Cuba Has AIDS Epidemic Under Control, Awaits ’Test and Treat’

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Cuba has had great success in controlling its AIDS epidemic,but the island nation is still struggling to transition its patients into care,The New York Times reports. Though Cuba is known for sex tourism and it has oneof the most genetically diverse epidemics outside Africa (with 21 different HIVstrains, compared with one strain in the United States), the island has one ofthe world’s smallest epidemics, with an infection rate of 0.1 percent (sixtimes less than the U.S. rate). Cuba has been able to contain the virus throughfree universal basic health care, a high rate of HIV testing, a rigorous freecondom program and mandatory sex education. With such conditions, experts said,Cuba would be an ideal place to implement the new “test and treat” concept,which theoretically could significantly reduce HIV rates by placingHIV-positive people on meds (the meds also make people less infectious bylowering their viral loads). However, only about half the 11,000 Cubans livingwith HIV are on treatment, and the island is struggling to find funds for treatment.

To read the Times article, click here.

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