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HIV cure efforts severely underfunded, US activists report

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Only 3% of the US AIDS research budget is currently devoted to efforts to find a cure for HIV infection, according to a new report from the [AIDS Policy Project](#).

Research funding for a cure is currently dwarfed by US expenditure on AIDS vaccine research, despite the fact that some researchers believe that the prospects for finding an HIV vaccine and a cure are about equal, the report states.

The AIDS Policy Project's report notes that the US alone spends \$20 billion a year on HIV treatment, but the AIDS Policy Project could identify only \$60 million across all the US National Institutes of Health research programmes devoted to cure research in 2009, compared to \$35 million allocated by the state of California's public stem cell research agency, and \$5.8 million allocated by the Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR).

Although the National Institute of Health's Division of AIDS has just launched a competition to fund HIV cure research, first year funding amounts to only \$8 million.

The AIDS Policy Project recommends that US government research funding devoted to a cure should quadruple to \$240 million by 2011, with the aim of reaching \$600 million within five years. This funding should not detract from support for HIV vaccine research or other prevention technology studies, the group notes.

An international workshop on the reservoirs for HIV in the body, and the prospects for successfully purging the virus from these reservoirs, will take place this week ahead of the Eighteenth International AIDS Conference in Vienna.