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<https://www.thewellproject.org/hiv-information/wri-2015-addressing-major-hiv-policy-needs-and-research-challenges-women-over-next>

WRI 2015 - Addressing Major HIV Policy Needs and Research Challenges for Women Over the Next Five Years

Submitted on Sep 28, 2015

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**WOMEN'S
RESEARCH
INITIATIVE
ON HIV/AIDS**

The Women's Research Initiative on HIV/AIDS (WRI) is dedicated to elevating, enhancing, and expediting research on women and HIV. At the 2015 meeting, the WRI embarked on a novel five-year visioning process (using a proprietary methodology called Syntegration) to identify the major policy needs and research challenges that must be addressed and overcome in order to significantly reduce the rate of new HIV infections and disease progression among women in the United States by 2020.

The meeting was a highly facilitated working session that utilized a series of exercises, breakout sessions, and brainstorming techniques to develop a strategy to achieve specific targets over the next five years.

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As in past meetings, WRI 2015 brought together national HIV/AIDS thought leaders from diverse backgrounds, including clinical care, research, academia, advocacy, the government, the pharmaceutical industry and women living with HIV. This expert think tank operationalizes the transdisciplinary approach advocated by the WRI. By addressing issues that affect women through a variety of lenses, the WRI is able to expand understanding of effective treatment and prevention for women and girls living with or at risk for HIV.

- View the full [2015 WRI Summary Report](#)
- View photos from the 2015 WRI meeting on our [Facebook page](#)

Meeting objectives

- Bring together a diverse group of experts on women and HIV/AIDS to collectively focus on the HIV epidemic in the United States and identify strategic overlap between their respective domains
- Determine and agree upon realistic and measurable targets for this initiative
- Produce an actionable, multi-stakeholder agenda and implementation roadmap aimed at addressing a select set of critical issues confronting the HIV community
- Recruit a network of experts across HIV who will champion the agenda and continue to collaborate on its execution

The overarching goal of the meeting was to develop a plan to significantly reduce the rate of new HIV infections and disease progression among women in the United States between now and 2020. The group also identified a number of sub-goals:

- Establish a new research paradigm that prioritizes the inclusion of qualitative data on women
- Ensure that the healthcare system delivers comprehensive, affordable, accessible, and gender-responsive care for all women, including transwomen
- Provide all healthcare practitioners with the tools they need to comprehensively engage in HIV prevention and treatment
- Identify mechanisms to measure quality-of-life issues for people living with HIV; develop metrics to drive accountability
- Elevate imperative to address stigma and normalization, including decriminalization

After three days of workshops and exercises led by a company called the Syntegrity Group, the WRI identified the necessary components of a five-year plan. WRI leadership will work over the coming months to identify partners and champions to research, develop, implement, or scale these goals and activities over the next 16 months.

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2015 WRI meeting participants

Erika Aaron, (WRI member)

Drexel University College of Medicine **Adaora Adimora**

UNC School of Medicine **Sevgi Aral**

Centers for Disease Control **Judith Auerbach* (WRI member)**

University of California, SF **Dawn Averitt (WRI member)**

The Well Project **Gina Brown (WRI member)**

NIH-OAR **Gina Brown (WRI member)**

PWN-USA **Kimberly Brown**

Janssen **Dawn Carey**

Dartmouth College **Jenna Conley (WRI member)**

The Well Project **Elizabeth Connick, MD* (WRI member)**

University of Colorado Denver **Jeffrey Scott Crowley**

O'Neill Institute/Georgetown Law **Antigone Dempsey**

HRSA/HIV/AIDS Bureau **Dazon Dixon Diallo (WRI member)**

SisterLove, Inc. **Lisa Fitzpatrick (WRI member)**

United Medical Center **Krista Heitzman Martel (WRI member)**

The Well Project **Sally Hodder**

West Virginia University **Elizabeth Johnson**

Christie's Place **Naina Khanna (WRI member)**

Positive Women's Network - USA **Marisol Martinez-Tristani**

AbbVie **Tonia Poteat* (WRI member)**

Johns Hopkins University **Maura Riordan (WRI member)**

AIDS United **Linda H. Scruggs (WRI member)**

Ribbon Consulting Group **Daniel Seekins**

Bristol-Myers Squibb **Kathleen Squires (WRI member)**

Thomas Jefferson University **Patrick Sullivan**

Emory University **Vani Vannappagari**

ViiV Healthcare Limited **Fulvia Veronese (WRI member)**

NIAID, DAIDS **Shannon Weber**

Bay Area Perinatal AIDS Center **Andrea Weddle**

HIV Medicine Association **Charles Wira (WRI member)**

Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth **Carmen Zorrilla**

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*2015 Executive Committee member



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