



C O M M U N I T Y R E S E A R C H I N I T I A T I V E
of New England

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HARVARD PILGRIM HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION AWARDS GRANT TO COMMUNITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT ACCESS TO NEW HIV MEDICATIONS

BOSTON, January 28, 2008 – **Community Research Initiative of New England (CRI)** is pleased to announce that they have received a \$10,000 grant from the **Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation**. The funds will help support CRI's expanded access programs, ensuring access to new HIV drugs for those who need them.

Expanded access programs make new drugs quickly available to a person whose health is failing and who is at significant risk because they have no other treatment options. These drugs have been clinically tested for safety and efficacy but are awaiting final approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

"CRI is committed to providing the best medications available to those living with HIV. Programs like expanded access are extremely effective in helping HIV-positive people throughout Massachusetts. When current treatment regimens fail, CRI's expanded access programs make new medications accessible to these individuals as soon as possible," according to **Dr. Cal Cohen, CRI's Director of Research**.

Karen Voci, Executive Director of the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation said, "Harvard Pilgrim is thrilled to provide this grant to CRI for expansion of its HIV treatment programs. This is the final installment of funds that became available years ago through the generosity of one of our members who made a donation to Harvard Pilgrim in honor of a family member." Voci went on to say that "CRI does the best job of meeting the needs of people living with HIV and AIDS."

Expanded access programs are important components of CRI's mission to meet the needs of underserved communities. They provide assistance to people who are usually too ill to work or who may have trouble accessing state of the art medical treatment. CRI has offices in Boston and Springfield, both of which have high HIV prevalence rates within the state.

Julie Marston, CRI's Executive Director, notes that "These programs are usually unfunded and it is only with the outside support of donors like the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation that CRI can continue to offer new medications through expanded access trials to the people who need them most

– the ones who can't wait six months or a year for these crucial drugs to be on the shelves of their local pharmacies.”

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Community Research Initiative (CRI) is an independent, nonprofit community-based organization dedicated to leading the way in HIV/AIDS clinical research, ensuring access to life-saving medications and providing financial assistance for approved drug treatments and health insurance coverage for those in need. For over 18 years, CRI has participated in some of the most promising HIV/AIDS medication research being conducted anywhere in the world. Through its continued outreach efforts, CRI provides the latest treatment information to people living with HIV/AIDS including women, people of color and others who have been traditionally underserved. Through its comprehensive management of the Massachusetts HIV Drug Assistance Program (HDAP), CRI provides access to medications and health insurance coverage to over 4,600 of the state's most needy individuals.