

# Research & Evaluation Committee

## MEETING SUMMARY

**Monday, September 16, 2019, 10AM-12PM**  
 Willing Heart Community Center  
 555 Martin Luther King Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102

PRESENT	EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED
1. Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. (Chair) 2. Summer Brown (Secretary) 3. Natalie Brown-Muhammad 4. Kasny Damas 5. Travis Love 6. Debbie Mohammed 7. Warren Poole 8. Sharon Postel (Non-Voting)	9. Patricia Moore 10. Providencia Rodriguez	11. Corey DeStefano (Vice-Chair)

**Guests:** Karen Ehiri  
**Staff:** Tania Guaman, Vicky Saguy

The meeting agenda was amended to include the Approval of the July Meeting Summary, the Review of the 2019 Epidemiological Profile, the 2019 Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism, and the voting in of a new member of the Research & Evaluation Committee.

**1. Welcome and Moment of Silence**

Ann Bagchi, Chair of the Research and Evaluation Committee, called this meeting to order at 10:10AM. A moment of silence was observed for all those living with, those who are affected by, and for those who have passed from HIV/AIDS.

**2. Roll Call**

Tania Guaman, Support Staff, conducted the roll call. Quorum was established at this meeting.

**3. Public Testimony**

No public testimony at this meeting.

**4. Review Action Steps**

Action Steps	Responsible Party
1. Present Behavioral Health Cascade	Sharon Postel
2. Prepare a report for the EIRCs based on the Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan Presentation	Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. and Support Staff
3. 2019 Epidemiological Report to include data by number of new diagnosis	Sharon Postel
4. Follow up on question regarding the REC IHAP survey	Support Staff

Sharon Postel, Consultant, is still working on the Behavioral Health Cascade since new CHAMP data was recently released. Postel mentioned that the data shows a higher use of mental health screenings.

Karen Ehiri, Recipient, provided a summary of the IHAP for review by the Committee. This report will be shared with the EIRCs via email along with the IHAP presentation.

Ann Bagchi, Ph.D., REC Chair, informed the Committee that Jamir Tuten would not be a formal member of the Research and Evaluation Committee, but that Travis Love will be a member and will represent Rutgers at REC Meetings.

#### **4. Approval of the Meeting Summaries from July 15 and August 19, 2019**

The July 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting summary was reviewed at last month's meeting and no edits were recommended. Ann Bagchi, Ph.D., REC Chair, asked for a motion to approve the July Meeting Summary. Natalie Brown-Muhammad motioned to approve. Warren Poole seconded the motion. The August 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting summary was reviewed. No edits were recommended. Ann Bagchi, Chair, asked for a motion to approve the August Meeting Summary. Warren Poole motioned to approve with recommended edits. Natalie Brown- Muhammad seconded the motion.

#### **5. Updates from other Committees**

- **COC – Continuum of Care Committee**

Tania Guaman, Support Staff, provided the COC report. The Continuum of Care Committee held a meeting on Thursday, September 12, 2019. The following occurred at the meeting:

- Quorum was not established
- A discussion on the Public Charge Rule Concern was held. Tania Guaman, Support Staff briefly explained that the Public charge rule expands the definition of what is public charge so that those who apply for cash assistance benefits and maintain those benefits over an extended period might risk their path to citizenship. Guaman reported that a COC provider has noticed that some clients refuse services due to a fear that receiving public benefits will negatively impact their legal status. Guaman also noted the COC's recommendation regarding this issue to email DHSTS for more information on the impact of this Rule on patients served by the Ryan White Program.
- CHAMP presentation by Jason Petteway and Dennis Leary, (CHAMP Programmers). Petteway informed COC members that weekly online CHAMP training classes are held every Wednesday from 11AM until 2PM. Anyone interested can contact Jason to participate. During this special presentation to the COC, Petteway reviewed useful CHAMP features such as: 1) how to know to if a patient needs to get seen by their primary care provider, 2) how to set up referrals, 3) if to figure out if a referral has been followed up and completed, how to set up referrals, 4) if the a person was certified, 4) to determine when was the last time they a person were was certified and 5) how the process to determine client eligibility for services.
- Some additional features were: agency reports that help prevent duplication of services; performance outcome reports that monitor agency compliance on patient's requirements such as viral load suppression behavioral, mental health screenings and other services. Lastly, the trainers noted that some fields in CHAMP expire every 6 months to make sure that agencies go back and follow up on those fields.

In the mention of the Public Charge Discussion, Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, mentioned that Dr. Figueroa was the provider who brought up that case to the COC Committee. Bagchi also

mentioned the case was confusing because the patient was residing in New York and was moving to New Jersey to receive services, thinking that she would then be safe. However, Bagchi, PhD. noted that the Public Charge Rule is a Federal policy, which would affect all states regardless of where the patient resides. Bagchi, Ph.D. also mentioned the COC's recommendation to keep track of how many patients, legal residents or otherwise are refusing services due to fear of the Public Charge Rule.

During the CHAMP'S Presentation's discussion, Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, noted that out of all qualifying women, only 26% of women had received a pap smear. Bagchi also mentioned her recommendation to Dennis Leary to develop a collaboration with the Rutgers Nursing Program so that Nurse Practitioners can work on quality improvement activities using CHAMP Data. Bagchi noted that she had emailed Ketlen Alsbrook (Recipient) and Dennis Leary (CHAMP Programmer) about this possible partnership.

The next COC meeting will be held on October 10, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

- **CPC – Comprehensive Planning Committee**

Tania Guaman, Support Staff, provided the CPC report. The last Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting was held on Friday, September 13, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center in Newark. The following occurred at the meeting:

- The 2019 Epidemiological Profile data was reviewed during this meeting. It was noted that the distribution of the HIV epidemic in the five counties has been consistent. It was noted that 71% of the HIV epidemic lie in the five largest cities in the EMA including Newark, Irvington, Elizabeth, East Orange, and Plainfield.
- The 2019 Needs Assessment Data was also considered in the process of finalizing the ranking and percentage of NEMA-wide service categories for FY'2020.
- The FY'2020 allocation recommendations were finalized and approved.
- The 2020 Minority AIDS Initiative Ranking was reviewed and approved.
- The 2020 Priority Setting and Resource Allocation Report was finalized and approved. The 2020 PSRA will be sent for Planning Council's approval at the meeting on Wednesday.

The next CPC meeting will be held on November 8, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

- **CIA/CC – Consumer Involvement Activities/Community Conversations**

Tania Guaman, Support Staff, provided the CIA report. The last CIA/CC meeting was a Summer Cook Out in collaboration with the Peter Ho Clinic, held on August 20 at 268 MLK Jr. Blvd. in Newark, NJ from 5 to 7PM. The following occurred at the meeting:

- Support Staff was able to get to know community members and hear their concerns and feedback. Support Staff took the opportunity to know how much consumers knew about the Planning Council and possibly applying for the Planning Council.
- A consumer from the Tri-County area mentioned the low representation the Tri-County has on the Newark EMA. It was also mentioned that Tri-County area residents would like to get more involved in Newark EMA activities, but transportation is a major issue. Guaman mentioned that Ketlen Alsbrook (Recipient) made a recommendation to look at the budget to provide transportation to Tri-County's consumers. The Recipient also suggested using

- carpool, Uber or Lyft to provide those services. Tania Guaman, Support Staff, mentioned that she emailed the Recipient's office to coordinate a meeting to discuss this possibility.
- Another consumer suggested to allow another person to pick up food from food pantries for those consumers that are mothers and have kids. According to this consumer, the person has to go personally and pick up the food, but it may be difficult to carry a bag full of groceries and their children.

The next CIA meeting on HIV and Aging will be held on September 25, 2019 at Kings Restaurant located at 557 Clinton Avenue Newark, NJ 07108.

After the CIA report, Travis Love (REC member) asked how CIA is trying to recruit consumers. Tania Guaman, Support Staff, stated that the team would gladly attend CAB meetings to share information about NEMA. Allison DelCalzo (CPC) member suggested that Support Staff find creative ideas on how to recruit consumers instead of invading CAB meeting's time. Support Staff mentioned that this discussion will have to include the Recipient's office. Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, mentioned that Warren Poole has been reliable CIA recruiting efforts. Guaman also agreed that Warren Poole (CIA Chair) and the Peter Ho CAB have been very supportive on recruitment efforts.

## **6. Old Business**

- **2019 Needs Assessment Follow Up/ Draft:**  
Sharon Postel, Consultant, reported that she prepared a Needs Assessment draft for the Comprehensive Planning Committee. The REC committee, in collaboration with the Consultant, also reviewed the Needs Assessment draft. Postel highlighted the following from the 2019 Needs Assessment:
  - Both providers and consumer had similar recommendations on various services categories. (i.e. providers and consumers agreed on increasing funds for housing, mental health, substance abuse and other services).
  - The substances most commonly used among survey participants were heroin, cocaine and alcohol.
  - A need for detox treatments – to which Postel mentioned that per HRSA's clarification notices, inpatient detox treatments are allowed under the residential substance abuse category (if the provider agency is licensed as a residential treatment facility).
  - A shortage of Psychiatric services – to which Postel mentioned that agencies can subcontract Psychiatric services and also use telemedicine.
- **Discussion/Update on the 2017-2021 Integrated Prevention and Care Plan:**  
Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. REC Chair, asked for a copy of the IHAP update presentation slides to be sent to all REC members. Bagchi, Ph.D. also asked if the findings should be shared with anyone outside of the REC. Kasny Damas stated that the findings should be sent to the EIRC's. Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, explained that she would look at the slides and summary and will add recommendations before sending it to the EIRCs.  
Tania Guaman, Support Staff, asked about the Implementation of the Integrated Health Plan Survey mentioned in the CPC Workplan. Sharon Postel, Consultant, mentioned that said survey was done in 2017 to achieve a more coordinated national response to the HIV End the Epidemic. Postel also mentioned that the survey was done at the annual meeting in March/April 2017 to identify current gaps, variance in the NEMA and to use it to contribute to an annual meeting to identify issues.

- **2019 Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism Update:**  
 Sharon Postel, Consultant, reported that the 2019 Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism was sent this morning to Tania Guaman (Support Staff) and Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. (REC Chair). Postel noted the major change in the procurement and contracting timeline - which was completed much earlier this year, as per HRSA's recommendation during the Recipient's 2018 site visit. Postel mentioned that the Recipient's office received a partial projected formula letter in September (which is 2/3 of the grant based on the current year Ryan White Program plus the HIV Surveillance Data that is collected by CDC from the State). This letter allows the Recipient's office to legally start the contracting process early on. The Recipient's office started the contracts two months earlier than in previous years. One hundred percent of the contracts were executed by April 30<sup>th</sup> compared to September 30<sup>th</sup> in FY 2017 and FY 2018. Postel highlighted the tremendous improvement, though she reported that some agencies were not able to meet the new deadlines because of their contract documents. Ultimately, Postel reported no deficiencies found on the Recipients' allocations and contracting process.

Sharon Postel, Consultant, mentioned another change that the Recipient will include on the NJ ETE proposal. This is a project that would create an automatic data bridge between CHAMP and EMR/EHRs that would automatically update Viral Load Data. Ann Bagchi, Ph.D., REC Chair, also mentioned that during the COC meeting, she asked Jason Petteway and Dennis Leary to develop a way to share information with primary care providers outside of the Ryan White Network. Postel also mentioned that CHAMP and Rutgers used to have an auto feed but then Rutgers changed its EHR services. Postel also suggests that since today's EHR/EMR, said integration may be possible.
  
- **2019 Epidemiological Profile:**  
 Sharon Postel, Consultant, mentioned that usually the Epidemiological Profile is a large report, but that she developed a 3-page spreadsheet comparing data from 2017 and 2018. Postel reported the following:

  - There was an increase in the number of People Living With HIV/AIDS in the Newark EMA of 0.7%.
  - The number of females living with HIV/AIDS has decreased by a 0.3% and the number of males continued to increase by 1.3%.
  - Over 71% of People Living With HIV/AIDS are aged 45 and older; and those between 45-54 are aging into the next group age.
  - Those in the age group of 13-27 are aging into the 25-34 group.
  - There does not seem to be any new diagnoses among the younger population.
  - The Hispanic population continues to increase by 2.4% from previous the previous year; Black, not Hispanics increased by 0.1%; and the total racial/ethnic minority is at 0.7%.
  - Under the mode of transmission category, MSM continue to increase; IDU at 15%; and heterosexuals at 28.8%.
  - The distribution of the HIV epidemic by county has not changed considerably since Essex County remains at 69.9%, Union County at 21%, Morris County decreased to 6.3%. But Sussex and Warren Counties had an increase of 0.7%, which is a greater increase than that of the Newark EMA-wide.
  - The 5 largest cities of the EMA (Newark, East Orange, Irvington, Elizabeth, Plainfield) comprise 70% of the EMA'S People Living With HIV/AIDS. Newark represents 37% of the

NJ HIV epidemic. Newark is at 58.4% East Orange decreased by 0.1%, Irvington increased by 1.3%, Elizabeth increased by 1.5%, and Plainfield decreased by 2.0%.

## **7. New Business**

- REC Membership:  
Kasny Damas, previously a member of the Recipient's Office has left his position. Therefore, Tania Guaman, Support Staff, suggested that Kasny Damas becomes a formal member of the Research & Evaluation Committee. Ann Bagchi, Chair, asked for a motion to accept Kasny Damas as a formal member. Warren Poole motioned. Natalie Brown-Muhammad seconded. All members agreed and there were no abstentions.

## **8. Administrative Issues**

Tania Guaman, Support Staff, reported that the NEMA website's prototype was reviewed during the last CPC meeting. Support Staff also mentioned that a meeting will be held regarding the website with UWGUC and the Recipient's office. Warren Poole recommended that Support Staff start a NEMA Newsletter quarterly.

## **9. Announcements**

- Debbie Muhammad mentioned that she recently participated in a webinar which stated that Ryan White Patients need to be charged for services and wanted to know if someone else in the community knows about this matter. Sharon Postel, Consultant, mentioned that there is no requirement for PLWHA to pay for services. Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, stated that she has heard about patients being able to donate, if desired, but not required to pay. Warren Poole stated that he has not heard about this webinar so he thinks, that must have been for providers only. Debbie Muhammad, REC member, reported that she will send the PowerPoint with more information about this matter.
- Travis Love mentioned that the Pride Center is still looking for partnerships for World AIDS Day in December. The Pride Center is located at 17 Academy St. Newark, NJ.
- Warren Poole made the following announcements:
  1. Peter Ho Clinic will have a dinner on HIV and Aging on September 24<sup>th</sup> at St. Michael Medical Center. Dinner and Parking will be free.
  2. The CIA's dinner on HIV and Aging will be held on September 25<sup>th</sup> at King's Restaurant. Please RSVP for this event. Participation is encouraged for all committee members and providers.
  3. Peter Ho CAB's World AIDS Day will be held on December 4<sup>th</sup>. There are spaces to table. There is no fee for tabling but the CAB asks for a \$10 gift card to raffle. Warren Poole will send an invitation to all agencies.
- Tania Guaman, Support Staff made the following announcements:
  1. The NJHPG will meet on September 19<sup>th</sup> at 10am at the Cook campus in New Brunswick.
  2. The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Gay's Men Awareness Day will be held on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Post cards with information are on the front.
  3. The Tri-County EIRC meeting will be held on Tuesday 17, 2019 at the Morristown Medical Center. Summer Brown commented that there will be a lunch and learn presentation after the meeting.

4. The Union County EIRC is having a meeting at the September 26<sup>th</sup> at 10AM at the Trinitas Medical Center.

**10. Next Meeting**

The next REC meeting will be held on Monday, October 21, 2019 at 10AM at Willing Heart Community Center at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

**11. Adjournment**

Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Warren Poole motioned. Debbie Mohammad seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:43AM.