



Continuum of Care Committee

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, November 11, 2021, from 10:00 AM to 11:48 AM
 Video conference via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/98086438103>
 Teleconference: (929) 205-6099 / Meeting ID: 980 8643 8103#

Present	Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences
1. Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. (Secretary) 2. Kendall Clark 3. Cezar Dumago 4. Dr. Lucy Efobi 5. Masiel Guzman 6. Dominga Padilla, MD 7. Sharon Postel (Non-Voting) 8. Lauro Rocha 9. Nancy Scangarello	10. Vieshia Morales (Chair) 11. War Talley (Non-Voting)	12. Wanda Figueroa, MD

Guests: Kathleen O'Brien (Merck), Tanzila Salim

Support Staff: Tania Guaman

1. Welcome and Moment of Silence

Dr. Bagchi called the meeting to order at 10:00AM and welcomed all in attendance. A moment of silence was observed for all those living with, those who have passed, and those affected by HIV/AIDS.

2. Roll Call

Dr. Bagchi conducted the roll call. Quorum was established later in the meeting.

3. Public Testimony

There was no public testimony at this meeting.

4. Approval of Meeting Summary from October 8, 2021

At the last COC meeting, the September 9th meeting summary was approved as presented.

The October 8th meeting summary was sent electronically in advance for committee review.

Motion: Dr. Bagchi asked for a motion to approve the meeting summary as presented. Dumago motioned to approve. Scangarello seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

5. Standing Committee Updates

- *Comprehensive Planning Committee (CPC)* – Guaman provided the following report:
 - The CPC committee has been working on the Integrated Plan and recommends that the COC considers the NJ priority populations with a focus on the jurisdiction's populations as the committee works on the Situational Analysis section of the Integrated Health Plan.

- There was discussion around attending the October 27th HRSA webinar: *2022-2026 Integrated Plan Guidance* to assist with the planning process.
 - The committee announced a new community member for the Morris County: Delia King area and the vacancies for the Secretary and Vice-Chair positions.
- The next CPC meeting will be held on November 12, 2021, via Zoom.

- *Research and Evaluation Committee (REC)* – Dr. Bagchi provided the following report:
 - Sharon Postel, PC Consultant provided two presentations: *Annual 2021 Epidemiologic Update and Unmet Need*.
 - The REC committee discussed and finalized the topic for the Full 2022 Needs Assessment, which will focus on the disparities in access to mental health and substance use treatment for limited English Proficiency speakers in relation to COVID-19.
 - The committee continued reviewing Section 3: Contributing Data Sets and Assessments for the 2022-2026 HIV Prevention and Care Plan.
 - The committee also discussed the Request for Bids for the Needs Assessment that will be published with a November 15th deadline.

The next REC meeting will be held on Monday, November 15, 2021, at 10AM via Zoom. At this meeting the committee will discuss the methodology for the Full 2022 Needs Assessment.

- *Community Involvement Activities Committee (CIA)* – Guaman provided the following report:
 - The *2021 Epidemiologic Profile* was announced as being available for public access on the NEMA Planning Council website under Community Reports.
 - There was a brief presentation provided by the Support Staff which discussed the role of the Planning Council in the Newark EMA and its committees.
 - There was an in-depth discussion regarding groups and/or organizations that should be engaged in the development for the 2022-2026 HIV Integrated Plan.
 - Participants provided feedback regarding what the HIV epidemic looks like in the EMA. Some offered their input on what influences peoples' ability to stay virally suppressed, such as the cost of food and dealing with health insurance, with a specific emphasis on gaps in health insurance being an issue for individuals.
 - Poole led a discussion regarding underrepresented groups, particularly youth, who need to be more involved, and methods to engage them. Some of the suggestions involved posting flyers in schools and youth programs, holding school assemblies, and using social media platforms (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, etc.).
 - The committee reviewed Appendix 3, which outlines required and recommended groups and organizations that need to be engaged in the development of the Integrated Plan. Participants put together an extensive list to fill these needs and recommendations.

The next CIA meeting will be held on Wednesday November 17, 2021, 5:00 to 7:00PM via Zoom. Then, the committee will review the Community Engagement section of the Integrated Plan.

6. Old Business

- **New Member Election: Denise Brown**
Guaman provided a brief background on Denise Brown to the committee prior to voting.

Motion: Dr. Bagchi asked for a motion to approve the election of Denise Brown as a new COC member. Scangarello motioned to approve. Dumago seconded. The vote passed unanimously.

- **Finalize the review/update of Other Professional Service Standard**

- The Other Professional Service Standard was sent to agencies funded for this service category requesting their input.
- The feedback provided further detail or clarification of existing information, such as: types of public benefits; revising “joint custody” to “custody arrangements” to be more inclusive; replacing “entitlements” with “public benefits”; and minor formatting and grammatical changes. These recommendations were approved via live edits.
- **Motion:** Scangarello made the motion to approve the Other Professional Service Standard as revised. Dr. Efobi seconded. The vote passed unanimously. This approved version will be introduced to the Planning Council at the November 17 meeting.

- **Finalize the review/update of Medical Nutrition Therapy Service Standard**

- There was no feedback provided by agencies funded for Medical Nutrition Therapy Services. After a thorough discussion, the committee advised the Support Team to re-send the request for feedback for this service standard with the help of the Recipient.
- The Support Team will work with the Recipient and agencies funded for Medical Nutrition Therapy to request feedback and to invite them to attend the next meeting in order to have a deeper discussion around client confidentiality and the referral process. This item will continue to be reviewed at the December meeting.

- **Planning for the 2022-2026 HIV Prevention and Care Plan – Overview of assigned Section 4: Situational Analysis**

- Last month, the committee started reviewing Section 4 of the Integrated Health Plan. For requirement number 2 - Priority Populations, feedback and suggestions were received from various sources to consider Ka’leef’s RPF at the DOH, the Epidemiologic profile, and others from Planning Council committees.
- The following populations were listed as a priority for the Newark EMA based on the Recipient’s data review:
 - African American and LatinX populations
 - Populations that fall under Unmet Need: People ages 13-24, 25-34, and 35-44
 - Subpopulations of focus: MSM of color; adults 45+; and youth of ages 13-24.
 - EIIHA populations: Black and Hispanic youth ages 19-24, males and females; and individuals ages 25-44
- Topics brought up in relation to Systemic Issues included internal barriers to service provision such as stigma around HIV; referral for clients; trust of providers; CHAMP; and patient confidentiality.
- There was also a suggestion to include, under the Universal Standard, a requirement for providers to guide clients step-by-step during a visit to help build trust.

7. New Business

- **RAPID Initiation of ART In An HIV Clinic – “A Collaborative Effort” by Dr. Lucy Efobi**

Dr. Efobi highlighted the following during the above presentation:

- **Rapid ART:** refers to the initiation of ART as soon as possible (within 7 days) after HIV diagnosis.
- **Immediate ART:** refers to starting ART on the day of diagnosis or at the first clinic visit. This term can be used interchangeably with Same-day ART initiation.
- The benefits of Rapid or Immediate ART include the increase in care retention and population-level viral load suppression, however, this outcome may not be sustained beyond 12 months.
- ART initiation has success in the following areas:
 - Increase of survival, leading to PLWH living with a near-normal lifespan and living to be over the age of 50;
 - An increased CD4 count, bringing a healthy immune system;
 - The reduction in HIV-associated morbidity;
 - And prevention of HIV transmission: Undetectable = Untransmittable
- Dr. Efobi shared key considerations for initiating and implementing Rapid Start ART in an HIV Clinic for both patients and providers; eligibility guidelines, the methods for ART delivery, lab test requirements, and its limitations.
- Finally, Dr. Efobi highlights the importance of following up with the client using their preferred method of contact to assess their medication tolerance and adherence, reinforce adherence, schedule in-person visits with a medical care provider within 7 days, advise of any needed tests, and then spread out the follow up (in-person or telehealth dependent on their test results) to ensure adherence.

8. Administrative Issues— PC Support Staff

- The Support Team will take the following action steps:
 - Consolidate all priority populations into one document for committee in December.
- The Support team updated the Presentations page on the NEMA Planning Council website: <https://www.nemaplanningcouncil.org/presentations>
- Next month, the COC will follow up the Medical Nutrition Therapy and Universal Service Standards, if changes are needed due to the release of new PCNs in October 2021.

9. Announcements

The African American Office of Gay Concerns (AAOGC) announced the following events:

- In honor of Transgender Day of Awareness, AAOGC will host the: TRANSPower: A Call to Action! Mascara XIII Back Together Again! event on Saturday, November 20 from 10-4PM at 350 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Newark, NJ, 07102
- St. James Social Service Corporation is hosting a Thanksgiving Food Basket and Christmas Toy Registration on a First Come First Serve basis. Registration opened Thursday, October 7th.

10. Next Meeting

The next COC meeting will be held on Thursday, December 9, 2021 at 10 AM via Zoom.

11. Adjournment

Dr. Bagchi motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:48 AM.