

Andrew J. Spano  
County Executive

Department of Health

Joshua Lipsman, MD,JD,MPH  
Commissioner

**TRI-COUNTY RYAN WHITE HATMA  
PART A STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING  
Wednesday July 9, 2008  
Nyack Hospital**

**APPROVED MINUTES**

Members Present: V. Alvarez, C. Archbald MD, B. Bennet, B. Bento-Fleming, L. Butler (for R. Schiffrin), M. Cubria (for C. Carroll), M. Donoghue, H. Jones, C. Joudy (for B. Ilardi), P. Taddeo (for S. Levine MD), R. Maher, M. Mahoney, J. McGovern, R. Nathan, T. Otisi, M. Piazza, S. Riordan, J. Ruiz-Perez, D. Scholar, K. Scott, H. Sherwin, A. Shurin, G. Yarn

Members Absent: T. Aliotta, S. Havelka, M. Bannister, L. Beal, C. Brazil, C. Burwell, D. Capasso, C. Carroll, D. Egan, H. Fitzgerald, D. Kittell, R. Leandre, M. Littles, R. Meyer, A. Paige-Bowman, S. Pemberton, K. Slade, M. Velazquez

Guests Present: L. Bagnarol (Victims Assistance Services), M. Fede (Nyack Hospital), E. Whitemore (Westchester Dept. of Health)

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

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**I. Approval of June 11, 2008 Committee Minutes**

A motion (R. Maher, D. Scholar) to approve the minutes as presented passed unanimously.

**II. Announcements**

- Tom Petro introduced new staff members Felix Avellanet and Linda Hakim hired in June who will serve as Part A program managers and service planners.
- On June 6 Danielle Scholar of Mount Vernon's Housing of People with AIDS program (HOPWA) and Ryan Nathan of the Urban League of Westchester coordinated a talent show with the City of Mount Vernon. Danielle reported that 350 children attended the event that included HIV testing and HIV education. Prizes were also distributed to children who participated in the event.
- On June 27, National Testing Day, Project W.A.V.E (War Against the Virus Escalating) sponsored HIV (rapid) testing at Pathmark's parking lot in Mount Vernon and tested over 80 individuals, none of whose tests were reactive.



- Henry Jones advised that Mount Vernon Hospital added Monroe College in New Rochelle as a new HIV testing site under its Part A-funded early intervention services program; testing will take place twice per month. Sound Shore Medical Center is also conducting testing through the student health office at the college.

### **III. Victims Assistance Services (VAS) Presentation (L. Bagnarol, E. Whittemore)**

Laura Bagnarol, sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) coordinator at VAS and Ellen Whittemore, health investigator from WCDH, presented on the NYS “Defendant HIV Testing Law” passed in November 2007 allowing – at the request of a survivor – for the testing of an “indicted” sexual assault assailant. Testing must be requested in writing to the court within 24 hours of the defendant being charged and is conducted by a county or state health department. Handouts were distributed regarding the services provided by VAS, a non-for-profit organization which can intervene to assist a survivor in receiving a medical examination, obtaining reimbursement for the exam, and getting free antiretroviral medications from the NYS Crime Victims Board. For more information about the program, contact Laura Bagnarol at [laura@victimassist.org](mailto:laura@victimassist.org) or at 914-345-3113.

### **IV. Update Reports**

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

- Victor advised he would be attending the national quality of care meeting in August sponsored by HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration). One pressing issue is the need for “credentialed” HIV medical specialists.
- At LT’s June meeting, Frank Negrón of NADAP presented on the agency’s new Project STEP program which prepares PLWHA for returning to the work force and assists in placing them in jobs. Barbara Bento-Fleming also made a housing presentation, as there was much concern over HRSA’s new policy of limiting Ryan White funding to 24 months of housing services and/or rent and utility subsidies.
- LT will present on health literacy at Open Door Family Medical Centers on June 30.
- The next LT meeting is scheduled for July 24 at which Urban League will present on the ADAP program. There will be no August meeting.
- The Annual LT Picnic will be held on Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup> at FDR State Park (Section 3BS) in Yorktown from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

#### **Part B (B. Bennet)**

- The first meeting of the Hudson Valley HIV Care Network’s (interim) Executive Committee will be held on July 17 at the Thayer Hotel in West Point. General Network meetings may be held in Fishkill with the first one tentatively scheduled for October 24. Video conferencing is being explored for smaller committee meetings.
- Humberto Cruz, Director of the NYSDOH/AIDS Institute, will be conducting a Network “listening tour” around NYS, the purpose of which is to learn first-hand about local barriers to care and needs and gaps in services. (It was subsequently clarified that the tour is not to receive input on the re-solicitation of state funding). The Hudson Valley’s tour date is scheduled for September 17 at the Fishkill Holiday Inn. The morning is set for clinicians; Mr. Cruz will hear directly from PLWHA at a lunch session; and social service providers will meet with him in the afternoon.
- Barbara advised she is looking to hire a program assistant for the Network.

## V. Ryan White Part A Updates/Issues (T. Petro)

### Electronic Financial Transfer

In its ongoing cost-savings efforts, Westchester County is moving away from mailing vendors checks (some 80,000 a year are issued), and instead has sent out forms requesting agency information so that EFTs can soon begin instead.

### Data Link Training: Primary Care Status Measures

Two trainings are scheduled for Part A agency staff to learn how to properly enter PCSM data into AIRS (AIDS Institute Reporting System): July 31 at Data Link's office in NYC and August 12 at Westchester County's training center at 112 E. Post Rd. in White Plains. All medical case management and early intervention services programs must learn how to enter this data so that it may be included in the monthly data extracts that Data Link receives and NYCDOHMH evaluates for outcomes.

### Year 19 (3/1/09 – 2/28/10) Award Percentage

Based on the recently published HIV/AIDS surveillance report for 2006 which appears on the NYSDOH website, the percentage of the EMA's (Eligible Metropolitan Area) living HIV and AIDS cases attributed to the Tri-County region is still at 5.1%. Therefore, according to correspondence received from the NYCDOHMH, next year's Part A award will remain at 5.1% of the EMA's annual grant from HRSA. (In previous years, the percentage was based on preliminary unpublished data for the last calendar year.)

### Year 18 (3/1/08 – 2/28/09) Base Reprogramming Plan

In the Year 18 budget passed by the Steering Committee earlier in the year, \$97,451 in unallocated award funding was "parked" in the ADAP line as a placeholder. Today the Committee unanimously approved a plan to allocate those funds to the housing (\$12,000), transportation (\$53,000), and food categories. (One housing provider declined an enhancement.) There being four food programs, WCDH staff was to work out a formula for distribution for the remaining \$32,451 (subsequently distributed to three providers, as the fourth food provider declined an enhancement). At its next meeting WCDH staff will ask the Committee to consider an enhancement for legal services.

### Revised HIV/AIDS Provider Service Directory

Steering Committee members indicated that a revised directory (the last published in 2004) should be made available online and be comprehensive, i.e., include all service providers in the region who address a need of PLWHA, rather than just those providers known specifically as ASOs (AIDS Service Organizations) or whose mission includes serving PLWHA in addition to other populations. The Committee also wants a limited number of hardcopy directories to be made available to PLWHA and providers. (The 2004 printing was so huge that copies of the outdated directory are still available at WCDH for distribution.)

### Year 19 (3/1/09 – 2/28/10) Federal Appropriations & HATMA Reauthorization

Jan Park from NYCDOHMH was unable to attend the meeting so no update was provided.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 10, 2008**  
**10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**Nyack Hospital**