



Planning Council

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, December 18, 2019 1:30 – 3:00PM
 Willing Heart Community Center
 555 Martin Luther King Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102

Present	Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences
1. Janice Adams-Jarrells	19. Ketlen Alsbrook (Recipient)	25. Wali Bradley
2. Ann Bagchi, PhD	20. Kendall Clark	26. Natalie Brown-Muhammad
3. James Carrington	21. Wanda Figueroa, MD	27. Vieshia Morales
4. Cezar Dumago (Secretary)	22. Debbie Morgan	
5. Juanita Howell	23. Mario Portilla	
6. Dr. Robert L. Johnson (Chair)	24. Ricardo Salcido	
7. Elizabeth Kocot		
8. Joann McEniry (Vice-Chair)		
9. Patricia Moore (Treasurer)		
10. Walter Okoroanyanwu, MD		
11. Aliya Onque (Non-Voting)		
12. Dominga Padilla, MD		
13. Warren Poole		
14. Sharon Postel (Non-Voting)		
15. Rev. Don Ransom		
16. Providencia Rodriguez		
17. War Talley		
18. Calvin Toler		

Guests: Kathleen O'Brien, James Horne (UWGUC), Chelsea Betlow (New Jersey Department of Health), Jeremiah Cohen and Michael Collier

Support Staff: Tania Guaman, Vicky Saguy

1. Oath Ceremony

A representative from the City of Newark Clerk's office conducted the Swearing In ceremony for term renewals. Those who participated in the Oath ceremony included: Dr. Robert Johnson and James Carrington. The certificates of the Oath of Office were distributed to participating candidates. A signed copy of the certificate will be submitted to the City Clerk's office for the record.

2. Welcome & Moment of Silence

Dr. Robert L. Johnson, Planning Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:32 PM after the Oath Ceremony. Dr. Johnson welcomed all attendees and called for a moment of silence for those affected, for those who have passed, and for those living with HIV/AIDS.

3. Roll Call

Cezar Dumago, Planning Council Secretary, conducted the roll call for this meeting. Quorum was established.

4. Public Testimony

There was no public testimony.

5. Approval of the Meeting Summary from November 20, 2019

Dr. Johnson (PC Chair) stated that the November 20th meeting summary was sent via email for review and asked if members had any comments. There were no comments, objections or abstentions. The November meeting summary was approved unanimously.

6. Report from the Recipient

Aliya Onque (Recipient) provided the Recipient's report.

- The FY'2020 Peer review sessions were conducted on Monday & Tuesday and ended yesterday. There were 25 reviewers who evaluated 41 applications. There was 1 new applicant and 2 were returning applicants.
- The FY'2020 Award letter should be received in January, around the same time as last year.
- Program Monitors from the Recipient's Office are reviewing sweeps data and preparing to request additional funds, if needed. Agencies that could demonstrate that actual expenditures were higher than their award should send a request for additional funding to their program monitor.
- The Recipient's Office is working in collaboration with the COC to reformat the current Standards of Care. The Standards will be separated into Service Specific Standard and Universal Standard. Once approved, the Standards will be sent to the Planning Council for approval and then sent to each Ryan White service provider organization.
- The Recipient is looking for an Ending the Epidemic Coordinator and an Ending the Epidemic Program Monitor. The Recipient's Office is still developing the job specifications, but anyone interested in any of those positions should contact the Recipient's Office. The EHE Coordinator and Program Monitor will work on the Essex and Hudson County Plan and in close collaboration with the State.
- The Essex and Hudson County Plan will be submitted to the State by the end of the month. There will be a Kick-Off Meeting in January. Once the date is set, the Recipient will contact the EIRCs and Planning Council Support Staff to help bring consumer representation for the meeting. Consumers who participate will receive a \$50 Visa Card for their participation.

Sharon Postel (Consultant) provided an update on the federal EHE plan. The Recipient and Consultant are working with the State for the Federal End the HIV Epidemic (EHE) by 2030. The State has a 1-year Planning Grant to support Essex and Hudson County to create an action plan. The Essex County Plan will be finalized this month and sent to the State by the end of December. Some of the Essex County components of the plan include "Treat and Respond" from the EHE pillar 4. Essex County is proposing to hire Community Health Workers to reach people who are not virally suppressed and bring them into care. Also, it has been proposed to have an automatic data fill from EMRs into CHAMP to collect data and make sure data and efforts show accuracy. Housing Assistance was also proposed since housing is a barrier to maintain viral load suppression.

The U.S. House of Representatives approved the FY'2020 Budget, which includes \$70M for HRSA to fund 1 year of the HIV Ending the Epidemic Initiative. This is a 5-year Initiative and the amount of funds increase every year. This new funding opportunity serves Essex County residents and agencies in other counties that serve Essex County residents.

Warren Talley asked if only agencies who requested Ending the Epidemic funds when applying for Ryan White Part A funds will receive the extra funds to hire Community Health Workers. Postel and Onque stated that only 18 out of 41 applicants requested funds for Ending the Epidemic. Postel added that the maximum amount of funds of \$4M was requested. But at the moment, the Recipient is unable to confirm which agencies will receive awards since the total award for the Ending the Epidemic Initiative is not known yet.

7. Standing Committee Updates

- **COC: Mario Portilla** - Tania Guaman (Support Staff) provided the COC report. The Continuum of Care Committee (COC) met on Thursday, December 12, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center in Newark. The following occurred at the meeting:
 - The committee approved the new format provided with guidance from the Recipient for the Standards of Care. The Standards will be divided into Universal and category specific standards in accordance with HRSA's guidance, as well as Recipient specific funding restrictions and limitations.
 - Dr. Finkel from Rutgers University provided a presentation on Trans Health - Update on Transgender Medical Care in Newark. Her presentation included information on Cultural humility, competence, the intersection of stigma and illness, Provider Basics in Cultural Humility and Self-Awareness, Terminology (Gender pronouns), data on queer youth of color, and immigration in the Transgender population. A list of Transgender service providers in the Essex County area were shared and the Trans Student Educational Resources (TSER) was mentioned as a resource.

The next COC meeting will be held on January 9, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102. All are encouraged to attend.

- **CPC: Joann McEniry** - Joann McEniry (CPC Chair) provided the CPC report. The Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC) met on Friday, December 13, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center in Newark. The following occurred at the meeting:
 - Committee members continued the in-depth analysis of progress on the HIV Integrated Prevention and Care Plan.
 - The meeting focused on drafting specific activities, parties responsible, time frames and data indicators for action plan goals. All items were completed for goal #1 and goals #2-4 are scheduled to be completed at the January meeting. The CPC will submit a draft of the updated Integrated Prevention and Care Plan to the full Planning Council by February 2020.

Dr. Johnson asked Joann McEniry to mention CPC responsibilities so that new meeting attendees are familiar with the committee's work. McEniry stated that the CPC updates the Integrated HIV Health and Care Plan, which sets the direction for all the goals that the Newark EMA wants to achieve from the prevention through care perspective and in line with NHAS Goals and 2020 Goals. The goals are set to improve the outcomes in the Newark EMA. These goals guide all the Planning Council Committees' work. Each committee takes their responsibilities from the Integrated Health Plan and include it into their workplan. Last month, the CPC had a conversation on the goals that were not achieved, and the CPC revised the strategies for those goals and created new strategies to improve the outcomes in the EMA.

McEniry mentioned that the CPC is also responsible for presenting the yearly Priority Setting and Resource Allocation Report to the Planning Council. The CPC considers information from the Epidemiological Profile, Funding Stream Analysis, Needs Assessment, and any changes in insurance availability for clients to develop the allocation recommendations for the Priority Setting and Resource Allocation. The CPC analyzes this information to be well informed of all the needs of PLWHA in the Newark EMA. Dr. Johnson emphasized that the work of the CPC is one of the most important since it directs the money to be able to achieve the outcomes that are important for the epidemic. Dr. Okoroanyanwu asked if the goals are aligned with the national goals or set a little bit above national goal. McEniry stated that the goals are aligned with the national goals and the CPC identifies how the Newark EMA specific goals are aligned with the national goals.

The next CPC meeting will be held on January 10, 2020 at the Willing Heart Community Care Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102. All are encouraged to attend.

- **REC: Ann Bagchi, Ph.D.** - Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. (REC Chair) provided the REC report. The Research and Evaluation Committee (REC) met on Monday, December 16, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center in Newark. The following occurred at the meeting:
 - Dr. Bagchi provided a presentation on Community-Based Participatory Research at the REC. A discussion on dissemination practices followed. Dr. Bagchi stated that the Newark EMA does a good job on getting consumers involved and getting consumers' feedback through the CIA and surveys. However, finding better ways to disseminate information to consumers who are not involved or participate in the Newark EMA was mentioned as an area of improvement. Support Staff created a consumer survey addressing this concern and the REC will review this survey at the next meeting. Bagchi, Ph.D. mentioned that the REC does not want to do a lot of surveys, also advised by Dr. Johnson at the Executive meeting, to avoid overwhelming the consumers with the surveys. Bagchi, Ph.D. emphasized that this an important topic to look at.
 - The REC identified topics for the FY'2020 Needs Assessment. The main topic is Housing and how it affects viral load suppression and engagement in care. Eviction Stigma, and Stigma when disclosing HOPWA status will be considered. The REC will have key informant interviews with People who are very knowledgeable on Housing Policies and Requirements as identified by REC members. There will also be client surveys. In addition to this, the REC will conduct some Policy Analysis to learn about what other states and municipalities are doing to address Housing Issues.
 - The next two REC meetings fall on Federal Holidays and the dates were changed. Instead of the usual REC meeting dates on the third Monday of the month, the REC January meeting will be held on the 13th and the February meeting will be on the 10th.

The next REC meeting will be held on January 13, 2020 at the Willing Heart Community Care Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102. All are encouraged to attend.

- **CIA/CC: Warren Poole** – Warren Poole. (CIA Chair) and Support Staff provided the CIA report. The Community Involvement Activities Committee (CIA) met on Wednesday, November 20, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center in Newark. The following occurred at the meeting:
 - The Holiday Party for Consumers will be held on Friday, December 20 from 5pm until 8pm in Conference Room 7B at St. Michael Medical Center. People from Warren, Essex and Union

County have RSVPed for this event. For the next year Holiday Party, the CIA will invite all Newark EMA CAB committees to be more inclusive.

- At the next meeting, the CIA will have a presentation HIV Disclosure Rights and the Law by Axel from the Hyacinth AIDS Foundation. Flyers are available in Spanish/English on the table.
- The CIA in collaboration with Support Staff is trying to get consumers from the Tri-County area more involved. Moving the CIA meeting to different counties or going to agencies in different counties was discussed as a way to get consumers from all counties involved.
- Warren Poole thanked everyone who made donations for the Holiday Party.
- Tania Guaman (Support Staff) added that at the last CIA meeting, there was a conversation about the Ending the Epidemic Initiative and consumers provided feedback on how to address challenges that might arise with each of the 4 goals. Consumers were also asked about what topics they might be interested in getting more information. HIV Criminalization Laws was mentioned as one of the topics of interest. The workshop in January was planned to meet this request from consumers.

The next CIA meeting will be held on January 22, 2020 at 5:00pm at the Willing Heart Community Care Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

8. State & National Updates

- **Report from the NJ HIV Planning Group (11.21.19)**

Tania Guaman (Support Staff) provided the NJHPG report

- DHSTS mentioned the Open Enrollment Nov 1 to Dec 15. The deadline was extended until Dec. 18 at 3AM
- Undocumented/Uninsured persons who are HIV+ and living under 500% of the poverty level can apply for health insurance coverage. Applications can be submitted directly to NJDOH.
- The Issues Committee had discussion about the Transgender needs assessment which will be approved at the December meeting, and be brought for the full group in January. There will be a Transgender Day of Learning in March. The Long-Term Survivor's Day will be held in June.
- There was a Presentation on HIV Decriminalization by the Hyacinth AIDS Foundation. Two State laws were mentioned that address High-Impact HIV Prevention Efforts ([N.J.S.A. 2C:34-5](#) and [N.J.S.A. 2C:14-1](#)). These law deals with HIV Transmission through sexual contact.
- There was a new medication for PrEP – Descovy which is the second drug that has been approved for PrEP for adults and adolescents at risk of HIV, with limitations for MSM and women.
- The Ready, Set, PrEP Program was launched. Consumers and Providers can register to receive free PrEP online at www.getyourprep.com/.
- The NJ Assistant Commissioner encouraged testing sites that might have lost their funding to think outside the box – to find ways to pay for a HIV testing program.

Dr. Johnson asked for more information about the two State laws mentioned previously. Tania Guaman (Support Staff) stated that, according to advocates, these laws are outdated and do not consider the impact of U=U and PrEP. A coalition is expected to be formed by January to change these laws. Joann McEniry (Vice-Chair) mentioned that this is not a new advocacy initiative. Bagchi, Ph.D. was interested in knowing more on how this initiative came back up at the NJHPG. It was mentioned that Dwight and his group tried to address this issue but was set aside. There was

a coalition to address HIV Stigma and Criminalization, including some current Planning Council Members. The focus of this group was to address Decriminalization. McEniry stated that there should be a better coordinated effort since there are a couple of groups trying to address the same issue. There is coalition of Executive AIDS Service Organizations that go to Washington D.C. every year to address the issue of Decriminalization. It was also mentioned that McEniry belongs to one of these groups as well as NJCRI, Buddies of NJ among others. Dr. Johnson stated that he tried to get more information to make sure there was no new Legislation mentioned and that this is a continuing effort to address these laws.

Chelsea Betlow clarified that the agencies that Chris Menschner was referring lost access to SAMSHA funds and were asked to partner with Community Based Organizations. Most of the organizations that lost their SAMHSA grant were drug treatment facilities, who were encouraged to partner with local CBOs to get HIV testing. McEniry asked if the State is providing extra the funds for CBOs to expand their capacity since the State has not accepted new applications for organizations that want to provide HIV testing.

Betlow explained that the State does not have funds to accept more organizations and that this change was due to a funding loss. McEniry stated that there is concern that testing efforts have been decreased instead of increased, especially considering the Ending the Epidemic Initiative efforts and some of the identified strategies to help End the Epidemic. Betlow mentioned that there is a large testing coverage throughout the State and there are a lot of agencies that provide testing with a zero-zero positivity rate. Betlow also added that the State is hitting the limit on their funding until more funding from CDC is obtained. McEniry asked that if there are any concerns with the CBOs that are not finding new positives and that probably those funds could be re-directed somewhere else. Betlow stated that the State is considering this approach at the moment. In addition to that, the State experienced a change of staff since the loss of both the Director for Prevention and the Director for Care/Treatment, both of which will be integrated into one. But the State is still working to find a new permanent candidate.

The next NJHPG meeting will be held on Thursday January 16th at 10AM at the Rutgers University Cook Campus Center.

- ***Report from the Governor's Advisory Council (11.28.19)***

Dr. Robert L. Johnson (PC Chair) stated that the Governor's Advisory Council did not hold a meeting in November.

9. Planning Council Administrative Issues

- ***Report from Executive Committee***

There was no Executive Committee report mentioned at this meeting.

- ***Report from Treasurer*** - Pat Moore (Treasurer) provided the fiscal report.

The budget is nine months (75%) into the fiscal year, we have spent approximately 68% of the contractual amount. All budget lines are within projected amounts except for consumer travel as has been noted previously. The only major expense that I am aware of is a pending voucher for the consultant. When paid, that line will be \$8,000 over budget. Projecting expenses for the next three months, a number of the budget lines will exceed the budgeted amounts.

UWGUC is in the process of requesting additional funding to cover short falls and expenses that were not included in the original budget such as the annual audit, copier lease and website fees. If additional funds are received, a budget modification will be submitted for your approval and then submitted to the Recipient's Office for approval.

- **Report from PC Support Staff** - Tania Guaman (Support Staff) provided the report. Evaluations are included in your packets. All recommendations are reviewed and will be included at future meetings.

10. Old/New Business

There were no Old/New Business discussed at this meeting.

11. Announcements

Warren Poole (CIA Chair) made the following announcements:

- The CIA Consumer Holiday Party in collaboration with Peter Ho is this Friday at 5PM
- A presentation on HIV 101 will be held at the Peter Ho Clinic on Friday January 17th at 12pm. It was found that some people do not know much about HIV after being diagnosed. Lunch will be provided. Dr. Johnson stated that if a consumer is in a treatment program and the program should educate the patient to know more about HIV. Janice Adams-Jarrells stated that since funds for education were lost, there has not been a lot of education efforts. Poole stated that his agency is trying to educate the consumers.
- Rev. Don Ransom mentioned that he knows 5 young consumers who go to agencies on Saturdays because they do not want to miss school or work. Rev. Ransom emphasized the importance of having agencies who are open on late hours, who are prepared to listen to their clients and who can meet a client where they are. McEniry stated that her agency is open until 8PM 4 days a week because young people are only available to get services later in the evening.
- Michael Collier (Community Advocate) made an announcement on behalf of a friend. He lives in an apartment that does not have access to right now (no wheelchair access to the third floor) and needs to find a new apartment. Currently, every agency he has asked has a waiting list. Michael welcomes a referral or any information in the Essex County area. McEniry asked if the voucher is portable to other counties after one year. Some members replied that they are portable.

12. Next Meeting

The next Planning Council meeting will be held on January 15, 2019 at 1:30PM at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

13. Adjournment

Dr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 2:22 PM and wished all members a Happy Holiday season. All members agreed to adjourn the meeting.