

# ACT UP

AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power

June 6, 1989

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACT UP NEW YORK UNVEILS  
NEW PROPOSAL FOR AIDS DRUG TESTING

ACT UP NEW YORK, the AIDS activist organization, will unveil a twelve-point agenda this afternoon which calls for government research of drugs already found effective in community clinical trials. Charging the United States government and the Food and Drug Administration with inefficiency and negligence in seeking out promising AIDS treatments, ACT UP has created this agenda. The text calls for a fairer approach to drug trials, the inclusion of a wider cross-section of the AIDS community in these trials, and more effective steps by the medical community to end the AIDS epidemic. Please join us at 3 p.m. today, June 6 for this crucial presentation.



opportunistic infections, as well as antiretroviral drugs.

The paper goes on to propose new models for clinical trials, including suggestions for speeding Phase I safety trials, pilot efficacy trials, new treatment protocols, and postmarketing surveillance. It then sets priorities for clinical research into several dozen specific AIDS drugs, and includes special sections on "Five Drugs We Need Now" and "Seven Treatments We Want Tested Faster." The final section, on AIDS drug development disasters, lists nine drugs whose development has been delayed, mismanaged, neglected, or prevented.

The paper concludes by recommending that current experimental drugs for AIDS and related conditions--many of them released or made available through pressure by AIDS activists--be tested in trials such as those conducted by San Francisco's County Community Consortium and New York City's Community Research Initiative. It states:

*AIDS advocates have identified the systematic problems afflicting the scientific and regulatory body politic. The point is to solve them. As citizens of this country, we have the right to demand that our government deploy its resources to save the most lives right now. Those with the power to redirect our nation's AIDS research effort must listen to and work with us. We will not rest until they do so.*

Copies of the paper are available in the Conference's media center and from ACT UP/New York, which is part of a coalition of activists staffing the AIDS Activism Center in Montréal to provide information on any further actions that may take place. TELEPHONE: 514-849-3937.

ACT UP/New York was formed in March 1987 and has 3000 members; it has led and participated in demonstrations on Wall Street, at New York's City Hall, and at the U.S. Food & Drug Administration. There are more than 50 ACT UP chapters in the U.S. and one in London.



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## AIDS ACTIVISTS ANNOUNCE U.S. TREATMENT RESEARCH AGENDA AT FIFTH INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE

Montréal, June 5--For the first time, AIDS activists have created a comprehensive AIDS treatment research agenda to address the failings of the U.S. government in research, treatment, and development of drugs to combat the AIDS epidemic. Thousands of copies of the paper will be distributed to delegates and attendees at the Fifth International Conference on AIDS.

"There is a vacuum at the heart of the U.S. research and regulatory effort," said Mark Harrington of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power), New York City. "The U.S. is ignoring the opportunistic infections that afflict people with AIDS and HIV, while focusing too much effort on expensive and often toxic antivirals" to attack HIV, the virus believed to lead to AIDS.

Although the U.S. is the epicenter of the worldwide AIDS crisis, he said, its government AIDS program, led by Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases, has failed to provide new treatments for AIDS. Despite three years' effort and expenditures of \$500 million, no new AIDS drugs have emerged from the program. The Treatment Research Agenda announced today represents the response by AIDS activists to that failure.

"Dr. Fauci likes to say the pipeline is full of AIDS drugs," Harrington said. "The pipeline is full: it is utterly clogged with AZT. More than 80 percent of people in federal AIDS trials are on AZT, which has been approved for two years. We need new, cheap, non-toxic AIDS drugs, and where the U.S. government cannot take action, AIDS activists will."

The paper, "A National AIDS Treatment Research Agenda," opens with 12 principles for a new AIDS drug testing system. These include demands that people with AIDS, HIV, and their advocates must participate in the design and execution of comprehensive, coordinated, and compassionate development strategies for AIDS drugs of all kinds--especially those that treat or prevent

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## COMMUNITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE

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### COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS REVOLUTIONIZING AIDS RESEARCH

The AIDS crisis has spawned a grass-roots revolution in the way research is conducted in this country. People with AIDS and their personal physicians have banded together to form community-based research organizations like New York's **COMMUNITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE** and the number of such groups is quickly growing. Their impact on progress toward potential interventions against AIDS is already being felt.

Last week, for the first time in history, community-generated research data was used exclusively by the FDA in its decision to recommend approval of aerosol pentamidine as prophylaxis for the number one killer of people with AIDS. New York's **CRI** alone is currently enrolling or conducting 11 studies. The quick access to large numbers of people with AIDS anxious to participate in research through their personal physicians has led to the success so far, which has earned the endorsement of the Presidential Commission on AIDS, AmFAR, Congress, and the National Institute of Health, which has developed a program to support community-based research efforts.

Speaking for **CRI** at the Vth International Conference will be Thomas Hannan, Administrator, on Tuesday, June 6th at 11 - 12:30, Section H. The Chair of the Institutional Review Board, Prof. Vanessa Merton will also make an oral presentation. She will discuss the unique mission of **CRI's** IRB in designing clinical studies to include the perspective of people with AIDS.

A general booth about **CRI** (BOOTH 901) and poster sessions will be available to the press throughout the Conference.

A national conference, sponsored by AmFAR, about **COMMUNITY RESEARCH INITIATIVES** is scheduled for July 7th through 9th in NYC.

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