



The mission of the CFAR is to provide a multidisciplinary environment that promotes basic, clinical, behavioral and translational research in the prevention, detection and treatment of HIV infection.

#### NEWS BRIEF:

- To read more UNC perspectives from inside the International AIDS Conference, visit <http://globalhealth.unc.edu/blog/>
- To hear thoughts on HIV and women from Valerie Jarett, Senior Advisor to the US President for Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Engagement, visit <http://tinyurl.com/c6q9v6f>
- To see beautiful photos from all areas of the conference, visit: <http://aids2012.smugmug.com/>
- Daniel Halperin, adjunct associate professor of health behavior and health education at UNC's School of Public Health, has released a new book called *Tinderbox* on how US western colonial powers sparked the HIV epidemic and fanned its rise. Learn more at <http://tinyurl.com/cxln9zm> and [www.tinderboxbook.com](http://www.tinderboxbook.com)

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# Center for AIDS Research

## University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Volume 4. Issue 5

August 7, 2012

### UNC CFAR at the 2012 XIX International AIDS Conference

The International AIDS Conference is a gathering for health care providers, activists, policy makers, persons living with and affected by HIV, and those interested in working to end the AIDS pandemic. Every two years, new scientific knowledge and discoveries are presented, providing an opportunity for dialogue and planning for the future of HIV/AIDS care. The 2012 conference took place in Washington, D.C. from July 22 to 27. The IAS Governing Council voted to hold the meeting in the US following President Barack Obama's October 2009 announcement that the nation would end its entry restrictions on people living with HIV effective January 4, 2010. The conference was last held in the U.S. in 1990 in San Francisco, California. The removal of entry restrictions on people living with HIV by the U.S. allows for the return of this global conference to the United States after a 22-year absence.

The theme of this year's global conference was "Turning the Tide Together." Attendees heard lectures and new ideas from a variety of world leaders, including former President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, South African Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, UNAIDS



*Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton told the conference attendees, "I am here today to make it absolutely clear the U.S. is committed and will remain committed to achieving an AIDS-free generation." This goal includes no babies born infected, young people with a much lower risk than today of becoming infected and people living with HIV having easy access to medication.*

*Photo Credit: Jim Watson, AFP/Getty Images*

Executive Director Michel Sidibé, Bill Gates, and Elton John. Sessions offered panel discussions, abstract presentations of new discoveries in the field, satellite meetings to include viewers from around the world, and activities in the Global Village. The conference hosted an estimated 25,000 people from 200 countries. Research from a wide array of scholars, students, and departments at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill contributed to more than 100 abstracts presented at the conference, on topics ranging from novel prevention strategies, to reducing stigma, to finding a cure.

The CFAR CODE office spoke with several of these esteemed colleagues to hear their unique perspectives on the importance of this conference and how it felt to bring their research into the public eye at the conference.



*Activists cheer for the "We Can End AIDS" March at the International AIDS Conference © IAS/Deborah Campos*



Singer Alicia Keys (in white hat), Valerie Jarrett (special advisor to President Obama, front & center), and UNC professor of medicine and epidemiology Ada Adimora (front row, second from right) gather for a meeting focused on black women living with HIV/AIDS, held in conjunction with the XIX International AIDS Conference. Photo Credit: Lisa Chensvold

## Insider Perspectives: Thoughts from UNC Researchers

Sudhanshu Handa, Professor and Chair in the UNC Department of Public Policy, was first author on a paper examining the effect of a national social cash transfer program on HIV risk behavior in Kenya. Dr. Handa explained, "This was my first AIDS Conference, and as an economist, it was also my first real exposure to a Public Health Conference. I felt a bit out of place at first, but my session was composed of truly interdisciplinary social science research, and all with strong public policy content. That made me feel like I was in the right place after-all! I have never seen a conference with such breadth of research and diversity of attendance - it was impressive from all perspectives, academic, social, political, and cultural."

Andrew Edmonds, Research Instructor in the School of Public Health's Epidemiology Department, served as first author on a paper presented at the conference focused on HIV-positive mothers and their infants. Dr. Edmonds shared, "Attending AIDS 2012 was a fantastic and inspirational experience. It was an excellent opportunity not only to present our research on differences in preventing mother-to-child transmission service delivery at maternity and HIV care and treatment sites, but also to learn from and network with experts in the field."

Mina Hosseinipour, Associate Professor of Medicine at the UNC School of Medicine and Clinical Director of UNC Project-Malawi, was first author on several papers shared at the conference. Her submissions presented information on the cost-effectiveness of treatment as prevention and the effect of early vs. delayed antiretroviral therapy initiation on clinical outcomes, inspired by an analysis of the recently released HIV Prevention Trials Network 052 study results. Dr. Hosseinipour shared, "Given the findings of HPTN 052 that treatment can prevent HIV transmission by 96%, we were excited to present continued work from the study on the clinical benefit that can be gained by starting HIV treatment early including a decreased risk of AIDS events, TB and other clinical events. Even more exciting are the strategies that were discussed to begin implementation of treatment as prevention or "Test and Treat". As a researcher working in Malawi, I was pleased to see Malawi's own Option B+, the first public health strategy to use a "test and treat" approach for pregnant women, being featured in the conference as an extension of the clinical and prevention benefits of HPTN 052."

***"Serious dialogue is now happening about collaboration among the diverse communities involved in this effort - science, advocacy, faith, and vulnerable populations...I am humbled by the job ahead of us, but this meeting has inspired me. I know we will keep moving toward our shared goal of ending AIDS." - Dr. Diane Havlir, AIDS 2012 Co-Chair & Professor of Medicine at UCSF***

Harsha Thirumurthy, Assistant Professor of Health Economics in the UNC School of Global Public Health, was first author on several papers. His research presented at the conference focused on a wide variety of topics, including outcomes in employment and children's education for households containing HIV-positive adults with high CD4 counts, which incorporated evidence from a community-wide health campaign in Uganda. Dr. Thirumurthy explained, "The conference offered an excellent opportunity to present ongoing research and receive feedback on a test and treat intervention that my colleagues and I are developing in Uganda and Kenya. I also had a chance to meet researchers and program staff working on a range of topics that are of interest to me, including adherence and retention, m-health (the practice of medicine and public health supported by mobile technology devices), and male circumcision. For an economist, this conference is always a good place to learn about new biomedical and behavioral research that others are doing."

The CODE Office is grateful to all of you for sharing your thoughts. We'll see you at the 2014 Meeting in Melbourne, Australia!

### NEW MEDIA NEWS



Join our facebook community to learn more about HIV-related news and events in the triangle! Search for "UNC

Center for AIDS Research" and click the "Like" button! Or, go straight to this link: <http://www.facebook.com/unccfar>

Want to brush up on your HIV/AIDS facts and new developments? We now upload free videos from the campus-wide course on HIV/AIDS for you! Watch them at: <http://vimeo.com/channels/unccfar>



We have a new and beautifully improved website! Take a look at: <http://cfar.med.unc.edu/>



Tweet Tweet, it's Springtime! Come follow us on twitter for easy updates and news at: <http://twitter.com/#!/unccfar>