

ABSTRACT TITLE

U.S. DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program: A Global Health Enterprise and Model for Military Health Engagement

Keywords: Global health, HIV, Military

ABSTRACT BODY

Summary:

The US Department of Defense (DoD) HIV/AIDS Program (DHAPP) mission is to combat HIV in partner militaries, with bilateral partnerships in 55 countries, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa. After 20 years of this work, DHAPP has refined methods to maximize partner military health. These refinements can serve as a model for military global health engagement (GHE).

Methods:

DHAPP engages military health leadership to build capacity in HIV care, resulting in strengthened military healthcare systems.

DHAPP receives funding from US DoD and Department of State, with mechanisms to award grants to organizations to supplement partner military capacity. DHAPP also posts personnel at US Embassies under existing DoD infrastructure. These on-site personnel work with headquarters staff to develop annual plans with programmatic targets. Fiscal and performance metrics are monitored quarterly to ensure spend plans align with outcomes.

DHAPP programming is a long-term investment. Favorable results are frequently dependent upon host military infrastructure and process improvement, often requiring multi-year engagement.

Conclusion:

The DHAPP GHE model differs from common DoD GHE (short-term/high-intensity) by providing long-term, predictable engagement with military partners. The main benefit from this steady engagement is achieving programmatic success. Ancillary benefits include strengthening partner military healthcare systems, as well as trust-building and goodwill between DoD and partner militaries.

DHAPP believes this could represent an additional model for military GHE. The DHAPP mission is focused on HIV mitigation, but could be combined with other efforts to address partner military force health issues such as hypertension, malaria, tuberculosis or mental health. Improved partner military force health translates into more effective national and regional forces for stability operations and lesser dependence on external military forces to maintain peace and stability.