

Former Surgeon General Calls for Funding of AIDS Drug Assistance Programs

by [Elizabeth Lombino](#) · March 19, 2011

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Finally, some recognition from a top health official of the ADAP Crisis in America!

Former Surgeon General of the U.S., Dr. David Satcher, [recently wrote](#) an opinion piece for *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* declaring that US government officials "must act to preserve drugs for HIV/AIDS."

AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAP) provide critical and life-saving medications to low-income people living with HIV who are unable to afford them. As HIV meds continue to be incredibly expensive, more and more people are seeking financial assistance. Unfortunately, states across the country continue to cut funding to this valuable program. The result is more HIV+ individuals unable to afford their medications, and therefore more HIV+ individuals at risk of death.

[Dr. David Satcher](#) understands just how crucial this program is to the survival of thousands of HIV+ Americans. The focus of his opinion piece is on the state of Georgia, yet his words ring true for almost all 50 states. Georgia currently has [1,253 people](#) on the state waiting list which opened in July 2010. [Tell Georgia legislators to re-instate full ADAP funding!](#)

"Congress has not taken action since July to address the budget shortfall that is jeopardizing patients' access to their medications. Instead, the Georgia General Assembly is considering more draconian budget cuts. It is unwise to use a one-size-fits-all approach to cut health care programs like ADAP. These are matters of life or death," Dr. Satcher writes.

He continues: "There are clear, economic reasons to eliminate this waiting list. It costs \$12,000 a year to provide medication through ADAP. If would-be medication recipients fall ill and need hospitalization, the increased cost to all Georgia taxpayers climbs to \$100,000 per patient. The choice is simple. We can save lives and save money."

The ADAP Crisis does not need to continue. This is clear to thousands of HIV+ individuals, to the hundreds of Change.org members who have signed our petitions, and to a former Surgeon General. When will this become clear to state officials?

Please join us and Dr. Satcher in demanding state officials to reinstate full ADAP coverage. We have petitions for [Florida](#), [Virginia](#), [Louisiana](#), [Ohio](#) and now [Georgia](#). We also call upon [Pharma](#) to reduce their prices of these medications to ease the burden on states.

Dr. Satcher concludes by saying: "There is no time to wait in line when a life is on the line." When a former Surgeon General declares a health crisis, we all need to take notice and do our part to advocate for the health of all HIV+ Americans!