



AIDS CARE AND TREATMENT

IN OUR NATION

[ryanwhiteaction.org](http://ryanwhiteaction.org)

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** What is the Ryan White CARE Act?

**A:** Since 1990, the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act has made federal funds available to metropolitan areas, states, clinics, hospitals and community-based organizations for health care costs and support services for low-income, uninsured and underinsured individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS.

**Q:** What is the Ryan White ACTION (AIDS Care and Treatment In Our Nation) Campaign?

**A:** The Ryan White ACTION Campaign is a national media campaign designed to raise awareness about the importance of the Ryan White CARE Act and why it needs to be reauthorized - or renewed -- this year and adequately funded.

**Q:** Who is involved in the Ryan White ACTION Campaign?

**A:** The coalition behind the Ryan White ACTION Campaign includes The AIDS Institute, American Academy of HIV Medicine, HIV Medicine Association and the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors. The National AIDS Minority Council will also be assisting the campaign through access to its national network of service providers. If you are interested in supporting the campaign, please contact Arlyn Riskind at 202-457-8100 or [ariskind@lipmanhearne.com](mailto:ariskind@lipmanhearne.com).

**Q:** When does the Ryan White CARE Act expire?

**A:** It was first signed into law in 1990. The Act's authorization expires every five years. The current law expires on September 30, 2005. This does not mean that programs won't continue. Congress will continue to fund the CARE Act programs regardless of authorization status.



- Q:** How many people are helped by the Ryan White CARE Act?
- A:** Approximately 577,000 people currently receive HIV/AIDS health care and antiretroviral treatment through the Ryan White CARE Act.
- Q:** How much money does the Ryan White CARE Act receive from Congress each year?
- A:** Currently, over \$2 billion per year is spent to support care, treatment and support services among those with HIV/AIDS.
- Q:** Is the same or more or less amount of money to be allocated in the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act?
- A:** There are targets of maximum funding amounts that may be included in the reauthorization bill. However, the process of funding the Ryan White CARE Act each year is a separate process, called appropriations. Each year advocates call for adequate funding increases to allow the program to meet the growing needs of low-income people with HIV/AIDS without other sources of health care coverage. For the past few years the Ryan White CARE Act has not received increased funding with the exception of minimal and inadequate increases to the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP).
- Q:** Does the coalition have a basic position on how the CARE Act should function?
- A:** There are differences among some of the groups about how the Ryan White CARE Act should be altered in the future. But there is common agreement that the CARE Act is a very important part of the care and treatment system in the United States and that it needs to be strengthened and adequately funded.
- Q:** If I work at an AIDS organization in an urban or rural area what should I know about this year's Ryan White CARE Act Reauthorization?
- A:** We suggest that people living with HIV, family members, medical providers, social service workers and agency administrators let their Members of Congress know about the importance of the CARE Act programs. We also suggest that people become familiar with the Administration's proposal for reauthorization that will guide Congressional action. This proposal and a variety of additional stakeholder positions can be found on the Resource Section of our website at [www.ryanwhiteaction.org](http://www.ryanwhiteaction.org).

**Q:** What do you consider to be the five (5) most important provisions for reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act?

**A:** 1. Medical care and access to medications is critical. Today, unlike in the past, we have drugs that can save lives and improve the quality of life. People living with HIV, no matter where they live, should have access to well-trained medical providers and access to the drugs that will keep them alive.

2. While medical care and drugs are crucial, we must also ensure the social support that people need to deal with HIV in their lives and to adhere to the drug regimens. For example, in some locations this may mean the need to ensure transportation to medical appointments.

3. Many persons living with HIV/AIDS have co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issues. For those who are in need of such services, mental health therapy and substance abuse treatment must be made available.

4. All the various programs within the Ryan White CARE Act as well as those that relate to it (Medicare, Medicaid, etc.) must be better coordinated in order to provide a true continuum of care and to reduce costs due to unnecessary duplication, paperwork and red tape.

5. Regardless of how the system may change, additional funding is needed to meet the medical, social support and housing needs of people living with HIV.

**Q:** What are the best ways someone affected by HIV can get involved and help?

**A:** Let your Congressional representatives know how important the Ryan White CARE Act is to you.

In addition, there are a number of national organizations engaged in advocacy around the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act. Here are a few with their websites:

The AIDS Institute ([theaidsinstitute.org](http://theaidsinstitute.org))

National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors ([nastad.org](http://nastad.org))

American Academy of HIV Medicine ([aahivm.org](http://aahivm.org))

HIV Medicine Association ([hivma.org](http://hivma.org))

Communities Advocating for Emergency AIDS Relief Coalition([caear.org](http://caear.org))

AIDS Alliance ([aids-alliance.org](http://aids-alliance.org))

AIDS Action ([aidsaction.org](http://aidsaction.org))

National Minority AIDS Council ([nmac.org](http://nmac.org))

National Association of People with AIDS ([napwa.org](http://napwa.org))

Title II Community AIDS National Network ([tiicann.org](http://tiicann.org))

**Q:** President Bush recently released principles from the White House guiding reauthorization. In those, he calls for a shift in Ryan White funds to areas most in need. What does this mean for both rural areas and urban areas?

**A:** There seems to be an attempt to ensure that some form of basic or core services are available to every person living with HIV, regardless of where they live. But, again, there are differences of opinion about the definition of basic or core services. More important, current funding levels need to be increased if a truly meaningful standard of care and treatment is to be accessible and available to anyone eligible for Ryan White CARE Act services.