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County Executive

Department of Health

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Commissioner

**TRI-COUNTY RYAN WHITE HATMA
PART A STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, December 10, 2008
Planned Parenthood – White Plains**

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: V. Alvarez, D. Anderson (for K. Scott), C. Archbald MD, C. Ardizzone-Joudy (for B. Ilardi), L. Beal, B. Bennet, L. Butler (for R. Schiffrin), D. Capasso, M. Donoghue, C. Douaihy, S. Levine MD, R. Maher, R. Meyer, J. Park, M. Piazza, S. Riordan, A. Ruggiero, D. Scholar, S. Sullam (for M. Donoghue), and G. Yarn

Members Absent: T. Aliotta, M. Bannister, B. Bento-Fleming, C. Brazil, C. Burwell, M. Cubria, H. Fitzgerald, S. Havelka, H. Jones, D. Kittell, R. Leandre, M. Littles, M. Mahoney, J. McGovern, R. Nathan, A. Otisi, A. Paige-Bowman, S. Pemberton, J. Ruiz-Perez, H. Sherwin, A. Shurin, K. Slade, and M. Velazquez

Staff Present: F. Avellanet, L. Hakim, J. Lehane, and T. Petro

I. Approval of November 12, 2008 Steering Committee Minutes

A motion (S. Levine, D. Anderson) to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2008 meeting was approved.

II. Announcements

- On December 8th more than 60 people participated in the Westchester County AIDS Council and Westchester County Department of Health (WCDH)-sponsored World AIDS Day (WAD) conference. The theme of the conference was “Mobilizing Community Leadership to Keep HIV/AIDS a Priority in this Time of Change.” Humberto Cruz, Director of the New York State Department of Health/AIDS Institute (NYSDOH/AI), gave the keynote address in which he spoke of the progress that has been made reducing the numbers of newly diagnosed. He also gave voice to the concerns surrounding proposed cuts to the NYS budget. He said that this is an opportunity to be creative, rather than thinking only of how to do more with less.
- Congratulations were given to Steering Committee member Steve Levine, MD who announced that he had recently been certified as an HIV-specialist physician and is now serving patients at the Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center where he is the medical director.

- TOUCH and Rockland County Department of Health sponsored a workshop at Rockland Community College for WAD. RCDOH commissioner Joan Facelle, MD was the keynote speaker and many students participated in the dialogue about HIV/AIDS.
- Mary Mahoney from Legal Services of the Hudson Valley will now be providing services in the agency's Family Law division. Christa Douaihy will be assuming responsibility for HIV/AIDS-related cases.
- The Tri-County HIV Services Resource Directory survey will be distributed in January. Responses to the survey will be used to update current provider information in anticipation of the release of a new directory in the spring of 2009. Contact Felix Avellanet at 914-813-5119 or fgal@westchestergov.com for more information.
- After more than 20 years of experience providing services to PLWHA, Doug Capasso will be retiring from his position on January 9th as director of the Genesis program at Hudson River HealthCare. Steering Committee members congratulated Doug for his dedication to the cause as he sadly commented that the epidemic has continued so long that people who had spent most of their working lives in the field are now moving into retirement.

III. Updates

Living Together (V. Alvarez and G. Yarn)

- At the November meeting, LT members reviewed and commented on the NY EMA's (Eligible Metropolitan Area's) draft comprehensive strategic plan for 2009-2012 as presented by Julie Lehane from WCDH and Jessica Wahlstrom from the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH). LT members also discussed concerns about the impact of proposed budget cuts on health care services. In addition, they identified various supportive services that may be unfamiliar to newer members that can help maintain regular medical care and treatment.
- Victor recently attended a training sponsored by the NYSDOH/AI on how to help and support newly diagnosed persons in accessing medical care. Those who are newly diagnosed present with different needs and concerns than those who have been living longer with the virus. It was suggested that medical case managers receive training and supervision on how to better assess the needs of people new to the HIV care network. It was suggested that providers plan for staff training when developing budgets and to look beyond basic trainings to find educational opportunities that might challenge case managers who have more experience.
- Victor and Gerald will be participating in a NYSDOH/AI four-day training this month at Columbia University titled "Multi-Media Connect" about HIV and heterosexual couples.
- The treatment adherence and men's and women's support groups are meeting monthly. Anyone interested in participating should contact Gerald at 914-937-2320 x129 for the dates and locations.
- Victor and Gerald continue to assist in recruiting PLWHA for the CHAIN study.
- The next LT meeting will be held on January 22, 2009 at ARCS in Hawthorne.

HATMA Part B HIV Care Network (B. Bennet)

- The HATMA Part B Hudson Valley HIV Care Network has been operational for six months and all of the committees have held at least two meetings. The Care Coordination committee, which will be adding membership from faith-based organizations, is conducting a provider survey to identify client needs and compile a list of private doctors providing HIV care in the Hudson Valley region. The Policy and Advocacy committee distributed information about the changes in Medicaid regulations and sent a group to Washington, DC to advocate for increased funding for HIV care services.
- The Network work plan for next year is under development. There will be a telephone conference call on December 12th at 3:00 – 4:00 pm to discuss future goals and objectives. For more information contact Barbara Bennet at bbennet@arcs.org or 914-785-8275.
- The new Regional Gaps Analysis questionnaire from the NYSDOH/AI has been released and is available on the website www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/aids/rga_letter_10_2008.htm. All are encouraged to complete this HIV/AIDS and STD (sexually transmitted diseases) prevention survey.
- On January 6th the Care Coordination committee will meet next; on January 8th the Policy, Advocacy, and Education and Consumer Involvement committees will convene; and the Executive Committee will meet on January 23, 2009. The next Part B Network General Meeting will be held on February 27th.

IV. Presentation: 2009-2012 Comprehensive Strategic Plan (J. Park/NYCDOHMH)

Jan presented the EMA's near-final plan which will be sent to HRSA (Health Services & Resources Administration) next month. The Steering Committee, a smaller planning ad hoc committee, Living Together and WCDH staff all provided input into the plan development over the previous three months. The Steering Committee's only recommendation regarding Jan's presentation was to add the term "HIV-related" to the two objectives whose purposes are to reduce emergency room visits and hospitalizations. (The final plan was subsequently changed and included *Obj. 2C: To decrease HIV-related visits to emergency departments by 2011*, and *Obj. 3D: To decrease HIV-related hospitalizations by 2011*.)

V. Part A Updates and Issues (T. Petro)

Year 18 (3/1/08 – 2/28/09) Base Budget Modifications

WCDH is in receipt of the last wave of Year 18 base budget modifications which were due December 1. Though it's too late in the year to use any budget takedowns to enhance Tri-County programs (i.e., by amending contracts), if any contract budgets are reduced via the budmods, the funding made available – together with Year 18 final underspending at closeout in the spring – might be able to be used by NYSDOH for the ADAP program in order to reduce overall Year 18 carryover. The *estimated* Year 18 base carryover for the Tri-County region, being sent by WCDH to NYCDOHMH and then on to HRSA later this month, is \$140,000. The Steering Committee has already earmarked those carryover funds for ADAP. (Year 17 base carryover totaled \$135,598 all of which was approved for ADAP.)

Year 19 (3/1/09 – 2/28/10) Base Continued Funding Applications

Year 19 Base CFAs, issued at the end of November, are due back to WCDH by December 19. Provider budget amounts, for the most part, are the same as for Year 18. However, final Year 19 allocations to each service category is subject to the total Part A appropriation by Congress, the EMA's award (which will not be known until March 1, 2009), the approvals of the Steering Committee and the NY HIV Planning Council, and, of course, Year 18 provider performance.

Federal Appropriations/HATMA Reauthorization (J. Park)

Both items are still in limbo until the new administration is sworn in. Federal agencies such as the Department of Health & Human Services (where HRSA resides) whose 2009 appropriations are not completed (the federal fiscal year runs from October through September), will go on operating via continuing resolutions (CR) which allocate partial short-term funding. Year 19 Ryan White funding is not currently being appropriated through a CR since those funds are not awarded until March 1, 2009 at which point all Congressional appropriations (hopefully) will be finished.

The advocacy community continues to lobby Congress for a three-year reauthorization of the current HATMA which expires on September 30, 2009 with some "fixes" rather than a wholesale re-writing of the legislation, as the new administration and Congress will be focusing much more closely on other issues such as the economy.

VI. New Business

WCDH staff asked the Steering Committee to consider transferring funding for a specific Food Bank/Home-Delivered Meals contract to the Medical Case Management category in Year 19 (starting 3/1/09). The agency's program, in place for over a decade, has always been a hybrid of case management and food services. However, the food services part of the program has evolved away from home-delivered meals and into food voucher distribution only. The agency also has a relatively large client base with HIV/AIDS, but only one case manager; the intent is to hire a second if this transfer is made.

Committee members did not object to the transfer, but three concerns were raised: 1) whether there were other food resources available for the clients given the apparent increasing need for food due to the weak economy and given that funds to hire another case manager will mean less available dollars for food vouchers, 2) current MCM programs should not be allowed now to shift funding away from MCM to food vouchers, and 3) the agency should work closely with other local providers and readily refer clients, when appropriate, to other programs such as, for example, COBRA.

No vote was taken (or necessary) at this point. The issue will be revisited in March when the Year 19 award is made and service category allocations will have to be approved by the Steering Committee.

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, 2009 at Planned Parenthood, White Plains Center.