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["rhall@desnews.com"](mailto:rhall@desnews.com);
Subject: Your recent HIV article not factual nor balanced
Date: Sunday, July 05, 2009 3:40:03 PM
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

TO: Reporter Clayton Norlen, Salt Lake City Deseret News
Cc: Jim Wall, President & Publisher, Joseph Cannon, Editor, Richard Hall, Managing Editor; At the Utah AIDS Foundation, Stan Penfold & Bret Hanna, Chair, Board of Trustees

RE: "[HIV rates increasing in Salt Lake County](#)" not factual nor balanced

Dear Mr. Norlen,

I am writing on behalf of our 26-member Board of Directors of surgeons, medical directors, et al, and our thousands of members to ask that in future reporting on HIV/AIDS you include facts and balance to your reporting. Had you done that, this article would never have been written because it is false.

You wrote that the HIV rate is increasing without referencing any rate increase, nor do you give the total number of HIV cases in recent years to allow a reader to make an informed opinion.

The actual facts as reported by the Utah Department of Public Health show HIV case rate declining significantly. There have been 29 HIV cases reported through May 30, 2009 which would extrapolate out to 70 for this year compared to 101 HIV cases in [\[1\]](#)

2008— with only 2 deaths from AIDS reported as of that date in Utah.

In future reporting, we would also ask that you balance your reporting by celebrating and congratulating the citizens of Utah on their great success against HIV/AIDS versus alarming, false stories of increased HIV rates and cases. Indeed, only nine states have [\[2\]](#)

fewer deaths from AIDS.

In doing such positive reporting on HIV/AIDS, you may wish to quote the Director of the NIAID, Anthony Fauci, MD, who is not only America's top HIV/AIDS researcher, but he oversees our government's \$2.9 billion HIV budget. Dr. Fauci stated in CNN, "...the scientific advancements that have been made in HIV [research] are breathtaking [with] highly effective drugs to suppress HIV to the point where what was a death sentence in the early eighties to now having patients who look and feel well, who are leading very

[\[3\]](#)

productive, very gratifying lives..."

The statement by Stan Penfold, the executive director of the Utah AIDS Foundation, that "Rates grow because there is a lack of conversation around HIV and what the risk factors are" is absolutely absurd—billions of dollars have been spent on educating the public about HIV and the media has written many thousands of stories like yours. Walk down the street and ask anyone if they've heard of HIV and if they know it is transmitted by sex and IV drug use—virtually all will respond affirmatively. The reason

[\[4\]](#)

HIV continues to be spread is because in any subset of a population at risk there will be those who prefer to not use preventive measures, be it a motorcycle helmet, a seat belt, a condom or a clean syringe. The tired alibi that infections are due to stigma is also nonsense; stigma exists, although to a much lesser degree than in years past, but stigma doesn't prevent an at risk person from protecting their partner or themselves by buying and using a condom or clean syringe.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests for positive, balanced reporting on HIV disease in Utah in the future.

Dr. Richard Darling, DDS: [Past National Public Citizen of the Year \(NASW\)](#)

President and CEO: [The FAIR Foundation](#), a national organization with thousands of members and supporters whose goal is

to reverse inequities in NIH research funding and to institute [new organ-donor policies](#) to reverse America's organ-donor crisis

Founder: [The FAIR Foundation Liver Disease & Transplant Support Group](#)

Author: [Coma Life](#), an autobiographical memoir of life "within" coma and survival over hepatitis C induced liver cancer, coma, 3

liver transplants, heart attack, diabetes & Muscular Dystrophy (Myasthenia Gravis)
Address: 78629 Bougainvillea Drive, Palm Desert, CA 92211 Ph: 760-200-2766

Our Government's Bio-Medical Research Allocations by the National Institutes of Health

| Disease | <u>2009 NIH Research \$\$</u> | Deaths Per Disease | \$\$ Per Patient Death | \$\$ Per Patient |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| COPD * | 90 Million | 126,128 | \$ 714 | \$ 7 |
| Hepatitis C | 107 Million | 12,000 | \$ 8,916 | \$ 20 |
| Cardiovascular Dis. | 2.3 Billion | 871,500 | \$ 2,714 | \$ 29 |
| Hepatitis B | 42 Million | 5,000 | \$ 8,400 | \$ 34 |
| Diabetes | 1 Billion | 74,817 | \$13,365 | \$ 39 |
| Parkinson's Dis. | 186 Million | 19,547 | \$ 9,516 | \$ 124 |
| Alzheimer's Dis. | 644 Million | 71,696 | \$ 8,928 | \$ 124 |
| Prostate Cancer | 344 Million | 27,050 | \$ 12,717 | \$ 181 |
| HIV/AIDS | 2.9 Billion | 14,016 | \$ 206,906 | \$ 2,774 |
| All Cancers Total | 5.5 Billion | 559,650 | \$ 9,888 | \$ 3,830 |
| Breast Cancer | 716 Million | 40,910 | \$ 17,501 | \$ 3,967 |
| West Nile Virus | 39 Million | 37 | \$1,054,054 | \$28,467 |

The NIH funding for 6000 Orphan (rare) diseases was reported to be \$1.2 billion until 2007. It is now reported to be only \$645 million which equals only \$107,500 for each disease's entire bio-medical research effort.

* COPD is Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

[1]

<http://health.utah.gov/cdc/hiv-surveillance/hiv%20docs/utahusa053109.pdf>

[2]

http://fairfoundation.org/states/hiv-aids_deaths_by_state.htm

[3]

http://fairfoundation.org/CNN_Fauci.wmv

[4]

The Centers for Disease Control lists the risk factors for HIV of men having sex with men, IV drug users and high-risk heterosexual sex which they define as having sex with someone who has HIV or is at high-risk of having HIV infection.