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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ADAP Crisis Deepens; 1,001 Individuals Now on Waiting Lists

Washington, DC –With 1,001 individuals on waiting lists to receive consistent access to their HIV-related medications through AIDS Drug Assistance Programs (ADAPs), the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) urges the Obama Administration and Congress, state legislatures and pharmaceutical companies to take immediate action to provide relief to the nation's struggling ADAPs. The program is in need of an additional \$126 million in FY2010 emergency funding in order to ensure access to lifesaving medications.

As of April 30, 1,001 individuals in ten states are on waiting lists. ADAP waiting lists have increased ten-fold in the last year (99 individuals were on ADAP waiting lists in May 2009). In addition to waiting lists, 16 states have implemented other access restrictions such as lowering financial eligibility criteria, removing drugs from their formulary and capping expenditures. To see a list of states with access restrictions please visit NASTAD's website at www.NASTAD.org.

"ADAPs are struggling to provide their clients with access to the medications they need to stay healthy and productive," stated Julie Scofield, NASTAD's Executive Director. "Without additional resources and assistance we fear we will continue to see more states reducing access to these critical, life-saving programs."

The current economic crisis has impacted ADAPs heavily. Individuals losing jobs and their insurance as well as increased HIV testing efforts have created a heightened demand for ADAP services. During FY2009, clients utilizing ADAP services increased by an average of 1,271 individuals per month. This is an unprecedented increase of 80 percent from FY2008 when ADAPs experienced an average monthly growth of 706 clients. To hear other detailed information about the changes in ADAPs, NASTAD will release its 2010 National ADAP Monitoring Report via a live webcast on Monday, May 3, 2010 at 9:00 am EDT – the webcast can be accessed at www.NASTAD.org.

"NASTAD believes we have reached the point where federal and state governments as well as our pharmaceutical partners must step up and ensure that eligible ADAP clients have access to their medications," remarked Scofield. "We call upon President Obama to provide sufficient funding to ease access restrictions in ADAPs nationwide."

The ADAP Crisis Task Force (Task Force), convened by NASTAD, will negotiate with the major antiretroviral manufacturers next week in an effort to provide additional rebates and discounts as well as multiple year cost protections for ADAPs which will

allow increased state and federal revenues to go toward eliminating waiting lists, providing medications to new clients, and maintaining formularies.

“While we believe the federal government must provide emergency funding to ADAPs, we also urge the pharmaceutical industry to come ready to negotiate with the Task Force,” stated Scofield. “We also urge state legislatures to maintain and increase their support of ADAPs during this critical period.”

ADAPs are the safety net under other public programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid. Over seventy-five percent of ADAP clients earn less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, which is \$22,000 for an individual.

NASTAD estimates that the additional \$126 million needed in FY2010 emergency federal funding will only allow states to continue their programs with the same composition, not expand their programs in any way. Emergency funding to curtail ADAP waiting lists has not been available since 2004 when President Bush provided additional funds to the program.

Founded in 1992, NASTAD is a nonprofit national association of state and territorial health department HIV/AIDS program directors who have programmatic responsibility for administering HIV/AIDS and viral hepatitis health care, prevention, education, and supportive services programs funded by state and federal governments. For more information, visit www.NASTAD.org.

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