



Trump White House Terminates Hundreds of Research Grants, Many on HIV and Minorities

“This feels like a genocide in the making,” said an HIV expert. The cuts also affect cancer and COVID-19 research and target women and LGBTQ, Latino and Black Americans.

March 26, 2025 By [Trent Straube](#)

The Trump administration pulled federal funding for over 60 research grants related to [HIV](#) and [HIV prevention](#), many of which also focused on minorities, such as [LGBTQ](#), [Latino](#) and [Black Americans](#), populations disproportionately affected by the HIV epidemic, [reports CNN](#).

The elimination of nearly \$34 million in HIV-related grants halts studies at 22 universities, [according to news site NOTUS](#). This also means that ongoing clinical trials and patient care are disrupted if not abruptly ended.

HIV researchers are not the only scientists to lose funding under the current administration. The Department of Health and Human Resources, which is now overseen by [Robert F. Kennedy Jr.](#), [published a database of over 260 federal research grants](#) that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has terminated (the NIH is part of the health department).

Most grants that were eliminated focused on diversity, health equity and minorities—topics that Trump and the MAGA base have openly criticized. In fact, the government is scrubbing language from its websites that refers to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs.

A glance at the titles of some of the eliminated grants is illuminating:

- Preventing Drug Abuse Among Sexual-Minority Youth;
- Building Mobile HIV Prevention and Mental Health Support in Low-Resource Settings;
- Testing Effective Methods to Recruit Sexual and Gender Minority Cancer Patients for Cancer

Studies;

- Public Drinking Water Contaminants and Infant Health: Advancing Environmental Justice;
- PrEP [pre-exposure prophylaxis to prevent HIV] at University of Georgia;
- Social and Structural Violence and HIV Care Continuum Outcomes: Developing a Trauma-Informed HIV Care Intervention Among WLWH [women living with HIV];
- Uptake, Safety and Effectiveness of COVID-19 Vaccines During Pregnancy;
- Multilevel Racism & Discrimination and PrEP Outcomes Among Black SMM [Sexual Minority Men] in the Southeastern U.S.;
- Smoking and Cancer-Related Health Disparities among Sexual and Gender Minority Adults;
- MyPEEPS Mobile Plus: A Multi-Level HIV Prevention Intervention for Young MSM [Men Who Have Sex With Men].

“People will die based on these decisions that have been coming through these past few weeks,” University of Chicago’s Aniruddha Hazra, MD, director of STI Services for Chicago Center of HIV Elimination, told CNN. “I don’t say that to be dramatic. I say that being a realist, that this will lead to a loss of American life, and I don’t know if the greater public fully understands that, at least not yet,” Hazra said. “This feels like a genocide in the making, and it’s not overstating it.”

The funding cuts are a direct result of the presidential memo “Radical Transparency About Wasteful Spending,” which claims the government spends too much on programs that don’t promote the interests of the American people.

Researchers counter that in the long run their work is not wasteful. For example, one of the terminated projects at Vanderbilt University had been following the health of 1,200 LGBTQ people 50 and older. It has already yielded dozens of published papers, [reports The Associated Press](#), and the project helped train doctors to provide better care, prevention and cancer screenings to LGBTQ people.

As Tara McKay, PhD, who oversees Vanderbilt's LGBTQ+ Policy Lab, tells the AP: "That saves us a lot of money in health care—and saves lives."

Lisa Bowleg, PhD, MA, a professor of applied social psychology in George Washington University's Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences, told CNN that the NIH pulled funding for her research because she explored intersectional discrimination and social structures and their link to Black men's risk for substance abuse and mental health issues. Her research also included HIV.

"It is disturbing that more than four decades into the HIV epidemic, Black gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (and also Black heterosexual women, by the way) continue to have disproportionately higher HIV incidence and prevalence compared with white and other racial/ethnic groups in the U.S.," Bowleg wrote in an email to CNN. "Terminating the research does not result in a termination of the problem; it simply exacerbates it."

In related and recent news items on federal health funding cuts, see

- ["Current, Former CDC Staff Warn Against Slashing Support to Local Public Health Departments,"](#)
- ["Amid Plummeting Diversity at Medical Schools, a Warning of DEI Crackdown's 'Chilling Effect,'"](#)
- ["Eight Countries Could Soon Run Out of HIV Meds Due to U.S. Funding Cuts, Says WHO"](#) and
- ["CDC's Division of HIV Prevention Could Face Reorganization or Elimination."](#)