

**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 14, 2006  
Planned Parenthood – White Plains Center

**APPROVED MINUTES**

- Members Present:** V. Alvarez, D. Anderson, C. Archbald MD, T. Ashe, M. Bannister, B. Bento-Fleming, R. Birchard (for C. Brazil), H. Blecher, C. Carroll, R. Cestone (for S. Wayne), G. Diaz, L. Hilton, B. Ilardi, S. Levine MD, R. Maher, J. McGovern, J. Park, T. Payne, S. Pemberton, M. Piazza, R. Schiffrin, D. Scholar, K. Scott, A. Shurin, and G. Yarn
- Members Absent:** L. Beal, L. Bennett, C. Burwell, D. Capasso, H. Fitzgerald, D. Kittell, R. Leander, M. Littles, D. Marlow, A. Paige-Bowman, K. Slade, and O. Young
- Guests Present:** M. Lesieur (NYAC) and D. Pernell (LT)
- Staff Present:** J. Lehane T. Petro and B. Reyes
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**I. Approval of Minutes**

The April 12, 2006 minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

**II. Announcements**

- Basil Reyes reported seven agencies in the Tri-County region are interested in taking part in the CDC DEBI (Diffused Effective Behavioral Intervention) training “Healthy Relationships.” The University of Rochester will be conducting the training most likely in the early fall.
- A conference, “Trouble in Paradise: The Diaspora Responds to the HIV/AIDS Crisis in the Caribbean – at Home and Abroad,” will be held on June 22 at the Grace Baptist Church, Mount Vernon. For more information contact Dr. Gerald White-Davis from the International Consortium of Caribbean Professionals at 718-363-2433 or Yedidah Yehudah from WCDH at 914-813-5266.
- Gladys Diaz announced that the Second Annual Symposium sponsored by the Yonkers HIV/AIDS Providers’ Task Force will take place on June 23. The topics to be covered at the day-long forum include new HIV treatments and drug trials update, Ryan White CARE Act reauthorization, and HIV prevention strategies. In addition, a special award will be made to Victor Alvarez to honor his many contributions to the HIV/AIDS community over the years. To register please contact Tracy Ashe or Yelitza Acevedo at 914-428-6300.

- Anita Paige-Bowman and Dawn Kittle are currently on medical leave. Cards can be sent for forwarding to St. John's Riverside Hospital for Anita or Living Together for Dawn.
- June 27<sup>th</sup> is National HIV Testing Day. Four vans will be available for HIV Rapid Testing in Mount Vernon and New Rochelle. The sponsors of the event are Mount Vernon Hospital, Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center, Urban League, HOPWA, and New Rochelle Community Action Program. For information contact Larry Hilton at 914-667-1010. Other testing vans will include those of ARCS, Planned Parenthood, and Westchester Medical Center.
- A final memo on the Tri-County policy regarding the use of Title I funding for client incentives was distributed.

### **III. Update Reports**

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

- At the May LT meeting, Dr. Bruce Agins, medical director of the AIDS Institute, presented on the NYSDOH Quality of Care program and advised about the development of an updated curriculum for clinical services that will include improved communication between clinician and patient. He gathered information about clinical services from the client's point of view.
- The June LT meeting was held at TOUCH in Rockland County. At the meeting Tom Petro received input from consumers about the central role of case management. Due to the high turnover in case managers it is often difficult for PLWHA to develop a relationship with a new person and likewise receive consistent service. (Plans to re-RFP the case management services are scheduled for Year 17 of the Ryan White grant, pending the results of the CARE Act reauthorization process.)
- The annual LT picnic will be held on July 15<sup>th</sup> at FDR Park in Yorktown. This is a chance to see old friends, network with people, eat a great BBQ lunch, and most of all have fun. For more information and to make arrangements for transportation contact Gerald Yarn at 914-937-2320 x129.
- The AIDS Institute is developing a brochure concerning how to retain substance users with HIV/AIDS in medical care and substance use treatment. Consumers need more than just education about medications and treatment to be adherent. They need to know how treatment might affect them psychologically as well as physically. This new brochure will deal with both aspects of treatment adherence and education. Hopefully, consumers will be able to translate the "power of knowledge" into the "power of action."

#### **Title II** (T. Ashe)

- Network staff are working together with the Yonkers HIV/AIDS Providers Task Force on the June 23<sup>rd</sup> Symposium. Please RSVP soon so that food can be ordered for the event. For more information contact Tracy Ashe or Yelitza Acevedo at 914-428-6300.
- On June 29<sup>th</sup> the Network is planning a legislative visit to NYS Assemblyman George Latimer (D-Westchester) to talk about the need to support HIV/AIDS services in our region. If anyone is interested in joining the group visit please contact Tracy Ashe or Yelitza Acevedo at 914-428-6300. The Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) meeting to be held on June 27<sup>th</sup> will be devoted to preparing people through role plays for the legislative visit. A large CAB turnout will help ensure that the voice of PLWHA is heard. For more information contact Tracy Ashe or Yelitza Acevedo at 914-428-6300.

**IV. CARE Act Reauthorization Presentation** (*J. Park, Director of NYCDOH&MH's Office of HIV/AIDS Policy and M. Lesieur, Director of Federal Affairs at New York AIDS Coalition*)

The Ryan White CARE Act has not yet been reauthorized. A bill has been passed by the Senate's Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee and is under review in the House's Energy & Commerce Committee. The committees are trying to iron out issues in order to bring a final bill to both chambers for vote rather than vote on separate bills originating in each house and then appoint a conference committee to resolve differences, as is the usual process.

Jan and Matt made a detailed powerpoint presentation on the current draft (Senate HELP) bill with these major highlights:

- Title I would be restructured into three tiers, each determined by the number of living cases reported to the CDC in the last five years. (It's unclear if that means the number of new cases.) New York City and Tri-County would be a Tier I region for which the retention of the HIV Planning Council is mandated. Nassau/Suffolk would move to Tier II (planning council also mandated), and Dutchess County to Tier III (planning council is "advisory" only), with Dutchess' eventual elimination of eligibility for Title I funding. (Current Title I regions not reaching newly set living AIDS-case thresholds will be phased out.)
- New York State is opposing the use of a proposed 90% HIV "proxy" to determine the amount of the formula grant awards. The proxy was introduced to substitute for states without HIV reporting so that for every reported AIDS case the state would be given the benefit of a .9 HIV case. This would place NYS at a distinct disadvantage because in New York, with name-based HIV reporting, there are .55 HIV cases for each AIDS case. This is a major sticking point in the draft bill around which many advocacy efforts will continue to be made since, in effect, NY would be penalized in its grant award because the State – to its credit – accounts for each HIV case.
- The draft bill mandates that 75% of funding be allocated to "core services" which are identified in the draft and includes "medical case management including treatment adherence." (It's unclear if treatment adherence will remain a stand-alone service category.) The remaining 25% may be spent on "supportive services" and several examples (NOT including housing assistance, food, or legal services) are cited in the bill. A waiver of the 75/25 split is provided in the draft if it can be demonstrated that core services are already accessible in the state and that no ADAP waiting list exists.
- Severity of need index (SONI) is another issue of concern. The Tier I and II supplemental grants would be based on "demonstrated need" according to a to-be-developed index, supposedly an aggregate score which incorporates rates of increase in HIV, health care costs, limited access to health care and the impact of co-morbidities. Our EMAs could lose some funding due to a decrease in new HIV cases in the region.

**V. Title I Fiscal Issues (T. Petro)**

- Year 15 (3/1/05-2/28/06) carryover (underspending) was reported at \$296,049, a record low. The Steering Committee reaffirmed its commitment to allocate the funds to the HIV Uninsured Care Pools (ADAP, ADAP-Plus, HomeCare, and APIC).
- A revised Year 16 (3/1/06-2/28/07) budget was presented which indicated \$51,453 in unallocated funds after all of the Title I contract negotiations were completed. A reprogramming plan must be developed by which the unencumbered funds will be allocated later this year to the HIV Uninsured Care Pools in order to fulfill an original commitment of \$400,000, or to other pressing needs such as transportation, for example.

- A Year 17 (3/1/07-2/29/08) budget must be finalized at the next Steering Committee meeting in order for the NY HIV Planning Council to vote on a total budget for the Year 17 application to HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration). It was suggested not adding new priorities (treatment adherence was added last year) because changes to the CARE Act are imminent and will likely dictate, for example, that 75% of funds be used for “core” services, whatever that final definition will include. There will probably be new restrictions on support services as well.
- The Committee reviewed the final ranking of priorities, completed in the spring, indicating case management with the highest score (94 of 100 points) and legal services, the lowest, at 57. The reauthorization of the CARE Act will certainly necessitate revisiting the rankings and will probably dictate that some service models be modified.

## **VI. Review of 2004 Epi Data**

A four-page handout was distributed on the most current data received from the NYSDOH Bureau of HIV/AIDS Epidemiology. The data cited cases through 12/31/04 reported as of 2/2/06 and excluded pediatric cases, but included inmates. Data was presented for each county with a summary page for the entire Tri-County region indicating 6,087 cumulative AIDS cases, 2,799 people living with AIDS, and 1,113 living with HIV. A future presentation will be made on regional trends in the epidemic.

**Next Steering Committee Meeting**  
**July 12, 2006**  
**10:00 am-12:00 pm**  
**Planned Parenthood – White Plains Center**  
**175 Tarrytown Road**