

Writers' Memo: "Targeted prevention and control strategies for MSM and IDU populations can reduce stigma and global burden of HIV"

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This paper started as an assignment for an infectious disease-based class called Peoples and Plagues. HIV was one of the modules that we learned about during this class and ultimately became the topic of our final paper due to my prior interest in the disease. Lead author Ashlyn Ludovici drove this project after an initial exposure to HIV as a global problem started in 2019, while studying abroad in Athens, Greece. While there, she noticed a lot of used needles and was questioning where they all came from. Learning that there was an Athens-based HIV outbreak among Intravenous Drug Users, and that the needles on the street helped stop the spread of HIV for this population. While writing my paper, we wanted to focus on other subpopulations that have faced unfair and very harmful stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS. This led us to researching the history of HIV and the discovery of the significant burden that was placed upon the Men Who Have SEX with Men Population. While the intended audience of this paper started off as just fellow classmates, it has grown to include anyone with an interest in HIV and global health. Our goal for this paper is to spread awareness of HIV and the significant impact it has had on men who have sex with men and intravenous drug users.