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Institute of Medicine's (IOM) AIDS Research Recommendations

In a 360-page study mandated by Congress, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) makes 46 specific recommendations describing how NIDA and two other Federal agencies can broaden the scope of their AIDS-related behavior. In the 1994 report, *AIDS and Behavior: An Integrated Approach*, the IOM commends NIDA on its record of research- multidisciplinary studies using various innovative combinations of pharmacologic, behavioral, and other approaches to improve the effectiveness of addiction treatment and outreach strategies for out-of-treatment individuals. IOM recommended that the three Institutes- NIDA, the National Institute of Mental Health, and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism- intensify and coordinate their research into behaviors that contribute to the spread of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

The IOM, with a membership of distinguished physicians and medical researchers, is a branch of the National Academy of Sciences, which advises Congress on health policy issues. Among the IOM's AIDS research recommendations are the following:

- Collaborate to sponsor and conduct a nationwide survey of the prevalence of HIV infection and the other factors associated with its spread.
- Conduct studies of the social, psychological, and biological factors that affect HIV risk-taking behavior.
- Continue to develop studies of high-risk settings for drug abuse, such as shooting galleries and crack houses, which may contribute to the spread of HIV and AIDS, and help implement prevention efforts in those settings.
- Expand basic research into the biology of sexuality as it relates to high-risk sexual behaviors and identify how the central nervous system controls sexual behavior.
- Support research into changes in AIDS risk behaviors among seriously mentally ill men and women with other cognitive impairments, including individuals not in psychiatric treatment.

- Continue supporting basic and applied research into the maintenance of behavior change, including patients undergoing treatment for alcohol and drug abuse from relapsing.
- Expand basic research into the biology of substance abuse, including the function of dopamine systems, mechanisms and components of addiction-euphoria, tolerance, sensitization, and withdrawal-and receptors in drug addiction and abuse.
- Design research to estimate the number of HIV infections averted by prevention efforts and the resulting health care costs.
- Develop new funding programs and grant review procedures to encourage innovative, collaborative interdisciplinary research proposals.
- Develop new initiatives to support research on the role of social, cultural, and structural factors in transmission, prevention, and intervention.
- Expand studies in the following behavioral and social science research areas: behavioral epidemic, cognitive science, cultural and ethnographic projects, intervention research, mental health research, aspects of technological interventions, organizational studies, cost-effectiveness research, and evaluation.

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