

# VCU RYAN WHITE CLIENT ADVISORY BOARD

# NEWSLETTER

Q1: SPRING 2025



VCU RWP CAB members feel that being part of the group is an empowering experience as it gives them a voice to make a difference and help bring about change. They appreciate the safe space that the CAB provides, allowing them to express themselves comfortably without any negative influence.

VCU RWP CAB meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 6:00pm until 7:30pm in VCU West Hospital, 3rd Floor, West Wing (1200 E Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219)



Register by the QR code or by visiting:  
<https://redcap.vcu.edu/surveys/?s=HJEL4XEMPK7J4LNJ>

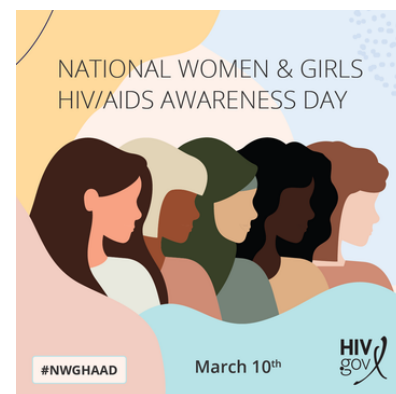
## WOMEN AND GIRLS HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is observed annually on March 10th.

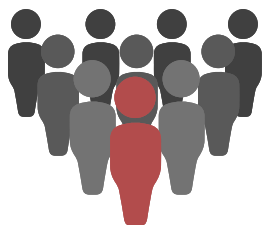
First observed in 2005, the National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NWGHAAD) is dedicated to raising awareness about the impact of HIV on women and girls.

This year's theme "Hope, Health, and Healing: Overcoming Barriers to HIV/AIDS Treatment for Women and Girls" focuses on the prevention of new HIV infections in women, improving HIV-related health outcomes of women living with HIV, and reducing gender-based HIV-related disparities.

Working together is essential in ending the HIV epidemic and improving the quality of care for women living with HIV.



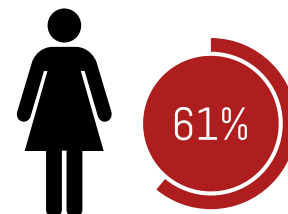
## FACTS ABOUT WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH HIV/AIDS



There are more than 1.2 million people living with HIV in the U.S. with 22% being women.



In 2022, women accounted for about 1 in 5 (19%) of new HIV diagnoses in the U.S.



In 2016, 61% of young people (ages 15-24) living with HIV were adolescent girls and young women.

# COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Questions answered by Dwight Rackley, NP-C: Ryan White Adherence and Nurse Manager*

## **What is ART (antiretroviral therapy) and how does it work?**

ART refers to the medications used to treat HIV/AIDS. ART usually consists of 2 or 3 medications (or more sometimes) to help get your HIV undetectable. ART works by preventing the virus from making copies of itself and infecting CD4 cells (part of your immune system). By keeping the virus undetectable, it will help protect the immune system from being damaged by the virus.

## **Can I still transmit HIV if I'm on treatment?**

Research studies have shown that if your viral load (the lab test used to see if you're HIV is controlled) is undetectable, you cannot transmit the virus. Your medical provider will be able to tell you if you're undetectable which indicates you are untransmittable (usually less than 50 copies).

## **What should I do if I miss a dose of my HIV medication?**

Missing multiple doses of your HIV medicines can reduce their effectiveness and increase the possibility of developing drug resistance. If you get resistant to one of more of the medications (ART), they may not work anymore. If you realize you have missed a dose, take the medication as soon as you can, then take the next dose at your usual scheduled time. If you find you are frequently missing doses of your HIV medications, talk to your HIV provider or Case Manager about ways to help you remember to take the medications at the same time every day, or to figure out a better regimen suited for you. Getting pill boxes or setting reminders might help.

***Do you have a question you'd like answered by a provider  
or a RW Case Manager?***

Send questions to Zaza Willis ([briana.willis@vcuhealth.org](mailto:briana.willis@vcuhealth.org))

# **UPCOMING CONFERENCES, AWARENESS DAYS AND EVENTS**

**National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day - March 10**

**National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day - March 20**

**Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness and Empowerment Conference - March 21st, 2025**

Sistas Over Stigma, BU Inc and the VCU Ryan White Program are proud to host a Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness and Empowerment Conference at the Minority Health Consortium (206 E. Clay Street #B Richmond, VA 23219). Register by visiting: [tinyurl.com/womenandgirls2025](https://tinyurl.com/womenandgirls2025)

**VCU Ryan White Program at the RVA Community Health Fair - April 5th**

Come out for a free community health fair at Diversity Richmond from 10am until 4pm. This event will offer resources related to cancer screenings, domestic violence, mental health, HIV/AIDS, blood pressure checks and much more.

**Long Term Survivors - June 5th** - Honored at the VCU RW Program on May 23rd (additional information to come)

**National HIV Testing Day - June 27th**

**For Us By US (For Positive By Positive) - October 24th - 26th, 2025**

OASIS Florida is proud to present their 27th Positive Living Conference at the Island Resort on Okaloosa Island! Registration spots are filled on a first come, first serve basis. Application deadline is October 3rd, 2025.

## **WANT TO STAY INFORMED?**

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**Get reminders for CAB events, CAB meetings and more!**

