

The impacts of increasing access to PrEP services in Pennsylvania: How changing dispensing rules might help

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When used as directed, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) lowers the risk of contracting the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Improving access to PrEP is a successful strategy for reducing HIV exposure among at-risk populations, including queer-identifying people, black and transgender women, and drug users. However, only a quarter of the 1.2 million people recommended for PrEP in Pennsylvania have a prescription. In Pennsylvania, only pharmacists in conjunction with a physician can provide PrEP, so allowing pharmacists to prescribe the drug alone would drastically increase access.

The results show that enabling pharmacists to provide PrEP alone would improve access in 27 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. Most pharmacies within a sub-30-minute drive are in Allegheny and Philadelphia counties. Drive times in more rural parts of the state remain over 30 minutes. For people in these counties, a lack of any pharmacy is a key issue.

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