TuSalud

Seven Pilot Programs Launch to Fight HIV Stigma in the South

These interventions are part of the Southern AIDS Coalition's COMPASS partnerships.

April 26, 2018 By Trent Straube

The Southern AIDS Coalition (SAC) is partnering with six organizations to launch interventions aimed at reducing HIV stigma in the South. This is in addition to its own intervention, the LEAD (Leadership, Education, and Advocacy Development) Academy.

According to a SAC press release, the programs are the first phase of its work with Gilead Sciences' COMPASS (COMmitment to Partnership in Addressing HIV/AIDS in Southern States) Initiative, a $100 million program to fight the epidemic in the South over the next 10 years. Read more about that here.

To measure the success of the programs, SAC will work with the Center for Health Policy & Inequalities Research at Duke University. The initiatives cover a range or regions and populations in the South, "from inner-city Nashville to suburban Florida to Alabama's rural Black Belt," according to the press release.

The six groups SAC is partnering with for this phase of COMPASS are:

- Basic NWFL in Panama City, Florida
- Rural Women's Health Project in Gainesville, Florida
- Street Works in Nashville, Tennessee
- Central Alabama AIDS Resource and Advocacy Center in Wetumpka, Alabama
- Medical Advocacy and Outreach of Alabama in Montgomery, Alabama

- Thrive Alabama in Huntsville, Alabama

“Addressing stigma in all its forms—from our lawmakers, our providers, our communities, and even within ourselves—is essential to improving the health of people living with HIV and, ultimately, ending the HIV epidemic in the South,” said Nic Carlisle, SAC executive director, in the press release. “We look forward to working with these organizations on the ground to continue assisting those most impacted by HIV and AIDS.”

In related news, SAC announced that Venita Ray is its new deputy director. In her new post, she’ll manage the group’s work with the COMPASS initiative.

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