half of PWLA are not in regular care, and as many as one-fourth of people infected do not know they are positive, many of whom are AA women. Many barriers prevent AA women from being tested and accessing quality medical care: low income, family responsibilities, disparities in care and treatment, and lack of transportation, education and health insurance.

The CDCs Advancing HIV Prevention Initiative (AHP) acknowledges that HIV can be detected before symptoms occur using a reliable and inexpensive test, and that quality healthcare and treatment given before symptoms develop is more effective than waiting until after symptoms develop. The AHP strategies should provide an effective means of reducing further HIV transmission, not only in AA women, but also in other US citizens.