



## Department of Health

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
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Commissioner

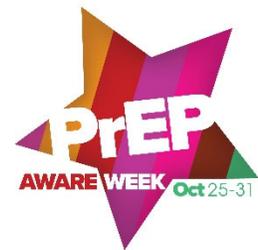
LISA J. PINO, M.A., J.D.  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

September, 2020

Dear Colleague:

The AIDS Institute is excited to announce the return of **PrEP Aware Week**, a public education campaign with activities across NYS to be held **October 25–31, 2020**. Every health care provider, health care facility, local health department, community-based organization, social service agency, school or individual concerned about HIV is being asked to join us in working together so that people of all races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities and abilities are aware of PrEP.

The theme of *PrEP Aware Week, 2020* is: “*This is Why I PrEP*”. The theme recognizes that PrEP is an individualized approach to HIV prevention and sexual health. “*This is Why I PrEP*” provides a broad umbrella for reaching all New Yorkers with tailored messages about PrEP that will speak to them as individuals and members of different, overlapping, diverse communities.



Studies have shown that PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV from sex by about 99% when taken daily (CDC). However, still today, too many people are unaware of PrEP, have misconceptions or misinformation about PrEP or fear stigma around PrEP. Sharing clear messages with your patients, clients, or community that PrEP is well tolerated can increase the likelihood that someone will fully consider whether PrEP is right for them. Most of all, we can all help “normalize” PrEP as a positive, self-empowered way to promote sexual health.

Certainly, this year’s *PrEP Aware Week* is taking place during a time that looks very different from the first *PrEP Aware Week* held one year ago. New Yorkers have endured much heartache, loss, and uncertainty during the COVID-19 crisis. Our communities need us more than ever. Attached is a list of possible activities to promote PrEP. This list is a resource for anyone who would like to promote PrEP in the days leading up to or during *PrEP Aware Week*.

PrEP Aware resources can be found at the following sites:

- [www.prepforsex.org](http://www.prepforsex.org)
- [https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/prep/prep\\_index.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/general/prep/prep_index.htm)
- [PrEP Voluntary Provider Directory](#)

If you have questions about **PrEP Aware**, please email [hivet@health.ny.gov](mailto:hivet@health.ny.gov).

Sincerely,

Charles Gonzalez, MD  
Medical Director  
AIDS Institute