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Novel internet-based resource maps HIV and AIDS by congressional district. Seven of ten congressional districts with highest HIV/AIDS prevalence are located in New York or New Jersey

WASHINGTON, May 31, 2011: The National Minority Quality Forum (Forum) today launched a novel, internet-based tool – the U.S. HIV/AIDS Index (<http://www.maphiv.org>). Building upon the HIV/AIDS Atlas introduced by the Forum in 2009, which currently has over 30,000 registered users, this updated resource enables users – for the first time – to map HIV and AIDS prevalence and total counts by congressional district and county. The Index confirms that the HIV and AIDS burden can be found in contiguous zip codes within defined congressional districts and counties.

“From a healthcare policy perspective, the U.S. HIV/AIDS Index provides us with the tools to direct needed resources towards early detection, surveillance, education, and treatment,” says Goulda A. Downer, Ph.D., RD, LN, CNS; Principal Investigator & Assistant Professor for the National Minority AIDS Education and Training Center in the College of Medicine at Howard University. “I look forward to working with the Forum and colleagues to use the index as a tool to improve health equity, particularly among communities disproportionately impacted by HIV and AIDS.”

“We are introducing the U.S. HIV/AIDS Index to assist health-care practitioners, policy makers, advocacy groups, and infectious disease researchers not only to identify and quantify HIV and AIDS by congressional district and county, but also to help to more effectively calibrate prevention and treatment efforts,” noted Gary Puckrein, Ph.D., CEO of the National Minority Quality Forum. “As we continue to incorporate the most current disease data available including clinical trials information, we are confident that the HIV/AIDS Index will serve as the source of information about HIV/AIDS patients, their care, and the factors that are shaping the epidemiology of HIV and AIDS in the United States.”

The National Minority Quality Forum (www.nmqf.org) is a non-profit healthcare research and educational organization dedicated to the elimination of health disparities. The Forum supports national and local efforts to eliminate the disproportionate burden of premature death and preventable illness in racial and ethnic minorities and other special populations. The Forum has introduced user-friendly, web-based disease atlases to provide a unique two-dimensional view of various diseases, including cancer, diabetes, kidney disease, heart disease and methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA, by zip code. Users now have an unprecedented objective and reliable source of integrated data to validate the existence of health disparities.