

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, April 14, 2004

Planned Parenthood – White Plains Center

APPROVED MINUTES

- Members Present:** V. Alvarez, L. Bennett, R. Birchard (for K. Gallagher-Tone), K. Everett, D. Frantzen, J. Ganapol, L. Hilton, J. Kraus, R. Leandre, J. Levy, M. Littles, R. Maher, J. McGovern, G. Moon (for F. Oldham), A. Paige-Bowman, S. Pemberton, M. Lopez-Squillini, J. Tribbie, S. Wayne, D. Williams, R. Williams, G. Yarn, O. Young
- Members Absent:** H. Blecher, W. Bullock, D. Capasso, G. Diaz, L. DiPierro, H. Fitzgerald, R. Glicksman MD, J. Hilger, J. Hornig, B. Ilardi, S. Levine MD, R. Marrero, L. Newman, R. Ortiz, M. Piazza, R. Schiffrin, K. Scott, K. Slade, L. Tackley
- Guests Present:** D. Abramson, B. Bennet, B. Cauthen, R. Gelb, S. Gray, N. Latterman
- Staff Present:** E. Fitzgerald, J. Lehane, T. Petro, B. Reyes
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I. Approval of March 10, 2004 Minutes

The agenda and minutes were approved as presented.

(The moment of silence was dedicated to Keith Cylar, co-founder of Housing Works, Inc., who passed away on April 5, 2004.)

II. Announcements

- R. Gelb distributed a handout on The Hunter College Center on AIDS, Drugs, & Community Health's mission statement and recent projects. He is working with the Center and advised that the Center's expertise can be especially helpful in evaluating programs.
- A. Paige-Bowman reported on the PWA/H Summit held on April 10 in Brooklyn at which some 120-130 attended including several from Westchester and Putnam. Workshops were offered on topics such as HIV rapid testing and partner notification.

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- A handout was distributed announcing a CDC satellite broadcast on April 29 on HIV Risk Reduction Strategies for Health Care Providers. R. Birchard advised that Westchester Medical Center/School of Public Health/Learning Center/Room 102 was a viewing site.
- A handout was distributed about the upcoming National Conference on Latinos and AIDS to be held May 24-25 at Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel in Philadelphia.
- A flyer was distributed on Women, HIV & Advocacy forums to be held over the next few months in various locations in NYC.
- A New York AIDS Coalition save-the-date flyer regarding AIDSWatch advocacy days in Washington, DC from May 17-19 and at local district offices on May 20 was distributed.
- A HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration) Information Bulletin on a number of HIV-related topics was distributed.

III. Update Reports

Living Together (V. Alvarez)

- A special LT-sponsored forum featuring Dr. Fong from the VA Hospital/Bronx on the interactions of various HIV-related medications will be held at ARCS on April 28, 1-3 PM.
- A workshop for PWA/H on viral loads and T-cell counts will be held this afternoon at St. John's Riverside Hospital.
- LT is continuing to work with Family Services of Westchester to provide support groups for women and adolescents.

Title II (K. Everett)

- Thanks were expressed to all those who participated in the very successful legislative breakfast held on March 18 in White Plains at which State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson was honored for her years of HIV/AIDS advocacy.
- The New York AIDS Coalition will sponsor five PWA/H for AIDSWatch advocacy days in Washington, DC from May 17-19. Hotel and meal costs will be covered, but transportation is not.
- The Mental Health/Substance Use Committee is sponsoring a forum on Adolescents and Misconceptions about HIV on April 28 at Cedar Knolls High School in Hawthorne.

Title I

- The HIV/AIDS Services Resource Directory went to the printer and should be available by the end of May. WCDOH was very pleased with the job that Lawrence Pagnoni & Associates did in compiling it. A distribution plan for directories and the wallet resource cards is being worked out.
- In response to the availability of free HIV rapid test kits offered by NYSDOH, Mount Vernon Hospital and St. John's Riverside Hospital will each receive 100 kits. To qualify, facilities had to submit their federal CLIA (waived test) number and be able to use the lot by the June 2004 expiration.

- WCDOH is in receipt of detailed Tri-County 2002 HIV and AIDS epidemiology data (dubbed the “matrix”) from NYSDOH. Individuals may notify T. Petro if they would like a copy sent.

IV. Presentation: CHAIN Report – Wave 2 (D. Abramson)

D. Abramson from Columbia University School of Public Health presented the findings from the second year Tri-County CHAIN Study. He gave a brief overview of how the study is conducted and the various reports it has produced as well who comprises the staff, the technical review team, and the project’s provider advisory group. He noted that the original 398-member cohort had decreased to 315 in the second year (with expectations of it dropping to 270 in the third year) prompting the need to recruit more PWA/H in order to maintain the cohort as a representative sample. The demographics of the Wave 2 cohort, however, are still closely matched to those of all Tri-County PWAs as reported by NYSDOH. In the second year, 285 interviews required 13 hours each of staff time with the remaining 30 more difficult-to-reach-and-complete cases needing 86.3 hours each.

One report presents estimates of those with HIV/AIDS in the care system and those not in care. Of an estimated 4,085 with HIV/AIDS (CHAIN estimate), the study calculated that 1,649 are in the public system of care (i.e., are receiving medical and/or supportive social services); 1, 715 are seen by private physicians; and 721 are not in the system at all.

Another report evaluates progress in reaching objectives in the Title I EMA (Eligible Metropolitan Area’s) strategic plan. Regarding health outcome objectives, problem drug users (PDU) and men who have sex with men (MSM) who are also PDUs have statistically lower health progress. The same holds for mental health progress. In social services, Rockland residents were reported to have statistically lower progress in improvements in accessing support and advocacy services and having their basic needs met. Regarding housing, there was a statistically significant difference (to the negative) in Wave 2 of those in need reporting receiving housing assistance. One of the Tri-County-specific objectives in the strategic plan was “improving the proportion of clients and providers who know how to access services.” Again, there was a statistically significant difference to the negative in the second year concerning this measure with Latinos and Rockland residents reported with lower progress.

Another report presented unmet service needs and indicated gaps in patient/provider (i.e., medical provider) communication, comprehensive case management, supportive and professional mental health services, alcohol/other drug use treatment, and transportation. There were significantly greater gaps reported for some special populations in certain service categories (e.g., women in patient/provider communication, Latinos in drug treatment, and Urban Westchester/Rockland residents in professional mental health).

The next report on Partner Notification findings (this one was based on 398 Wave 1 interviews) indicated that only 18% of medical providers asked about sex/drug partners. Of those 18% (71 individuals), 99% were asked about sex partners, but only 27% (16) about drug partners. Of the 71, 25 provided the medical provider with a contact name.

A few selected health analyses were presented: knowledge of T-cell count and proportion on HAART (antiretroviral therapy). Seventeen percent of Wave 2 Tri-County residents don’t know their T-cell number compared to only 4% in NYC. Associated factors with not knowing were having less than a high school education and reports that the medical provider does not spend enough time with the patient. Regarding HAART, 54% of those in NYC reported to be on antiretrovirals which is comparable for Urban Westchester residents (south of Route 287) at 50%, and Suburban Westchester/Putnam at 48%; however, Rockland residents fared much better at 71% reported on HAART. Factors associated with less reported HAART usage included being black (whites were twice as likely to be on antiretrovirals), and being unstably housed.

Major Wave 2 findings pointed to the need: 1) to improve patient/provider communication; 2) to reduce persistent racial/ethnic disparities (e.g., HAART utilization), and 3) to fill gaps in supportive/professional mental health, financial housing support, and transportation.

[As the meeting ran late, the final vote on whether to approve a one-time \$25,000 allocation to refresh the CHAIN cohort, (i.e., recruit more participants since the 398 had dwindled to 315) was not taken. There was consensus to conduct voting by mail instead with the results to be announced at the next meeting.]

V. Year 13 (3/1/03 – 2/29/04) Carryover Allocation Process

A review of the Year 14 spending plan was presented indicating that the substantial increase in the award means that \$400,000-\$500,000 in Year 13 carryover is available for one-time allocation. Given this unusual but enviable situation, WCDOH staff recommended extending a public solicitation to consumer groups, providers, task forces, service committees, etc. for one-time spending (to be expended by February 28, 2005) ideas for submission in May for discussion at the June Steering Committee meeting. There was consensus from the Committee to move forward.

VI. Planning for Year 15 (3/1/05 – 2/28/06)

Steering Committee members were reminded that Tri-County priorities for the Year 15 federal application have to be finalized by the June meeting for presentation to the New York HIV Planning Council's Planning & Evaluation Committee. The service committees will again be making recommendations to the Steering Committee for consideration.

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, May 12, 2004, 10:00 AM at Planned Parenthood - White Plains Center.