

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, May 12, 2004

Planned Parenthood – White Plains Center

APPROVED MINUTES

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

I. Approval of April 14, 2004 Minutes

The minutes were approved as presented.

II. Announcements

- On May 29, 2004, Danielle Williams' last name legally becomes Scholar. (Congratulations!)
- Copies of Westchester County's HIV prevention needs assessment were distributed for discussion at yesterday's Westchester AIDS Council meeting. The executive summary and recommendations were distributed to the Steering Committee. One of the highlights of the report is the minimum amount of prevention activity being conducted with the partners of those with HIV/AIDS.
- On Friday, June 4, The Sharing Community will hold an HIV prevention-focused health fair in Yonkers.

- A printed e-mail message from Adam Gurvitch, Director of Health Advocacy at the New York Immigration Coalition was distributed; it called for opposition to pending federal bill H.R. 3722, Access to Emergency Health Care Services, legislation that would deny some hospitals federal funding for serving (and require them to report to the Department of Homeland Security) undocumented residents who receive care in their emergency rooms.
- An HIV advocacy kit from the CAEAR (Cities Advocating Emergency AIDS Relief) Coalition was distributed which called for additional CARE Act funding; it included postcards and sample letters to send to Congress.

III. Update Reports

Living Together (V. Alvarez)

- Fifteen consumers participated in a special LT-sponsored forum at ARCS on April 28 featuring Dr. Fong from the VA Hospital/Bronx on the interactions of various HIV-related medications. LT will be surveying its members regarding future topics of interest to be presented.
- LT's annual picnic will be held on Saturday, August 14, 2004 in FDR Park in Yorktown.

Title II (K. Everett)

- The Mental Health/Substance Use Committee sponsored a well-attended forum on Adolescents and Misconceptions about HIV on April 28 at Cedar Knolls High School in Hawthorne.
- At the May 21 general network meeting to be held at ARCS, staff from NYC-based GMHC (Gay Men's Health Crisis) will present on HIV rapid testing.

Title I

- The newly released Tri-County HIV/AIDS Resource Directory of Service Providers was reviewed. B. Reyes will arrange distribution to individual agencies.
- The final vote on allocating an additional \$25,000 this year for the CHAIN cohort refresher was announced: 22 Yes/4 No/2 Abstain.

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

Year 13 Carryover

A memo to the HIV/AIDS community that was issued April 27 was reviewed. It called for suggestions of one-time funding initiatives to be supported with the Year 13 carryover, estimated at no more than \$500,000, for spending by February 28, 2005. Submissions are due to WCDOH by May 19 and will be presented for discussion at the June Steering Committee meeting. It was noted that the recommendations could also be used in establishing Year 15 service priorities.

Year 15 Priorities

Case Management (includes social services): The committee is exploring ways to better coordinate the delivery of case management with the assessment, referral and follow-up for ensuring access and maintenance in mental health services. In addition and in response to CHAIN findings, the committee has

been discussing how to improve case managers' communication skills. Comprehensive case management can be instrumental in getting consumers into medical treatment and improving adherence to treatment.

Mental Health Committee: 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 has been discussing the need to better integrate case management into all housing assistance programs. Further discussion will be held in the June meeting after a presentation of the first two years of CHAIN data specific to housing issues.

Health: The committee has been discussing two main issues: 1) 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, and 2) how to outreach to (reportedly black) men on the DL (down-low), i.e., those men who have sex with women and men yet do not consider themselves bisexual, no less gay.

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.

Regarding the down-low population, it was suggested (at the Steering Committee) that an ad hoc DL subcommittee might be formed and that perhaps the community could be surveyed for where and how to best engage those affected. (There was some difference of opinion on whether to focus on men, women or both at once.) It was noted that a local STD (Sexually Transmitted Disease) coalition has been working on ways to engage men via the internet (websites, chat rooms, etc.) and that a proposal is currently pending approval before the NYSDOH/AIDS Institute.

Health-Related Surveys: The Steering Committee also reviewed a survey form that was being 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. (\$83,038 has been encumbered this year for HIV primary care start-up in Putnam pending the survey results.)

Draft surveys were also reviewed which are to be sent to private physicians and publicly-funded medical facilities in the region to better estimate the number of people in HIV primary care in 2003 and the number specifically meeting the HRSA definition of unmet need, i.e., having had a viral load or CD4 test or been on antiretroviral therapy.

IV. New Business

M. Littles noted the need to better train case managers and care coordinators about how to help clients achieve a Medicaid spend-down. Some persons with HIV/AIDS have incomes that are just above the threshold to be Medicaid-eligible and therefore must rely on less comprehensive coverage such as ADAP and ADAP-Plus. As a training issue, it was suggested that this may be appropriate for the Case Management Committee to take on.

The next meeting (subsequently changed to June 17) was scheduled for Wednesday, June 9, 2004, 10:00 AM at Planned Parenthood - White Plains Center.