



## **Position Paper: Support for Restoring KADAP**

### **Statement of Position**

AVOL (AIDS Volunteers, Inc.) is in favor of immediately restoring the Kentucky AIDS Drug Assistance Program (KADAP), which provides access to low-cost, life-saving HIV/AIDS drugs for those low-income individuals and families infected and affected by the disease.

### **Rationale for this Position**

HIV/AIDS is a challenging disease under the best of circumstances. HIV/AIDS affects Kentucky's most at-risk communities, families, and individuals. While HIV/AIDS is more treatable than at any point in history, treatment depends on access to the appropriate medication. A single medication, however, can cost more than \$1000/mo per person—more than the entire monthly income of many of AVOL's clients!

Moreover, men and women with HIV/AIDS who have inconsistent access to medication risk developing resistance to the very drugs that can allow them to function productively in society. Those living with HIV/AIDS who do not have the proper meds are at increased risk for acquiring opportunistic infections, AIDS-related complications, and suffering premature death.

Given the larger financial crisis facing the state, this may seem a specific and 'special interest' concern. The impact, however, is far reaching. Individuals with HIV/AIDS are mothers and fathers, family providers, valued employees, consumers, and citizens. Lack of access to medication will result in more work missed, a greater strain on social service organizations as families are forced into poverty and homelessness, a burden on medical facilities who must write off astronomically expensive HIV/AIDS hospital care to indigent and low income people, plus further disenfranchisement of those Kentuckians already at highest risk. Inasmuch as the state is feeling the challenges of the current economic climate, low-income individuals and families living with HIV/AIDS are losing jobs, struggling to make ends meet, and deciding whether to use their meager incomes to buy life-sustaining drugs or to pay rent and buy food for their families.

### **A Call to Action**

AVOL sees an urgent need for action to restore KADAP. This effective program of preventative care is in the best long-term interest of the state as well as those living with HIV/AIDS. Given the potential adverse effects and medical impact, time is of the essence. AVOL supports action now.

Approved by the AVOL Board of Directors on February 12, 2010.