

Portland's World AIDS Response

continued ▲ from Front

The Mutare clinic is a major tool in fighting HIV and other healthcare concerns in a region of Africa severely impacted by the world AIDS epidemic. The clinic helps educate the Zimbabwe people in family planning, HIV/AIDS prevention and child care.

Worldwide, 39 million people are estimated to be living with HIV, while 5 million were estimated to be infected with AIDS in 2004,

resulting in 3.1 million deaths.

In Zimbabwe, about 1 in 4 adults are infected with HIV and about 2,500 people die each week of AIDS. There are nearly one million AIDS orphans in the country, located adjacent to South Africa.

In comparison, 930,000 cases of AIDS were diagnosed in the United States through 2003 resulting in 524,060 deaths.

The world AIDS epidemic is an on-going battle for people all across the nations of the world.

New Trends in AIDS/HIV World Epidemic

Disease expands, but prevention also pays off

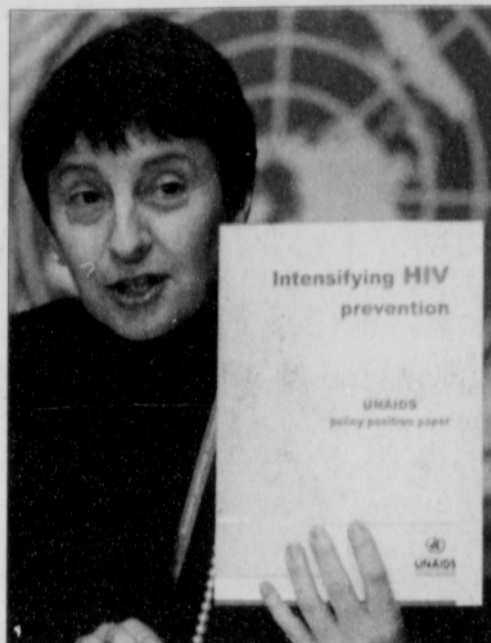
(AP) — The global HIV epidemic continues to expand, with more than 40 million people now estimated to have the AIDS virus, but in some countries prevention efforts are finally starting to pay off, the United Nations says.

AIDS has killed more than 25 million people since it was first recognized in 1981, making it one of the most destructive epidemics in history. An estimated 3.1 million people died from the virus last year and another 4.9 million people became infected, according to a U.N. update published Monday.

The deaths and new infection estimates were in line with those from last year, when the total number of people living with the virus was estimated at 39.4 million.

However, for the first time there is solid evidence that increased efforts to combat the disease over the last five years have led to fewer new infections in some places, said UNAIDS chief Peter Piot.

Previously improvements had been seen in places such as Senegal, Uganda and



Canada's Deborah Landey, deputy executive director of the United Nations program on HIV/AIDS holds a copy of a new report on the AIDS epidemic. (AP photo)

Thailand, but those were rare exceptions. "Now we have Kenya, several of the Caribbean countries and Zimbabwe with a decline," Piot said, adding that Zimbabwe is the first place in Southern Africa, the hardest-hit area, to show improvement.

These are all countries that have invested heavily in safe-sex campaigns and other prevention programs, with the result that prevalence of HIV among the young has declined.

The most dramatic drops in prevalence have been among pregnant women in urban Kenya, where in some areas the proportion of pregnant women infected plummeted from approximately 28 percent in 1999 to 9 percent in 2003.

In the Caribbean, declines are evident in Barbados, the Bahamas and Bermuda, Piot said.

In Zimbabwe HIV prevalence among pregnant women in the capital Harare has decreased from 35 percent in 1999 to 21 percent in 2004.

About 1 million HIV patients in the developing world now are on treatment. While that is just a small fraction of the people needing treatment, the availability of drugs has meant that people see a point to getting tested for the virus, which is crucial for prevention efforts. About 300,000 deaths were avoided last year because of treatment, the report said.

Intravenous drug use and commercial sex are fueling the epidemic in Asia, where few countries are doing enough to inform people about the danger of such behavior, the report warned.

Worldwide, less than one in five people at risk of becoming infected with HIV has access to basic prevention services. Of people living with HIV only one in 10 has been tested and knows that he or she is infected.

Holiday Program
 Saturday, December 3, 2005
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Music by Highland Temple Choir and Soloist Calvin Allmon
 Pastor Steven Holt speaking
 Reception Follows

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Payday Loans Cost Millions

continued ▲ from Front

Advance America, a publicly traded company on the New York Stock Exchange and based in South Carolina, has 9 stores in the Portland area. Other lenders go by the names Ace Cash, Any Day Payday, Cash Connection and Cash. Most of the storefronts also serve as Western Union check cashing outlets.

OSPIRG found that the payday lenders have lines of credit financed by the country's major banking institutions, but are not owned by the major banks.

The new report, Preying on Portlanders, also provides an overview of the typical structure of a payday loan; a story of a Portland family's experience with the pay-

day lending industry; a look at the payday lending industry and its recent rapid growth; a general look at the regulatory scheme in the state of Oregon, and provides guidance for policymakers who may seek to protect consumers.

"Payday lenders have preyed on our fellow citizens long enough," said Callahan. "It's time for policymakers and regulators to protect consumers by reining in the predatory practices of payday lenders."

Proposals to cap the costs of payday loans and offer reasonable payment plans failed in the last session of the Oregon Legislature.


The Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group is a non-profit organization focused on research and education.

Medicare Prescription Forum Scheduled

A public forum to address concerns about Medicare Part D, the new prescription drug coverage, will be held Wednesday, Nov. 30 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Multnomah Building Boardroom, 501 S.E. Hawthorne.

The main focus of the session is "dual eligibility" for people who are covered by both Medicare or Medicaid and the Oregon Health Plan.


The program is sponsored by the Multnomah County Disability Services Advisory Council, a citizen's advisory group. For more information call Juliet at 503-232-7411.




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