

What HIV Elimination Means to Me...



"Arkansas needs better linkage to care."

LaTunja

Diagnosed in 1997

Barriers Experienced

- Lack of resources in my rural town.
- Lack of treatment from primary care doctor.
- No local support system.
- Had to travel long distances to receive care in Texarkana.
- Doctor refused to perform a tummy-tuck because of fear "for his staff's safety" due to my status.
- Stigma in community and church.

Changes Needed in Arkansas

- Need to have mass testing.
- Stop using the term "high-risk" to test people, everyone is at risk. HIV is not a "gay disease."
- Track people with HIV regardless if they are in Ryan White programs or seen at ARCare.
- HIV education needs to be in schools.
- Rural doctors need to learn how to provide HIV care instead of referring patients to a Specialist.
- More clinical trial opportunities including shots, not just pills.
- Doctors need to practice universal precautions on ALL patients.
- Test people at community events such as PS2 gaming tournaments.

Ending the HIV Epidemic

A PLAN FOR ARKANSAS

What HIV Elimination Means to Me...



"HIV elimination means freedom."

Kimberly

Diagnosed in 2015

Barriers Experienced

- Uncaring staff at local health unit.
- Stigma.
- Faced rejection, ignorance and hateful words.
- Some family members did not want me to use their plates and utensils to eat.
- Fear of the unknown.

Changes Needed in Arkansas

- Reduce stigma.
- Provide better HIV education to the public and businesses.
- Advocacy training so people with HIV can speak out more effectively.
- More caring doctors like Dr. Joseph Beck.

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