



Highlights of [GAO-06-395](#), a report to congressional committees

Why GAO Did This Study

The U.S. Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003 authorizes the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and promotes the ABC model (Abstain, Be faithful, or use Condoms). It recommends that 20 percent of funds appropriated pursuant to the act be spent on prevention and requires that, starting in fiscal year 2006, 33 percent of prevention funds appropriated pursuant to the act be spent on abstinence-until-marriage. The Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) is responsible for administering PEPFAR. GAO reviewed PEPFAR prevention funds, described PEPFAR's strategy to prevent sexual HIV transmission, and examined related challenges.

What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that the Secretary of State direct the Global AIDS Coordinator to collect and report information on the abstinence-until-marriage spending requirement's effects and use it to assess whether the requirement should apply only to the Global HIV/AIDS Initiative account. GAO also suggests that Congress use the information to assess how well the requirement supports the Leadership Act's endorsement of both the ABC model and strong abstinence programs. OGAC agreed regarding collecting information but disagreed with applying the requirement only to certain funds. We modified our recommendation in light of this concern.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-395.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact David Gootnick at (202) 512-3149 or gootnickd@gao.gov.

GLOBAL HEALTH

Spending Requirement Presents Challenges for Allocating Prevention Funding under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

What GAO Found

In fiscal years 2004-2006, the PEPFAR prevention budget increased by almost 55 percent, from \$207 million to \$322 million. During this time, the prevention share of the total PEPFAR budget fell from 33 to 20 percent, consistent with the Leadership Act's recommendation that 20 percent of funds appropriated pursuant to the act should support prevention.

The PEPFAR strategy for preventing sexual transmission of HIV is largely shaped by the ABC model and the abstinence-until-marriage spending requirement. In addition to adopting the ABC model, OGAC developed guidance for applying it—stating, for instance, that prevention interventions should be integrated and respond to local epidemiology and cultural norms. OGAC also established policies for applying the spending requirement for fiscal year 2006. To meet the 33 percent spending requirement, it mandated that country teams—PEPFAR officials in the field—spend half of prevention funds on sexual transmission prevention and two-thirds of those funds on abstinence/faithfulness (AB) activities. At the same time, OGAC permitted certain teams, especially those with relatively small budgets, to seek waivers from this policy to help them respond to local prevention needs. OGAC also applied the spending requirement to all PEPFAR prevention funding as a matter of policy, although it determined that, as a matter of law, it applies only to funds appropriated to the Global HIV/AIDS Initiative account.

OGAC's ABC guidance and the abstinence-until-marriage spending requirement, including OGAC's policies for implementing it, have presented challenges for country teams. First, although most teams found the ABC guidance generally clear, two-thirds reported that ambiguities in some parts of the guidance led to uncertainty about implementing the model. OGAC officials told GAO that they plan to clarify the guidance. Second, although several teams told GAO that they value the ABC model and emphasize AB messages for certain populations, teams also reported that the spending requirement can limit their efforts to design prevention programs that are integrated and responsive to local prevention needs. Seventeen of 20 country teams reported that fulfilling the spending requirement, including OGAC's policies implementing it, presents challenges to their ability to respond to local prevention needs. Ten of these teams (primarily those with smaller PEPFAR budgets) received exemptions from the requirement, allowing them to dedicate less than 33 percent of prevention funds to AB activities. In general, the nonexempted teams were effectively required to spend more than 33 percent of prevention funds on AB activities; as a result, OGAC should just meet the overall 33 percent spending requirement for fiscal year 2006. However, to meet the requirement, nonexempted country teams have, in some cases, reduced or cut funding for certain prevention programs, such as programs to deliver comprehensive ABC messages to populations at risk of contracting HIV. Finally, OGAC's decision to apply the spending requirement to all PEPFAR prevention funds may further challenge teams' ability to address local prevention needs.