

On the 28th annual World AIDS Day, we reflect on the great accomplishments we have made and the work we still have before us. When God's Love We Deliver opened our doors in 1985, the diagnosis of HIV/AIDS was widely feared and often times considered a death sentence for those infected. Today, with an abundance of medical advances and social supports, the community members we serve who are living with HIV are living longer and healthier lives. This would not be possible without dedicated researchers, advocates, providers and public champions.

The Progress We Have Made

The latest reports indicate that HIV numbers are on the decline. According to a report by the World Health Organization, the number of HIV-related deaths are the lowest they have been in two decades. New infections are at a 25-year low. In addition, the list of countries that are on track to eliminate new HIV infections in children continues to grow.

What has contributed to the reduction in AIDS-related deaths and new infections is, in part, the recognition of the social circumstances that contribute to the epidemic. Hardships such as a lack of stable housing, unemployment, and food insecurity can both put a person at risk for infection and can cause serious complications for those already infected. In a [study](#) published in AIDS Care, the provision of meals was shown to be important in helping people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH) adhere to their treatment while also improving health outcomes.

In New York City, with the help of 23 million additional dollars in funding to increase HIV prevention, health care and other support services, the number of new HIV diagnosis has hit a historic low. In 2015, [fewer than 2,500 NYC residents were newly diagnosed which is less than half of the number of new diagnoses in 2001](#). The lesson we have learned is that great progress can be made with leadership, commitment and funding to achieve our goals.

For over 30 years, God's Love We Deliver has provided our clients living with HIV/AIDS individually tailored home-delivered meals. Our organization started with one woman bringing one meal to one man dying from AIDS. Today, we serve approximately 300,000 nutritious meals to PLWH each year. We believe passionately that Food is Medicine and Food is Love.

And we know that our services have a significant impact on PLWH. Research in NYC, done with the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, demonstrates that when PLWH are nourished, their health outcomes improve, their well-being improves and their reliance on emergency rooms and hospitals goes down. And we are not alone. [According to UNAIDS and the World Health Organization](#), people who have access to food and nutrition services have better health outcomes than those who are malnourished or undernourished. Food and nutrition services increase adherence and response to antiretroviral therapy, helping people achieve viral suppression. Unfortunately though, even with research demonstrating the effectiveness of food and nutrition services, too many PLWH remain food insecure.

World AIDS Day

Today, we will gather to remember those we have lost to HIV/AIDS, and to support those who are living with HIV/AIDS. Since our founding, God's Love We Deliver has been committed to providing services and great care to the community of people infected and affected by HIV. We hope you will join us by taking a moment in your day to honor those affected by HIV, past and present, and to recommit to the fight to end AIDS. Now, more than ever, as we focus on ending the epidemic, it is important that we remind our clients and the community that God's Love will always be here to nourish those living with HIV, and to bring them, as we always have, respect, dignity, hope, meals and love.

