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County Executive

Department of Health  
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Commissioner

**TRI-COUNTY RYAN WHITE TITLE I  
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Thursday, December 14, 2006  
Planned Parenthood – White Plains Center

**APPROVED MINUTES**

- Members Present:** V. Alvarez, B. Bento-Fleming, C. Brazil, C. Carroll, G. Diaz, B. Ilardi, S. Levine, MD, M. Littles, R. Maher, J. McGovern, T. Payne, R. Schiffrin, D. Scholar, A. Shurin, S. Wayne, and G. Yarn
- Members Absent:** C. Archbald, MD, M. Bannister, L. Beal, L. Bennett, H. Blecher, C. Burwell, D. Capasso, H. Fitzgerald, , D. Kittell, R. Leandre, R. Nathan, A. Paige-Bowman, S. Pemberton, M. Piazza, T. Saari, K. Scott, K. Slade, L. Tackley, and O. Young
- Guests Present:** M. Hodgson-Vargas (CCSNYS), J. Maldonado (UL), V. Martinez (Renaissance), and N. Tucker (CCSNYS)
- Staff Present:** J. Lehane, T. Petro, and B. Reyes

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**I. Approval of Minutes**

A motion (G. Diaz, B. Ilardi) to approve the minutes of November 8, 2006 was unanimously approved.

**II. Announcements**

- T. Petro announced that, with Tracy Ashe's departure as Title II network coordinator, Ryan Nathan of the Urban League of Westchester, Inc. was appointed as a Title I Steering Committee voting member. He also thanked everyone who participated the day before in the Westchester County Department of Health's (WCDH) World AIDS Day (WAD) forum *A New Look at Public Health Practice in a Time of Shifting HIV Priorities* at the Maryknoll Center in Ossining at which 60 people attended.
- G. Diaz announced that the Yonkers AIDS Providers Task Force will not meet in December. Gladys also reported that Sharing Community had a great turnout for the annual WAD events in Yonkers, with many young people participating in the "awareness" walk and attending the performance of the play *Between the Seams*, before which Anita Paige-Bowman made an introduction and after which Melvin Littles gave a testimonial. Sharing Community will be closed on Christmas Day; but dinner will be served, Santa Claus will distribute gifts to children, and a concert will be performed at St. John's Church.

- M. Hodgson-Vargas, Tri-County project director for the Council of Community Services of New York State, Inc. technical assistance program, introduced Natasha Tucker recently hired as the program's project assistant.
- B. Iardi announced that ARCS/Putnam held an annual WAD event. Nelson Adler, ARCS assistant director for client services, collected names of Putnam consumers who might be interested in joining the various Tri-County planning and advisory committees.
- V. Martinez reported that he was in Albany for WAD and participated in a NYSDOH-sponsored event that educated about 1,800 children and youth about AIDS. The children, who were from ten school districts, were divided into groups and each worked with a PLWHA educator. There were many questions and both the children and the group facilitators came away with an increased awareness of what it means to live with HIV/AIDS.
- R. Maher announced that the Rockland County Department of Health held its annual WAD memorial service in its chapel and the Rockland AIDS Consortium staffed an AIDS awareness and education table from 2:00 to 7:00 PM at the Palisades Mall.
- G. Yarn and R. Maher reported that they attended a conference in Albany last week about HIV risk among men who have sex with men (MSM). Even with the drumbeat of messages about the dangers of HIV infection, some younger men are participating in risky behaviors such as mixing HIV medications, Viagra, and crystal meth in what is known as a "triad."
- S. Wayne announced that another Family Services of Westchester, Inc. team, consisting of a peer educator and staff member, was trained in NYC in the DEBI behavioral intervention techniques. There are now eight DEBI teams in the Tri-County region which will be working with clients on building "healthy relationships."
- M. Littles announced the availability of a newly FDA-approved protease inhibitor manufactured by Tibotec called Prezista (generic name: darunavir). For more information, visit [www.prezista.com](http://www.prezista.com)
- V. Alvarez also announced that two new promising antiretrovirals are in clinical trials and available through expanded access programs: TMC125, a non nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor manufactured by Tibotec (see <http://www.aidsmeds.com/drugs/etravirine.htm>); and MK0518, an integrase inhibitor manufactured by Merck (see <http://www.aidsmeds.com/drugs/MK-0518.htm>).

Also, included in Committee members' packets was a list of dates, times, and locations for 2007 Title I Steering Committee meetings.

### **III. Epi Data by Local (Westchester) Areas (J. Lehane)**

Highlights from a set of tables containing the epidemiology data for HIV and AIDS cases by local Westchester municipality were presented. These data – cases confirmed through December 31, 2004 as of February 2, 2006 – represent the most recent figures from the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of HIV/AIDS Epidemiology. Data include inmate cases and exclude cases under 13 years of age. The tables containing the data for reported HIV cases since 2000 provide a picture of more current trends in HIV infection and risk categories.

The breakout by Westchester municipality is part of a special data run that the NYSDOH provides annually to the WCDH in its capacity as the region's Title I administrative agency. Such detailed demographic data for Rockland and Putnam are not provided due to the potential of actual identification by name of the few cases in some zip codes in those counties. (R. Maher subsequently provided the WCDH with a 2003 data run by zip code completed by the NYSDOH, however it was limited to the number of living HIV and AIDS cases without any further demographic breakdown by gender, race/ethnicity, age or risk exposure category. The WCDH will enter the data into a spreadsheet to be distributed to the Steering Committee in January.)

In response to several members' questions:

- data is available to WCDH on those deceased with HIV who injected drugs, but data on those deceased who were also infected with hepatitis C (HCV) would have to be provided by special request to NYSDOH (however HIV and HCV, are not always listed on death certificates either as the immediate cause of death or as a consequence thereof) ;
- the HIV risk exposure categories have not been modified since they were outlined by the CDC in the 1980s;
- data is not available on the number of people who utilize HIV/AIDS services in the Tri-County region but who actually reside in the Bronx (cases reported to NYSDOH are based on zip code of residence at the time of diagnosis or zip code of the physician who ordered the HIV test if the patient's residence is unknown); and
- the percentage of HIV/AIDS cases in the EMA comprised by inmates will be calculated and presented at the January Steering Committee meeting.

#### **IV. Update Reports**

##### Living Together (V. Alvarez)

On November 30<sup>th</sup> Living Together (LT) held its monthly meeting at ARCS. Treatment adherence issues were discussed. Members suggested that an ongoing treatment adherence support group facilitated by peer educators was needed. Such a group will be added as a continuation of future LT meetings.

At the meeting, B. Bennet of CHAIN presented some recent findings on the service needs and gaps to the group. (She also was able to recruit two new CHAIN participants and made contact with one person whom she thought had moved out of the area.) B. Reyes and Barbara helped the LT members use the data as they scored service priorities from the consumers' perspective using the Title I Steering Committee's ranking tool

There will be no LT meeting in December. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 25, 2007 from 1:00 PM- 3:00 PM at ARCS in Hawthorne.

##### Title II (T. Payne)

The Title II Steering Committee meeting is cancelled for the month of December. The next meeting will be held on Friday, January 19, 2007 from 9:30 AM-11:30 AM at ARCS in Hawthorne.

The Committee is finalizing the Network's 2007-2008 strategic plan. Also, the Case Management Committee is working on the new "CM Orientation Brochure." This brochure will provide descriptions of programs and contact information that will be useful for new case managers and those who are looking for more places to make referrals for their clients. The distribution date will be announced once the materials are finalized.

##### CARE Act Reauthorization (T. Petro)

The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act (HATMA) of 2006 – effective for three years instead of five – was passed by Congress on December 9 and signed into law by the President. A briefing paper containing the legislation's highlights was distributed for discussion. The financial impact of the newly authorized Act is difficult to assess at this time, but there is serious concern that the funding level for the NY Title I EMA (Eligible Metropolitan Area), and NYS Title II, will be reduced next year. The distribution of the award depends more heavily on the formula grant whose allocation now comprises two-thirds (formerly 50%) of the total Title I funds available. The remaining one-third will be allocated by the competitive supplemental application. MAI (Minority AIDS Initiative) funding will also now be allocated competitively instead of by formula.

The formula distribution of funds will be based on name-based reporting of HIV/AIDS cases to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) and states that are currently using code-based HIV reporting are required to change to name-based reporting systems by 2011. A hold harmless clause (no formula grant reduction greater than 5% per year) has been added to protect program infrastructure. A new list of core services was established. Unobligated funds (i.e., unspent carryover funds) must be kept at an acceptable 2% or less, with any carryover more than 2% going back to HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration) for redistribution. An EMA with an overage will get a decrease in future funding equal to the amount over the 2%. Factoring the proposed severity of need index (SONI) into the distribution of funds has been postponed for three years during which HRSA will work on developing the index.

**V. Title I Issues/Votes (T. Petro)**

Vote #1: Allocation of Unencumbered Funds

A motion (R. Maher/G. Diaz) was unanimously approved to allocate an estimated \$60,000 in unencumbered funds to ADAP. The funding resulted from final contract negotiations and the last (unfinished) round of contract budget modifications which reduced funding for several programs, thereby freeing dollars for reallocation. It being too late in the year to further enhance and amend contracts (\$67,400 in enhancement funding having already been approved by the Steering Committee in September), the ADAP allocation is the most expedient way to reduce carryover funding which otherwise might revert back to HRSA for distribution to other EMAs. It was noted that the Committee earlier this year allocated all of last year's \$296,049 carryover to ADAP, now bringing the total to over \$356,000 (\$296,049 plus \$60,000). The WCDH staff agreed to report back to the Steering Committee in its January meeting on the exact unencumbered amount reallocated after all budget modifications are complete.

Vote #2: Program Support Funds

A motion (B. Iardi/D. Scholar) was approved, with one abstention, to increase the program support line in next year's budget by \$12,354 in order to allow for Family Services of Westchester, Inc.'s administration of the Living Together program. A recent audit by NYCDOHMH dictated the need to establish a more formal working relationship – either consultant or paid staff – between FSW and LT. Until now FSW has been acting only as a fiscal conduit for LT and receiving just a nominal amount of funding for space costs (LT's office is located within FSW's) while FSW contributed a considerable amount of in-kind support. Steering Committee members discussed the pros and cons of LT becoming a FSW program with several concerned that LT might lose its independent identity as the voice of Tri-County consumers. It was suggested instead that LT could seek to establish itself as a IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and still subcontract with FSW as such.

**NOTE:** Since attendance at today's meeting was less than usual, the above issues were subsequently put out for a vote by mail to those members who were not present. Both motions nonetheless passed with more than 50% of members voting YES on both issues. Final tallies will be presented at the January meeting.

**V. Review of Service Rankings (T. Petro)**

Service priorities were originally ranked by score in March 2006. The following documents were included in members' packets today in order to begin re-rank priorities using more up-to-date data and information: 1) Service Category Assessment Grid (scoring sheet); 2) (Other) Funding Sources for Tri-County Title I Priorities; and 3) Year 15 (3/1/05-2/28/06) Service Category/Indicator List (comprised of number of clients and units of service). Partly because of time constraints, no re-scoring took place. Members asked that representatives of each of the service categories to be discussed be present at the January and February meetings in order to better understand exactly how Title I funding is filling service gaps.

**Next Title I Steering Committee Meeting: January 10, 2007, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM, at Planned Parenthood**