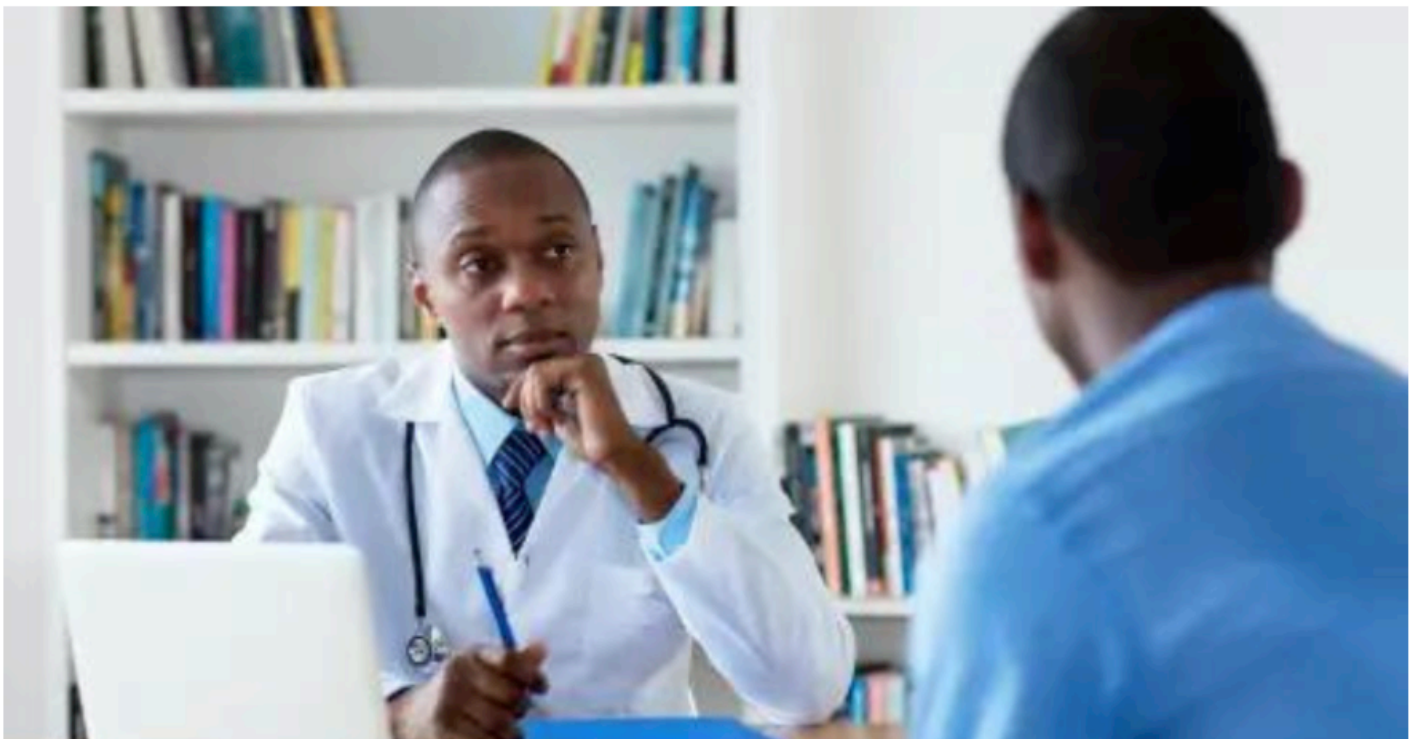


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Bridging Gaps, Changing Lives: Vivent Health and UNIFIED Merge to Revolutionize HIV Services in Detroit

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Detroit's battle against HIV/AIDS continues to rage on, and a new signal of hope emerges as two powerhouse organizations, Vivent Health and UNIFIED, join forces in a historic merger. Their mission? To transform the landscape of HIV care, social services, and prevention in a community grappling with disproportionate rates of infection and systemic barriers to healthcare access.

In Metro Detroit, the HIV diagnosis rates paint a stark picture of disparities among different racial and ethnic groups. For Black males, the rate is a staggering 7.5 times higher than that of White males. Similarly, Hispanic/Latino males face a rate four times higher than their White counterparts. The situation is even more concerning for Black females, with an alarming rate that is 16.3 times higher than that of White females. These statistics underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions and comprehensive support services to address the disproportionate burden of HIV within minority communities in the Metro Detroit area.

Despite advances in medical science, a significant portion of those living with HIV remain undiagnosed or disengaged from care, perpetuating a cycle of poor health outcomes and deepening health disparities. Enter Vivent Health and UNIFIED, catalysts for change in a city yearning for solutions. With a shared vision of equitable healthcare for all, their merger signifies a paradigm shift in the approach to HIV care and prevention. President and CEO of Vivent Health, Dr. Brandon Hill, articulates their mission succinctly: “Our integrated approach to HIV care and prevention is rooted in tackling broader inequities and removing barriers to care and services.”

At the core of Vivent Health’s model lies a commitment to holistic care, addressing medical needs and the social determinants of health. Their track record speaks volumes: an astounding 95% of patients achieve viral suppression, surpassing national and state targets. Particularly noteworthy is their success in reaching marginalized communities, with 93% of Black/African American patients achieving viral suppression, a testament to their unwavering dedication to health equity.

For UNIFIED, this merger represents a strategic alliance to bolster their grassroots efforts and enhance service delivery. Matt Browning, Chair of UNIFIED’s Board of Directors, emphasizes the urgency of their mission: “With racial inequities continuing to drive the HIV epidemic, the need to transform the way we deliver HIV care and prevention services in Detroit is clear.”

Indeed, the synergy between these two organizations heralds a new era of possibility. By leveraging Vivent Health’s expertise in integrated care and UNIFIED’s community-driven approach, they envision a future where every individual, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, has access to comprehensive HIV services. As Arvan Chan, Chair of Vivent Health’s Board of Directors, aptly puts it: “We are pleased our organizations are working together to offer integrated solutions that will deliver the best outcomes for the people in Detroit and beyond.”

But beyond the statistics and strategic plans lies a deeper narrative—a story of resilience, compassion, and collective action. It’s a story of individuals like Mary, a Detroit native living with HIV, who found solace and support in the embrace of organizations like UNIFIED. Now, with the backing of Vivent Health’s cutting-edge resources, Mary and countless others like her can dare to dream of a future free from the shadow of HIV/AIDS.

As the merger between Vivent Health and UNIFIED draws nearer, optimism pervades the air, tempered by a steely resolve to confront the challenges ahead. May 1, 2024, marks not only the beginning of a new chapter but also a testament to the power of collaboration in the face of adversity. In the heart of Detroit’s HIV epidemic emerges a source of inspiration fueled by the joint efforts of Vivent Health, UNIFIED, and the resilient spirit of the community. Together, they stand as a testament to the power of unity, demonstrating unequivocally that in the fight against HIV, no one stands alone.