

Nation's Capital Sees 'Remarkable' Drop in New HIV Cases

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By most measures, Washington, DC, is making major progress in its fight against HIV, according to new data released by the city and reported in the [Washington Post](#). From 2012 to 2013, the latest date available, newly diagnosed cases per year dropped from 678 to 553.

This represents a 40 percent decline from 2009, which saw 916 new cases. In 2009, officials had claimed the city had rates that were “higher than West Africa.”

HIV-related deaths in 2013 decreased by 44 percent from the previous years, and no children were born with the virus. What's more, new HIV rates in 2013 declined among whites, Latinos and African Americans. Despite this good news, the city still has a high prevalence of HIV: 2.5 percent of the population was HIV positive as of December 2013. This translates to 16,423 residents, an increase from 16,044 in 2012.

Mayor Muriel E. Bowser presented the new data at Whitman-Walker Health, a nonprofit that caters to DC's LGBT and HIV communities. The mayor, according to the newspaper, also announced a series of goals for the city to achieve by 2020: “for 90 percent of residents with HIV to know their status; for 90 percent of those infected to be in treatment; for 90 percent of those infected to achieve viral load suppression; and for the District to see a 50 percent decrease in new cases.”

“The precipitous drop in new HIV cases in recent years has been nothing short of remarkable, said Don Blanchon, the executive director of Whitman-Walker Health, in a statement. “We've also made tremendous progress in keeping people who test positive engaged in care. These hard-won victories are a tribute to government and the community working hand-in-hand to address the epidemic.”