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**ADAP Crisis Task Force Reaches Agreement with
ViiV Healthcare to Assist Struggling ADAPs;
*Calls for Emergency Federal Funding***

June 2, 2010, Washington, DC – As part of ongoing efforts by the ADAP Crisis Task Force (ACTF) and the pharmaceutical industry to address the unprecedented need for access to antiretroviral medicines through AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAP), the ACTF announced that it has reached an agreement with ViiV Healthcare. The agreement will extend additional cost savings to ADAPs that provide access to medications for HIV positive individuals enrolled in their programs. Further discounts on the most widely used HIV medicines produced by ViiV Healthcare will be provided to the country's ADAPs, beyond existing ones mandated by health reform and included in previous agreements with the ACTF.

"ViiV Healthcare recognizes that now, more than ever, swift action must be taken to stem the dramatic and increasing gap that exists with patients' access to HIV medicines through ADAPs. We are committed to doing all that we can to ensure that the needs of HIV patients are met," said Bill Collier, Head of North America, ViiV Healthcare.

The agreement with ViiV Healthcare comes at a time when the combination of the nation's current economic situation, increased HIV testing efforts and state budget cuts has resulted in an unprecedented acceleration in the number of ADAP enrollees, resulting in severe cost containment measures in many ADAPs. As of May 20, there were 1,143 individuals in ten states on waiting lists for ADAP. In fact, ADAP waiting lists have increased more than ten-fold in the last year (99 individuals were on ADAP waiting lists in May 2009). In addition to waiting lists, 16 states have implemented other access restrictions such as lowering financial eligibility criteria, removing drugs from their formularies and limiting expenditures.

"We appreciate ViiV's efforts and understand that industry alone cannot close the entire gap. Additional state and federal funding is required to avoid a growing public health crisis," stated Jennifer Brown, Director of the

Bureau of Epidemiology at the Utah Department of Health and spokesperson for the ACTF.

The National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) routinely monitors the status of ADAP programs. While the program will yield savings from agreements with pharmaceutical partners, the ongoing state budget crises coupled with the increased numbers of clients seeking ADAP services will continue to require a significant increase in funding. NASTAD estimates the program is in need of an additional \$126 million in FY2010 emergency federal funding as well as critical state funding. Increased funds from the federal and state governments in addition to price freezes and increased discounts and rebates from companies are all necessary to sustain ADAPs until health reform is fully implemented in 2014.

"As ACTF, community groups, and industry have come together to address the current crisis in ADAPs, we ask that individuals concerned about issues of access to life saving medicines for persons with HIV contact their legislators to voice support for an emergency appropriation to close the funding gap for ADAPs across the country," declared Julie Scofield, NASTAD's Executive Director.

The ACTF previously reached agreements with Abbott Laboratories, Merck, Inc. and Tibotec Therapeutics. Negotiations continue with Boehringer Ingelheim, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Genentech and Gilead Sciences. "We are confident that agreements with the remaining manufacturers, similar to this one with ViiV Healthcare and those already in place with Abbott, Merck and Tibotec, can be accomplished soon," noted Dwayne Haught, Manager of the HIV Medication Program for the Texas Department of State Health Services and a member of the ACTF. "These agreements are a critical component of our nation's collective response to help meet the medication needs of nearly 200,000 HIV-positive Americans," added Haught.

The ADAP Crisis Task Force (ACTF) was formed in December 2002 by a group of state AIDS/ADAP directors concerned about the nationwide fiscal crisis facing ADAPs. The ACTF works with pharmaceutical manufacturers of antiretroviral medications to reduce drug costs and improve access to medications for clients in the nation's ADAPs. NASTAD provides logistical support for the ACTF.

Founded in 1992, NASTAD is a nonprofit national association of state and territorial health department HIV/AIDS program directors who have programmatic responsibility for administering HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis health care, prevention, education, and supportive services programs funded by state and federal governments. For more information, visit www.NASTAD.org.

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