

Questions for Presidential Candidates

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Introduce your questions with the context provided for each topic and ask as many as you can. Share your experience with us by tweeting @idsainfo, @hivma and @pidsociety or emailing advocacy@idsociety.org.

- **Antibiotic resistance** is swiftly diminishing our ability to fight once easily treatable infections while the antibiotic pipeline has collapsed. Resistant infections kill up to 162,000 people in the U.S. annually, with the prediction of 10 million people dying globally by 2050 unless change occurs. Medical advances that include transplantation and cancer therapy are threatened by antibiotic resistance.
 - What commitments can you make to address this threat to promote appropriate antibiotic use and invest in the research and development of new antibiotics?
 - Will you commit to new investments in antibiotic R&D, new policies to establish antibiotic stewardship in all health care facilities, and new resources for surveillance and prevention?

- **Fewer physicians now enter the fields of ID and HIV**, in part due to high medical school debt coupled with low compensation relative to other specialties. A U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study predicted a shortfall in HIV physicians beginning this year.
 - What will you do to ensure we have the **ID/HIV workforce** needed to respond to outbreaks, prevent and treat life-threatening infections and drive innovation?
 - Will you commit to re-evaluating and recalibrating reimbursement for cognitive care services and advancing new payment models to ensure ID and HIV physicians are fairly compensated?

- **We have the prevention and treatment tools in-hand to end HIV as an epidemic in the U.S.** and yet new HIV infections are not diminishing, and the U.S. ranks last among high-income countries in rates of viral suppression among people living with HIV. Hepatitis C virus can now be cured, but in the U.S. new hepatitis C cases increased 3.5-fold from 2010 to 2016 largely due to the opioid epidemic, and barriers to care remain high.
 - Will you commit to ending HIV as an epidemic in the U.S.?
 - Will you commit to eliminating the hepatitis C virus in the U.S.?
 - How will you expand access to HIV prevention for the populations at highest risk including young gay men of color and transgender individuals?
 - How will you decrease the cost of HIV treatment and reduce barriers to hepatitis C treatment?
 - What actions will you take to reduce stigma and discrimination as barriers to preventing and treating communicable diseases, including HIV and hepatitis C?

- **The opioid epidemic** is driving significant increases across the U.S. in viral hepatitis, HIV, endocarditis, which is an infection of the heart valve, as well as other serious and life-threatening infections.
 - What will you do to address infectious diseases associated with injection drug use?

- Will you support the full spectrum of effective harm reduction strategies including expanding syringe services programs and allowing safe injection sites where approved by the local jurisdiction?
 - Will you commit to sustaining funding to track and respond to infections linked to injection drug use?
 - How would you integrate substance use disorder treatment and infectious diseases prevention and treatment to reduce deaths due to drug use and to improve health outcomes?
- **Vaccines** are among our most effective public health tools, yet vaccine hesitancy due to misinformation and healthcare barriers has fueled the measles resurgence and limits prevention of serious illnesses that include influenza, shingles, pertussis, and hepatitis A and B.
- What will you do to increase vaccination for children and adults?
 - What is your plan to combat vaccine hesitancy and misinformation?
 - Will you commit to Medicare coverage for all CDC recommended vaccines for people age 65 and over?
 - How do you plan to increase vaccination rates across the globe?
- **Sexually transmitted infections** are skyrocketing, in part due to a weakening public health system and the opioid epidemic. This includes chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis, including infants born with syphilis, where cases more than doubled from 2013 to 2017.
- How will you address this growing epidemic?
 - How will you ensure increased and stable funding to support a robust public health workforce and infrastructure throughout the country?
 - How will you reduce barriers to STD screening and treatment including the high cost of laboratory testing and of Penicillin benzathine, which is used to treat syphilis?
- **Outbreaks of emerging and reemerging infectious diseases across the globe**, including the current COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China, spur community destabilization and present threats of global spread.
- How do you plan to prepare for and respond to global outbreaks that threaten U.S. security?
- **The U.S.-led progress in the global response to HIV, tuberculosis and malaria** is at risk of stalling. Despite being preventable and curable, tuberculosis is the leading infectious disease killer globally, is facilitated by HIV and infects 16 million people worldwide.
- Please describe your vision the U.S. role in global HIV, TB and malaria efforts.
 - Will you commit to increasing U.S. funding for global health programs?