

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, September 13, 2006
Krutz Auditorium, Nyack Hospital, Rockland County

APPROVED MINUTES

- Members Present:** V. Alvarez, M. Amelio, D. Anderson (for K. Scott), C. Archbald, MD, T. Ashe, B. Bento-Fleming, H. Blecher, C. Brazil, D. Capasso, R. Cestone (for S. Wayne), M. Cubria (for C. Carroll), G. Diaz, B. Ilardi, M. Littles, R. Maher, M. Piazza, R. Schiffrin, A. Shurin, L. Tackley, and P. Taddeo (for S. Levine, MD)
- Members Absent:** M. Bannister, L. Beal, L. Bennett-Rodriquez, C. Burwell, H. Fitzgerald, D. Kittell, R. Leandre, J. McGovern, A. Paige-Bowman, S. Pemberton, D. Scholar, K. Slade, G. Yarn and O. Young
- Guests Present:** R. Nathan (Urban League), C. Revesz (Nyack Hospital), and S. Sullam (RCDOH)
- Staff Present:** T. Petro and B. Reyes
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I. Approval of Minutes

The July 12, 2006 meeting minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

II. Announcements

- Lisa Tackley from the NYSDOH/AIDS Institute and Tracy Ashe from the Urban League have been appointed as voting members of the Title I Steering Committee.
- Doug Capasso announced that Hudson River HealthCare's mobile medical unit (which sees 12 patients a day) will no longer provide medical services because of gas prices and funding issues, but counseling & testing (C&T) services will continue on the van. HRHC's C&T program is up at all 14 sites using Ora-quick; the bilingual staff are directing their attention on testing youth. HRHC has hired Myriam Sterling, M.D., an infectious disease specialist who speaks four languages, and also filled two HIV-dedicated positions --- one for mental health and the other for treatment adherence. In addition, HRHC has been awarded a \$100,000 capacity-building grant from HRSA (Health Resources & Services Administration) for a dental program which employs five dentists in Peekskill.

- Pat Taddeo announced that Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center has hired Dr. Marva Scarlett, a new child psychiatrist.
- Claire Brazil announced that Westchester Medical Center has appointed Dr. Gary Wormser as interim medical director to replace Dr. Harold Horowitz while a permanent replacement is being recruited.
- Gladys Diaz announced that Sharing Community's Title II-funded food and nutrition program will end as of September 30, 2006. The loss will include support for food vouchers and a part-time dietician. (The NYSDOH/AI chose instead to fund a program that can serve a wider geographic population, Gladys stated.) Also, SC will begin shortly to operate a mobile unit to conduct C&T. Finally, Gladys announced that on September 23 she will be ordained an Episcopal priest at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in NYC. Congratulations, Reverend Diaz!
- And congratulations to Ryan Nathan who, with Larry Hilton's recent retirement, was appointed Urban League's director of HIV services.
- A flyer was distributed regarding the Council of Community Services of NYS's forum "Managing Contract Funding: The Basics and Beyond" to be held September 26, 930 am – 12 pm at the Yonkers Public Library.
- A source sheet was distributed for accessing a federal internet site of federal "Glossary of HIV/AIDS-Related Terms" in both English and Spanish whose link is also on the WCDH website.
- A voter registration form was distributed in response to the upcoming October 13 registration deadline for voting in the November 7 elections.
- A service directory list of all current-year Tri-County Title I providers was distributed.

III. Update Reports

Living Together (V. Alvarez)

- Over 135 people attended the Living Together picnic at FDR Park in Yorktown on July 15.
- Victor and Gerald will begin conducting treatment adherence educational support groups. (Gerald could not attend today's meeting since he has been ill and is recovering at home.)
- Nestor Roche, former Tri-County resident and employee of several local AIDS organizations, has been appointed chief of C&T at the District of Columbia's DOH in Washington.
- The next LT meeting will be held on September 21, 1-3 pm at Family Services in White Plains.

Title II (T. Ashe)

- The Case Management Committee has created a Tri-County-wide CM brochure, especially important for new hires, but some information is still being collected before it's finalized.
- The Case Management and Housing Committees will hold a WCDSS workshop on Medicaid and CASAC programs on October 17, from 930-1130 am at the Urban League office in White Plains. (A flyer was distributed.)

- The next Network legislative visit is scheduled for September 20 at 1030 am to NYS Assemblyman Adam Bradley's office. The Network CAB (consumer's Community Advisory Board) and the Community Awareness Committee are committed to attending.
- The next CAB meeting will be held on September 26, 1-3 pm at St. John's Riverside Hospital.
- Andrea Torres from the Westchester Hispanic Coalition is working on an immigration law presentation to be scheduled later this year.
- Tracy, along with the Title II Steering Committee, are working with Matt Lesieur from the New York AIDS Coalition on a public relations event highlighting AIDS services in the Tri-County region; NYS Congressional representative Nita Lowey's participation is being sought.
- With Diane Anderson stepping down as Case Management Committee co-chair, two new co-chairs have been appointed --- Diane Ahmed from Grace Church Community Center and Lakeisha Dawkins from Mount Vernon Hospital.

CARE Act Reauthorization (T. Petro)

The Ryan White CARE Act has not yet been reauthorized. A bicameral (House/Senate) bipartisan (Republican/Democratic) committee continues to work on the legislation. The current House bill that was drafted would result in a major loss of funds for both NYC and NYS over the next four years, largely due to how HIV epi data would figure into the revised formula for distribution of funds as well as the weakening of "hold harmless" provisions. This has prompted testimony by NYSDOH/AIDS Institute director Dr. Guthrie S. Birkhead and many other advocates at a recent Ryan White CARE Act "stakeholder meeting" in Washington. It appears that the reauthorization committee is looking to have a final bill drafted for both houses to vote on by September 30, the end of the federal fiscal year. News updates are being distributed by the New York AIDS Coalition (www.nyaidcoalition.org).

DEBI Training (B. Reyes)

After contacting seven different possible training sites, WCDH proposes that the four-day Healthy Relationships DEBI (Diffused Enhanced Behavioral Intervention) training be held at a meeting room space in the Westchester County Center in White Plains which offers a 25% County discount and free TV& VCR rental. The other locations were either not available for the four full days or the costs were too high. Catering – consisting of a continental breakfast, a box sandwich lunch, and an afternoon coffee break – would be provided by CulinArt which has a contract with the County Center and is located in the building. The estimated cost of the entire training with food will not exceed more than \$3,500.

Title I Year 17 (3/1/07 – 2/29/08) HRSA Application (T. Petro)

WCDH is working with NYCDOHMH to submit next year's application to HRSA by the due date, October 2. Since the CARE Act has not been reauthorized, and since the CARE Act of 2000 mandated that HRSA incorporate HIV epi data into the funding formula beginning with the 2007 awards, HRSA has decided to use such data only for states with "name-based" HIV reporting. The less reliable "code-based" reporting, which often duplicates HIV counts and is utilized currently in some 17 states, will not be used by HRSA, placing those states at a distinct disadvantage. NYS implemented name-based reporting in 2000.

IV. VOTE: Unallocated Title I Year 16 (3/1/06-2/28/07) Funding (T. Petro)

The Ryan White Title I Steering Committee discussed a number of competing service priorities for the allocation of about \$70,000 in available Year 16 funding. The first request was for \$3,500 to cover the cost of the space and catering for the Healthy Relationships DEBI training.

A second proposal was made to distribute the funds to C&T programs to purchase rapid testing kits and/or pay for lab work now that the kits and lab testing are no longer available for free, and because the kits are being used in greater and greater quantities in an all-out effort to stem the spread of HIV and bring as many people as possible into HIV primary care.

As has been done historically, the Committee also considered the needs of food, housing, and transportation programs rather than other services because these programs would produce the most direct benefit to PLWHA, potentially providing additional meals, pantry supplies and food vouchers; rental and utility subsidies; and taxi rides and bus tokens. Regarding food services, it was noted that one agency will be losing its Title II grant award to distribute food vouchers, and other programs have seen a marked loss of private funding which at one time was a reliable source to fill service gaps and address increased costs items such as gasoline, for example. In addition, WCDH has heard from at least one housing provider and the transportation program, both of which could use additional funding to fill shortfalls or expand services.

It was also suggested that the funds be used to support an upgraded standard of HIV primary care, i.e., for the screening and treatment of hepatitis C. However, it was noted that the NYSDOH/AIDS Institute is currently addressing this very standard.

In the end, there was consensus from the Steering Committee to allocate a maximum of \$3,500 for the DEBI training, and to allow the WCDH to canvass the Title I providers of food, housing and transportation for their needs and ability to spend additional funds by February 28, 2007, the end of the Title I fiscal year. Funds will be awarded by the Department taking into account need, spending and performance levels to date, and what the extra funds will actually buy. Given that there are seven programs eligible, the impact a very small grant will make will also be considered.

The Committee agreed that using the extra resources for C&T was not the best use of funds since the service has been one largely associated with prevention rather than care, and that the provision of more units of food, housing and transportation to address the daily living needs of those already living with HIV/AIDS just could not compare to an uncertain result of paying for more test kits.

Next Steering Committee Meeting:
Wednesday, October 11, 2006
10:00 am-12:00 pm
Planned Parenthood – White Plains Center
175 Tarrytown Road