



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The International AIDS Society (IAS) announces a new grant of £500,000 from ViiV Healthcare to support its Collaborative Initiative for Paediatric HIV Education and Research (CIPHER)**

**Thursday, 6 March 2014 (Geneva, Switzerland)** — Following on from a first generous grant for £1,500,000 received from ViiV Healthcare in 2012, the IAS's Collaborative Initiative for Paediatric HIV Education and Research (CIPHER) has received a second grant for £500,000. Thanks to this, the IAS will utilize this funding to strengthen and extend its activities in paediatric HIV to include priority areas of advocacy and implementation of programmes for scale-up of optimized care and treatment services.

"In recent years much progress has been made in scaling up prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) and increasing the number of children on antiretroviral therapy (ART). Despite these efforts, the paediatric population remains understudied in comparison with adults," said Bernard Kadasia, Acting Executive Director of the IAS. "Thanks to the support of ViiV Healthcare, we believe that our CIPHER initiative, by promoting and investing in paediatric research, and by strengthening paediatric cohort collaboration, will help to address critical research gaps related to clinical management and delivery of service to infants, children and adolescent affected by HIV in resource-limited settings".

The announcement by researchers at yesterday's Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Boston, that a second baby is currently HIV free after early treatment soon after birth, together with the US federal government funded study of around 60 babies that is just getting under way, are clear indications that paediatric HIV research is gaining strong momentum.

The new ViiV grant will strengthen CIPHER's programme for 2014 and 2015 and allow for extending the scope of the initiative. Specifically, the grant will fund the CIPHER Research Grant Programme; the global CIPHER Cohort Collaboration, [Online Paediatric HIV Cohort Database](http://www.iasociety.org/cipher.aspx) (<http://www.iasociety.org/cipher.aspx>) launched in December 2013; and a stakeholder consultation in early 2015

"Efforts to scale up HIV treatment and care services for children have intensified; however, access to appropriate treatment and care for this population remains a major unmet need in HIV. In the light of this, Paediatric HIV remains an important priority for ViiV Healthcare – so I am really proud to be making this announcement today as part of our Paediatric Innovation Seed Fund." Commented Dr Dominique Limet, CEO, ViiV Healthcare.

Founded in 2012, the **CIPHER Grant Programme** was established with the support of ViiV Healthcare to encourage research projects that have the potential to address priority research questions and in its first year granted a total of USD\$ 1 million to seven high-level research projects. The strategy for 2014 will be to grant, for a maximum of USD\$ 150,000 per project, two additional grants that could not be funded in 2013.

The **CIPHER Cohort Collaboration** is a global collaboration of paediatric HIV cohorts that will be looking at two critical research gaps in paediatric HIV: the durability of first-line antiretroviral treatment (ART) in children in resource-limited settings; and the global epidemiology of adolescents living with HIV since birth. CIPHER is providing a grant of USD\$500,000 to fund these two important projects, the first to include such a broad range of participating paediatric cohorts.

The **CIPHER Paediatric HIV Cohort Database**, launched on World AIDS Day 2013, features an interactive map and complete cohort profiles and is designed to act as a forum and tool for researchers, funders and policy makers. It is intended to act as a dedicated platform for communication and coordination, facilitating harmonization of protocols, data collection, sharing and analysis between cohorts.

In 2014, this core programme will be built upon, while engaging with partners to develop potential new activities in key areas of advocacy and implementation of programmes for scale-up of care and services for paediatric populations.

Finally, in 2015 all CIPHER's stakeholders (researchers, policy and decision makers, industry representatives) will meet to take stock of the achievements, discuss ways to optimize the programme results and brainstorm CIPHER's future directions.

**END**

#### **About CIPHER:**

The [Collaborative Initiative for Paediatric HIV Education and Research \(CIPHER\)](#) is a flagship paediatric research initiative of the International AIDS Society (IAS), aimed at addressing outstanding research gaps related to clinical management and delivery of services to infants, children and adolescents affected by HIV in resource-limited settings. Initiated in 2012, CIPHER is supported by an unrestricted grant from ViiV Healthcare's Paediatric Innovation Seed Fund. The content and structure of the project is guided by paediatric experts convened by the IAS.

The main objectives of CIPHER are:

- Promoting and investing in targeted research to address knowledge gaps/priority questions to optimize service delivery and clinical management of infants and children in resource-limited settings.
- Convening stakeholders and establishing collaboration mechanisms to strengthen communication, knowledge transfer and exchange among paediatric HIV cohorts.

CIPHER is designed to complement existing global initiatives and create partnerships with other organizations to maximize investment in paediatric HIV research and improve paediatric health outcomes. The first phase of the project consisted of building a solid scientific and programmatic foundation. A comprehensive [needs assessment](#) was conducted, including a literature review and key informant interviews with experts, which outlined a set of research priorities that has been used to inform and guide CIPHER.

#### **About the IAS**

The International AIDS Society (IAS) is the world's leading independent association of HIV professionals, with over 16,000 members from more than 176 countries working at all levels of the global response to AIDS. The IAS members include researchers from all disciplines, clinicians, public health and community practitioners on the frontlines of the epidemic, as well as policy and programme planners.

The IAS is custodian of the biennial International AIDS Conference, which will be held in Melbourne, Australia, 20-25 July 2014 and lead organizer of the IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, which will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 19-22 July 2015

[www.iasociety.org](http://www.iasociety.org) | [www.aids2014.org](http://www.aids2014.org) | [www.ias2015.org](http://www.ias2015.org)

**For more information:**

Sian Bowen (Geneva, Switzerland)  
IAS Senior Manager, Communications, IAS  
Email: [Sian.Bowen@iasociety.org](mailto:Sian.Bowen@iasociety.org)  
Tel: +41 22 710 0864

Francesca Da Ros (Geneva, Switzerland)  
IAS Senior Coordinator, Communications and Media  
Email: [Francesca.Daros@iasociety.org](mailto:Francesca.Daros@iasociety.org)  
Tel: +41 22 710 0822