

Andrew J. Spano
County Executive

Department of Health

Joshua Lipsman, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

**TRI-COUNTY RYAN WHITE TITLE I
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

Wednesday, June 17, 2004

Planned Parenthood – White Plains Center

APPROVED MINUTES

- Members Present:** V. Alvarez, D. Anderson, C. Ardizzone (for B. Ilardi), L. Bennett, H. Blecher, C. Brazil, D. Capasso, G. Diaz, K. Everett, H. Fitzgerald, L. Hilton, J. Kraus, R. Leandre, R. Maher, J. McGovern, A. Paige-Bowman, S. Pemberton, C. Silva (for F. Oldham), K. Slade, M. Lopez Squillini, S. Wayne, R. Williams, Y. Yehudah (for R. Glicksman, MD), O. Young
- Members Absent:** W. Bullock, L. DiPierro, D. Frantzen, J. Ganapol, J. Hilger, J. Hornig, S. Levine (MD), J. Levy, M. Littles, R. Marrero, L. Newman, R. Ortiz, M. Piazza, R. Schiffrin, D. (Williams) Scholar, L. Tackley, J. Tribbie, G. Yarn
- Guests Present:** L. Beal, K. Brennan, S. Gray, J. Nelson
- Staff Present:** E. Fitzgerald, J. Lehane, T. Petro, B. Reyes
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I. Approval of May 12, 2004 Minutes

The May 12, 2004 Minutes were reviewed and a motion to approve the minutes was made by Harriet Blecher and seconded by Karen Slade. The minutes were approved as presented.

II. Announcements

- On June 29, 2004, Hudson River Health Care with Cicattelli and Assoc. will conduct a training session on HIV prevention outreach. The training will be held in Peekskill from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm.
- NYSDOH/AI is doing an HIV testing awareness campaign with Better World Advertising. The theme of this statewide awareness campaign is *Prevention for Positives*.
- On Friday, June 4, The Sharing Community held an HIV prevention-focused health fair in Yonkers. Twenty-five people were tested using Orasure and five were found to be HIV positive.

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- Rockland County Department of Health (RCDOH) began a rapid testing program. Ten people have been tested and zero (0) HIV positive people have been identified.
- Westchester County Department of Health (WCDOH) will put out a press release on June 23rd listing the agencies, days, and times that rapid testing will be available in Westchester County.
- June 27th is National Testing Day and Project WAVE has arranged for various testing sites providing rapid testing throughout Westchester County.

III. Update Reports

Living Together (V. Alvarez)

- At the last Living Together meeting there was a discussion about the use of outreach funds for HIV prevention. The ongoing issue is that very few new HIV-positive cases are identified through current outreach. A better focus would be on prevention for positives and their partners.
- Partner counseling and Referral Services (PCRS) training by NYSDOH for CBO staff can be arranged. The consensus among members of the Steering Committee was that the PCRS training should be done to strengthen the communication skills between providers and consumers.
- The next meeting will be held on June 24th at ARCS. The “Sex Risk Game” will be demonstrated at that meeting.
- The adherence support group at SJRH continues to be successful in attracting and maintaining members.

Title II (K. Everett)

- The Mental Health/Substance Use and Case Management Committees are doing a joint breakfast forum to discuss how to minimize the gaps in mental health care.
- At the May 21 general network meeting to be held at ARCS, staff from NYC-based GMHC (Gay Men’s Health Crisis and PCDOH) presented details of their HIV rapid testing program. They identified the need to provide support for the counselors who are staffing the rapid testing sites.
- At the Case Management Committee meeting Wilfredo Morel and a staff member from SJRH talked about how to bring immigrants into care.

Title I

- The Y15 application requires that we estimate the number of persons in the EMA that meet the criteria for unmet need. Those who fall into the unmet need category would be individuals who know their status but are not in care as defined as not having a viral load test, CD4 count test, and/or on ART in the past 12 months. We need to plan for how Tri-County will address the issue of unmet need in our region. Currently, it is assumed that primary care providers and case managers ask questions about viral load, CD4-count, and ART when they meet with consumers. What do other service areas do to help people access medical care? Perhaps those who ordinarily would not talk to consumers about medical care issues, e.g., food service could ask these questions? One suggestion was to put a fact sheet in the pantry bags reminding consumers to become active in their medical care; however, after considering issues of confidentiality that idea was dropped. Instead, we agreed that case managers would be in the best position to help people access medical care and to stay in care. This might require specific training of case managers and other providers.

IV. Prioritization: Year 13 (3/1/03 – 2/29/04) Carryover & Year 15 (3/1/05 – 2/28/06) Services

Year 13 Carryover - Reprogramming Initiatives Review

Available Unallocated Funds

The total Year 13 carryover amount is \$377,154 which includes \$56,867 in MAI (Minority AIDS Initiative) funding and \$320,287 in base funds. Of the MAI carryover, \$31,323 is needed to make the Year 14 (3/1/04 – 2/28/05) contracts whole since there was a shortfall in MAI funding this year. This leaves a balance of \$25,544 in MAI to be reprogrammed.

In addition, it was recommended that the \$83,038 in Year 14 (base) award allocated for the Putnam County primary care start-up initiative be freed up for reprogramming as well since it's late to develop an RFP (Request For Proposals) and because it appears that some (very) preliminary talks were underway on providing HIV primary care in a community clinic in Putnam. It was noted, however, that it may be wise to prioritize HIV primary care start-up in Putnam as a new initiative in the Year 15 (3/1/05 – 2/28/06) application to HRSA since the community clinic option may not pan out.

So if the \$83,038 in base award funds is added to the \$320,287 base carryover, there would be a total of \$403,325 in base plus the \$25,544 in MAI carryover available for immediate reprogramming.

Initiatives Review

Only the first of 29 community proposals, i.e., the repair or replacement of an 11-year old mobile medical van, was discussed by the Steering Committee due to lack of time and several questions about the van's present geographic catchment area and possible expansion into Putnam County. The van currently operates in several Westchester County sites – providing HIV primary care and medical case management – and also conducts colposcopies to determine cervical dysplasia (pre-cancerous testing) on the Rockland County Department of Health campus. Expansion of the van services was proposed for testing for anal dysplasia in men throughout the Tri-County region. It was noted that any vote to repair or replace the van should be kept separate from whether the van might extend its HIV primary care services into Putnam, a yet unresolved issue pending the possible establishment of fixed site clinic-based services by the Putnam County Department of Health.

Year 15 Priorities

Case Management (includes social services): The following issues were discussed, however no decision was made regarding priorities.

- Provide additional funding for transportation because the current budget will be used up by August.
- Provide additional funding for the food and nutrition programs due to increases in food costs and gas for delivery of meals.
- Possibility of purchasing a yellow bus to be used as transportation for PWLA who travel to meetings in the Tri-Co. region.
- One time training for case managers to improve their communication skills. Comprehensive case management can be instrumental in getting consumers into medical treatment and improving adherence to treatment.

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Mental Health: No new initiatives have been discussed, however the committee is concerned about issues of stigma that may prevent consumers from seeking out mental health services. In response to these concerns and partially prompted by CHAIN results, the committee has planned a series of breakfast forums to make mental health providers and case managers aware of these issues and improve skills related to identifying people who need help, and assisting clients enter into mental health care.

Housing: The committee discussed the need for additional funds for one time expenses in Rockland County. These expenses were not calculated in the original budget and although were labeled “emergency” funds they represent expenses that fall under the definition of things that are allowed in the housing program.

Health: The committee discussed several issues introduced by the Health Committee.

(The Steering Committee discussed requesting \$600,000 for the HIV uninsured care pools next year.)

- The committee discussed the issue of how to improve patient/provider communications (partly prompted by the CHAIN findings) in order to better engage patients and improve health education and treatment adherence. There was disagreement about who was best suited for delivering treatment adherence messages. Some members thought that these messages were best delivered by primary care providers who worked directly with the doctors who cared for consumers. Others thought that similar messages could be delivered by social service case managers who were specifically trained in the area of health education and treatment adherence information. Further discussion is required to determine the language for an initiative.
- The communications issue might be addressed by the Ryan White-funded AETC (AIDS Education & Training Center), NYS-funded CEI (Clinical Education Initiative), or special Title I-supported trainings.

Health-Related Survey: The Steering Committee also reviewed the results of a survey that was circulated to Putnam County residents with HIV/AIDS to determine from whom they currently receive HIV primary care and where they would prefer to receive it. One third (33.3%) of the respondents indicated that they are currently seeing a private doctor and a little more than a third (38.9%) receive their medical care from a community health clinic. All of the respondents (100%) said they currently receive care in Westchester County and 44.4% said they would change doctors if medical care became available in Putnam County. The two barriers to getting medical care in Putnam County were transportation (30%) and long waiting lists for appointments (36.7%). None of the respondents said that they would prefer receiving their medical care from a Mobile Medical Unit. Most (60%) would rather be at a private doctor’s office or community medical clinic (20%).

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 8, 2004, 9:30 AM at Planned Parenthood - White Plains Center.