US To Tackle AIDS on the Border

The US Health and Human Services Department plans to spend $11 million over the next 5 years in demonstration projects designed to provide care for people with AIDS who live along the US-Mexico border.

The grant, announced by US Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala on World AIDS Day, December 1, will first be awarded to 4 projects in each of the 4 border states, Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. Funded at $2 million each, the programs will seek to serve hard-to-reach people and improve access to care in the poverty-stricken region.

“We have seen a significant decline in deaths from HIV and AIDS in the last several years, but we must continue to broaden our efforts in HIV/AIDS prevention, especially in communities of color, which still suffer disproportionately from infant mortality and AIDS,” said Secretary Shalala.

“This new program will go a long way toward delivering innovative HIV/AIDS care for those in the border area who need it so desperately.”

“It’s appropriate that we are announcing this new program on December 1, which is World AIDS Day,” said Claude Earl Fox, administrator of the Agency for Health Research and Services Administration. “As our US-Mexico border populations have increased, so too has the number of individuals affected by HIV/AIDS. In an area of the country where access to care is severely limited by poverty, lack of education, isolation, cultural diversity and other barriers to quality care, these grants will support more innovative and effective ways to deliver HIV care.”

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