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County Executive

Department of Health

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Commissioner

**TRI-COUNTY RYAN WHITE  
“PART A” STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

Wednesday, September 12, 2007  
Nyack Hospital – Krutz Auditorium

**APPROVED MINUTES**

- Members Present:** T. Aliotta (formerly Saari), V. Alvarez, D. Anderson (for K. Scott), C. Archbald MD, C. Ardizzone (for B. Ilardi), M. Bannister, B. Bento-Fleming, H. Blecher, S. Brandon, C. Brazil, C. Carroll, G. Diaz, A. Hardman (for C. Burwell), S. Havelka (for Y. Christofilis), V. Jones (for R. Schiffrin), R. Maher, J. Park, M. Piazza, R. Schiffrin, K. Scott, H. Sherwin, A. Shurin, P. Taddeo (for S. Levine MD), S. Wayne, and G. Yarn
- Members Absent:** L. Beal, D. Capasso, H. Fitzgerald, D. Kittell, R. Leandre, M. Littles, J. McGovern, R. Nathan, A. Paige-Bowman, S. Pemberton, D. Scholar, K. Slade, L. Tackley, and M. Velazquez
- Guests Present:** M. Donoghue (RCDOH), D. Garcia (ODFMC), T. Otisi (VOA), M. Simon (RCDOH), and S. Sullam (RCDOH)
- Staff Present:** J. Lehane, T. Petro, R. Recchia and B. Reyes
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**I. Approval of July 11, 2007 Steering Committee Minutes**

A motion (G. Diaz, R. Maher) to approve the minutes passed with one correction on page two which clarified that “... Westchester Jewish Community Services outstations mental health workers *Tuesdays through Fridays* at ARCS in Hawthorne.”

**II. Announcements**

- Harriet Blecher, the Director of Social Work at the Rockland County Department of Health, is retiring after 30 years of devoted service. Harriet was honored with a cake and many well wishes as she begins a new (hopefully more relaxing) chapter of her life. Harriet has always been a tenacious advocate for increasing and improving health and supportive services and the clear winners have been Rockland residents living with HIV/AIDS.
- Maura Donoghue has been appointed as the new Rockland County Department of Health Director of Social Work and Mary Simon will assume a new position as Assistant Director of Social Work.

**Part A (formerly Title I) Steering Committee Meeting**

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- Claire Brazil announced that there were two open positions at Westchester Medical Center --- nurse practitioner and a mental health worker (social worker or clinical social worker).
- Diane Anderson reported that the HOPE Center had opened its COBRA case management program and is now accepting referrals. There are two other COBRA programs in the Tri-County region (TCR) operated by ARCS and VOA.
- Alexander Hardman has been appointed to the New York Ryan White Part A HIV Planning Council and will represent the TCR at the meetings in New York City.

**III. Update Reports**

Living Together (V. Alvarez/G. Yarn)

- The annual LT picnic was held on August 4, 2007 at FDR State Park in Yorktown. Over 175 people attended with Greyston Health Services supplying much of the transportation. Attendance continues to grow each year and this year's picnic cost about \$1,800.
- LT is helping the NYSDOH/AIDS Institute establish an adolescent advisory group; Westchester Medical Center, which receives AI funding for its adolescent program, submitted two names.
- A four-day training was held in August by the Leadership Training Institute based at Cicatelli Associates, Inc. in NYC in conjunction with the NYSDOH/AI, the purpose of which was to assist participants develop "mentoring" relationships, i.e., where a trained PLWHA would be paired with another to help adhere to one's HIV primary medical care and treatment.
- The next LT meeting will be on September 27<sup>th</sup> at ARCS. Mary Mahoney, staff attorney from Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, will present on issues everyone should know about: credit and debt management, and Kilwanna Jordan, nutrition coordinator at ARCS, will conduct a nutritional workshop.
- At the last Steering Committee meeting it was reported that some LT members are experiencing mental health (e.g., suicidal ideation) and sleep deprivation issues. Subsequently, it was learned that one of the LT members, a man age 77, took his life. LT members are being urged to take advantage of mental health services offered by the Ryan White Part A-funded program at Family Services of Westchester, Inc. and also by Westchester Jewish Community Services which outstations mental health workers Tuesdays through Fridays at ARCS in Hawthorne.

Part B (formerly Title II) (S. Brandon)

- The Mental Health/Substance Use Committee is sponsoring a forum titled "Treatment Adherence – Priorities & Perspectives" on September 26, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM at ARCS about how to help clients prioritize their health and treatment.
- The Network's annual legislative breakfast will be held on November 1 at the Doral Arrowwood in Rye Brook. Members are invited to meet local officials and advocate for funding for continued and increased HIV/AIDS and to advise them about the impact of Ryan White reauthorization(s).

Part A (formerly Title I) (T. Petro)

- This year, due to changes in the newly authorized Ryan White legislation, the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) is funding the CHAIN study for the *entire* Ryan White Part A eligible metropolitan area (EMA). The Steering Committee had previously earmarked \$28,000 for the possible closeout of the CHAIN project in the TCR. The Committee agreed to contribute the \$28,000 this year towards the newly established TCR CHAIN budget which will be approximately \$170,000 per year (i.e., half of the previous year's annual budget). Dr. Peter Messeri, principal investigator, will present the new TCR CHAIN research design at the October 10<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting.
- The Year 18 (3/1/08 – 2/28/09) base application guidance has been released by HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration). Mike Isbell has been retained by NYCDOHMH again to write the narrative of the application. The last two applications for base and MAI (Minority AIDS Initiative) funding received scores of 97 and 98, respectively, of a possible 100 points. The Year 18 base application is due on November 5, 2007.
- Jan Park reported that the CAEAR (Cities Advocating Emergency AIDS Relief) Coalition – a Washington, DC-based advocacy group representing Ryan White Parts A and C (Part C funds early intervention services) – has been working with representatives in Congress to introduce a new bill to replace the current Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act which expires in 2009. Coalition members are also advocating for increased Ryan White appropriations next year for both base and MAI funding, as the program has faced flat funding for the past three years while the need for services has been increasing. (The EMA's Year 17 grant application, previously distributed, is posted on the website – [www.nyhiv.org](http://www.nyhiv.org).)
- A notice was distributed regarding the Part A Medical Case Management (MCM) Services (including Treatment Adherence) RFP which will be released on September 19. The current programs – case management, outpatient medical care, and treatment adherence – will terminate on February 29, 2008. The RFP model follows months of discussion among case management and primary care providers, consumers and the planning staff of WCDH, largely in response to the MCM “core” service category established in the newly authorized Ryan White legislation. (The EMA must meet a minimum of 75% funding for core services or apply for a waiver.)
- Underspending in the TCR was at a record 2.7% low in Year 16 (3/1/06 – 2/28/07) --- only \$147,104. Combined with NYC's underspending, the EMA's Year 16 carryover request at \$2,667,071 was submitted to HRSA last week for allocation to ADAP.

**IV. Part A Budget Votes (T. Petro)**

Year 17 (8/1/07 – 7/31/08) MAI Award and Budget

A spreadsheet was distributed which included the Year 17 base (formula/supplemental) spending plan (3/1/07 – 2/29/08) approved in July and a proposed budget for the newly awarded Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) grant to the EMA at \$9,347,777. Tri-County's 5.1% award at \$476,737 is based on the proportion of those living with AIDS in this region of the EMA. After the maximum 10% (\$47,674) is set aside for WCDH program administration, the remaining \$429,063 is allocated for the continuation of three formerly-funded early intervention services (EIS) programs. (A fourth outpatient medical/maintenance in care program was transferred to base funding.) The EIS funding was evenly distributed across the three programs giving them each what may be a permanent “bump up” in funding if future MAI awards are comparable and the Steering Committee approves. The Committee unanimously approved the MAI spending plan as presented.

The spreadsheet also included a proposed spending plan for the \$194,768 in unencumbered (available) Year 17 base award funding discussed at the previous meeting at which the Committee approval agreed to enhance food, housing and transportation services. In the interim, WCDH staff canvassed the Committee by e-mail regarding a suggested enhancement also to mental health services to address a waiting list at one agency, and a proposed increase for legal services --- a category whose funding had been significantly reduced in recent years largely to due HRSA policy changes. (Some members e-mailed back questions which were answered; no one objected to these additional enhancements.) The proposed plan included: \$20,000 for mental health; \$81,402 for food; \$25,000 for legal services; \$60,000 for transportation; and \$8,366 (originally earmarked at \$30,000) for a two-month closeout of the Council of Community Services of NYS, Inc. technical assistance contract. Housing providers declined an increase largely due to adequate HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS) funding.

Regarding concern that no award funds were being allocated for ADAP this year, it was noted that traditionally carryover funding – not award funding – has been appropriated for ADAP.

The Committee was advised that WCDH had begun processing mid-year budget modifications likely to result in additional funds becoming available in the next month as providers reduce budgets they realize will not be fully spent. WCDH requested that any additional “take-down” funding be allocated across the food programs whose food product and delivery costs increase annually and whose spending is almost always at 100% even with enhancements.

A motion was made by Andi Shurin to accept the proposed Year 17 enhancement spending plan – including the authorization to add extra budget take-down dollars to the food programs – as presented, but with one amendment to add another \$10,000 (of those take-down funds) to transportation for a total of \$70,000. The transportation program reassessed its spending since the July meeting and found that increases in the volume as well as the costs of taxi rides were creating a larger potential deficit than expected. The motion was seconded (C. Carroll) and unanimously approved by the Steering Committee.

During the discussion of the transportation program budget, the Committee was advised that the Westchester County Department of Social Services was not approving some potentially Medicaid-reimbursable rides because the time of the ride necessarily was after 6 PM, or because the patient’s medical provider – though sited within the county – was not located close enough to the patient’s home community. Some providers stated, however, that they had success – after having to appeal – in arranging Medicaid transportation even if it was across county lines (e.g., into the Bronx). Mike Piazza, Putnam County Commissioner for Social Services, suggested that such issues could be resolved through discussions between the Westchester Commissioners of Health and Social Services.

**The Next Steering Committee Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 10, 2007, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM at Planned Parenthood – White Plains Center.**