

OAA Newsletter

February 2012

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Keeping Up with the NHAS Strategy: Increased HIV Testing

By Kabir Hypolite

Director, Office of AIDS Administration

Across the Country efforts are underway to align local efforts with the vision set forth in the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) and the Affordable Care Act. Here in Alameda the Health Care Services Agency, the Office of AIDS Administration and our community partners are all pushing forward to embrace the NHAS vision so that the County also becomes a "place where new HIV infections are rare and those individuals who are infected with HIV have unfettered access to high quality, life-extending care, free from stigma and discrimination regardless of age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or socio-economic circumstance".

The strategy sets forth three primary goals: 1) reducing the number of people who become infected with HIV; 2) increasing access to care and improving health outcomes for people living with HIV; and 3) reducing HIV-related health disparities. To achieve each of these goals requires that people know their status and adopt safer sexual practices. Studies show that HIV+ people who know their status tend to protect their intimate partners from HIV transmission. So getting more people tested is critical to achieving the vision of the NHAS, especially in populations hardest hit by the epidemic.

In 2010, the Office of AIDS Administration began an important effort to increase the number of Alameda County residents who know their HIV status. We forged a partnership with Corizon, the inmate health services provider at Santa Rita Jail, Planned Parenthood, HEPPAC, Cardea, and La Clinica to compete for one of five expanded HIV testing grants awarded by the State Office of AIDS. In August, 2011, our new collaboration won nearly \$1,000,000 to increase HIV testing in some of Alameda County's key medical settings. Over the next two years 100,000 individuals will be tested for HIV.

Expanding HIV testing in Santa Rita Jail and in clinics located at Planned Parenthood, methadone sites and selected school based health centers is an important step towards ensuring that members of underserved populations in Alameda County also know their current HIV status and receive appropriate counseling and care. This is especially important for African Americans and Latinos who are disproportionately represented in these settings.

In addition, each of our partners is also receiving technical assistance and evaluation expertise to link HIV+ individuals to quality care earlier in disease progression and to work with them to notify their intimate partners using social networking strategies. These interventions aim to improve health outcomes and reduce HIV-related health disparities, key goals of the NHAS and the Alameda County Public Health Department.

Much more needs to be done to realize the NHAS goals. We are hopeful and excited by these developments and determined to continue the real battle, the fight against HIV/AIDS. Working together we can make the difference.

Governor Proposes ADAP Budget Cuts

By Tom Mosmiller, Alameda County ADAP Coordinator

In his recently released 2012-13 budget, Governor Brown proposes reducing state contributions to ADAP by approximately \$24 million, based on estimated savings to the program in the coming fiscal year. He also calls for \$14 million in new revenue by imposing copayments on ADAP clients who would pay anywhere from \$70 to over \$300 a month for their drugs. These copayments would be for people living with HIV/AIDS whose income might be slightly more than \$10,000 a year.

California AIDS advocates are calling on the state legislature to roll back these devastating cuts and cost sharing proposals now threatening the state's AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP).

"His proposals would force the State's most vulnerable to pay far more than they can afford for crucial HIV treatment – or to go without" said AIDS Project Los Angeles Executive Director Craig E. Thompson

ADAP currently provides life-saving HIV/AIDS medications at no cost or low cost to some 40,000 uninsured or underinsured Californians earning up to 400 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). The approximately 1,900 Alameda County residents living with HIV/AIDS, who are enrolled in ADAP, account for almost 5 percent of all ADAP beneficiaries statewide. The program is funded through state general funds, federal funds and rebates from pharmaceutical companies. In FY 2010 – 2011, Alameda County ADAP clients had more than 48,000 prescriptions filled and received medications that cost ADAP more than \$15M.

If allowed to remain unchanged, the State Budget Proposal would raise the costs of vital treatment for the lowest-income Californians living with HIV/AIDS which will make life-saving HIV/AIDS drugs inaccessible to the state's poorest people. "The legislature rejected these staggering cost sharing proposals last year, and they should do so again," Thompson said. "They're too high for poor beneficiaries and they are definitely bad for public health."

The governor's budget counts on savings for ADAP by transitioning clients to new county Low Income Health Programs (LIHPs), some of which have yet to begin operations. These programs will eventually serve uninsured Californians living at 133 percent of the FPL in about half of California's counties, including an estimated 10,000 current ADAP beneficiaries. The proposed budget also calculates savings from transitioning clients, earning between 101 and 200 percent of the FPL, into the LIHPs. State Office of AIDS (OA) estimates show clients, on average, transitioning into the new county programs in January of 2012. However, Alameda and Los Angeles Counties are planning their transitions as of July 1, 2012.



"It's reckless to assume savings from programs that are just getting off the ground," Thompson explains, "We're concerned the ADAP budget will come up short, if these savings fail to materialize."

Kabir Hypolite, Director, Alameda County Office of AIDS Administration states that "We cannot yet say what level of savings the Low Income Health Program will generate because too many variables remain. It makes much more budgetary sense to avoid such cuts, for at least a year or more, until we know the actual impact of LIHP".

Requiring low-income people to meet substantial cost sharing obligations to receive life-saving HIV medications will have devastating short and long-term consequences for HIV/AIDS care and prevention.

Cuts to ADAP services will have costly implications and will result in advanced HIV disease, increased co-morbidities and even premature death.

Medications provided by ADAP also help prevent the spread of HIV. People on effective treatment can reduce the amount of HIV in their blood to undetectable levels. Mounting evidence shows an undetectable viral load makes HIV-positive people less likely to spread the virus to others. A study published by the National Institutes of Health shows HIV-positive people who are on drug therapies are 96% less likely to transmit the virus to their uninfected partners. For every new HIV infection prevented, California saves an estimated \$600,000 in lifetime treatment costs. ADAP is an essential bridge to the promise of health care reform in California and it's critical that we ensure that ADAP remains available for everyone who needs it.

"Going forward with these budget proposals now", say Hypolite, "places poor people's lives in jeopardy and undermines the goals of the National HIV AIDS Strategy".

These proposed ADAP cuts will ultimately result in HIV-positive people dropping out of the program altogether, in effect denying them the very medication they need to stay healthy. Generating budget savings by creating a system that denies medication to

the most vulnerable among us is unjust, and certainly not the most effective way to deal with tough economic times.

Thanks to AIDS Project Los Angeles staff, Philip G. Curtis, Director, Government Affairs, and Gabriel McGowan, and to www.Healthreform.org for their January 19, 2012 post, Gov Brown Proposes Cuts to California's ADAP Program, by Courtney for material used in this article.

Alcohol Use and the Spread of HIV

by Sarah Gamble, Project Manager, Berkeley Builds Capacity

Those of us who provide HIV testing are accustomed to working within alcohol-centered environments (bars and clubs) and, when it comes to our clients, alcohol-related decision-making. Because of our commitment to non-judgmentally “meet people where they are at”, and because alcohol use is so widespread, it can be easy to forget the implications of alcohol use on HIV risk.

Our project, Berkeley Builds Capacity, is funded by SAMHSA to reduce HIV and related substance abuse in East Bay college students. One thing we’ve noticed is that, in HIV work, we tend to focus substance use conversations on intravenous drug use which, though critical, is not the only or most common substance used. For college students (community and 4 year) the most commonly used substances are alcohol and marijuana. Alcohol in particular has negative consequences when paired with sexual situations.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse’s (NIAA) “Alcohol Alert” number 80 focuses on HIV and alcohol, and makes some points that are valuable for anyone working to reduce HIV



infections and improve the health of HIV+ people. Here are a few:

- For HIV+ people, alcohol can increase how fast the virus grows; it may interfere directly with ART medications; it can put already vulnerable organs at further risk; and it can impact peoples’ ability to comply with their medication regimens.
- Alcohol also raises problems for HIV prevention. It can decrease inhibitions, impair judgment, and increase likelihood of higher-risk sexual behaviors.

For more information, check out: www.niaaa.nih.gov.
For more information about Berkeley Builds Capacity, check out our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/BerkeleyBuildsCapacity.

Neena Murgai

By: Pam Casey

The OAA welcomes Neena Murgai, PhD, MPH, who serves as the Deputy Director of Surveillance and Epidemiology. She has worked with ACPHD for over 10 years as a senior epidemiologist. In her new role she will work to enhance HIV/AIDS reporting methods and data systems for Alameda County, and coordinate and direct the epidemiological analysis of local HIV/AIDS data. She will also manage field staff engaged in HIV/AIDS surveillance activities, such as case investigations and reporting, and those providing targeted HIV testing among selected high-risk populations.

“The epidemiology of HIV/AIDS tells the story of the epidemic in Alameda County. It provides the best description of the burden of HIV/AIDS in the community, including the risk groups and populations that are disproportionately impacted and how these patterns have changed over time. The HIV/AIDS epidemiology profile will help focus prevention and planning efforts in the

community” states Dr Murgai.

We look forward to her leading the Public Health Department’s effort to in strengthening our data and reports, by assessing gaps in data and providing HIV/AIDS data that is meaningful and accessible for prevention, planning, and advocacy.





Actions Speak Louder Than Words at East Oakland Garden

By Pam Casey

Acta Non Verba: Youth Urban Farm Project, a community-based program since August 2010, manages a garden that serves as a natural sanctuary in one of East Oakland's most underserved areas. Located at Tassafaronga Park (83rd Ave & E Street in Oakland), the garden provides fresh and affordable produce to individuals who otherwise lack access to fresh produce. There is a beautiful array of organically-grown kale, broccoli, Swiss chard, cauliflower, beets and herbs neatly arranged in several raised beds. Executive Director, Kelly Carlisle reports that there have been five harvests since the

garden opened and at least 100 pounds of produce have been given to needy families in the surrounding area. The project encourages intergenerational relationships as well. Most of the volunteers have been youth aged 5-12 and community elders. The project also raises money for college funds for participating youth.

A few of the local partners include the Oakland Department Of Parks and Recreation (OPR), Oakland Redevelopment Department, East Bay Urban Agriculture Alliance (EBUAA), and donors include The California Endowment, Sweetwater Organics Nursery, and Keep Oakland Beautiful. Future activities include starting a "Salsa Bed", a weekly farmers market, twice monthly yoga classes in the garden, and classes on beekeeping.

If you would like to participate in the growing success of this project, the wish list includes a 115'x100' wood & wire perimeter fence, a chicken coop or tractor for 7 hens, a large beehive, a small greenhouse, tool caddy, and lumber. Visit the website at www.anvfarm.org , or contact Kelly at (510)972-3276 for more information.

Lifelong Medical Care Offers New HIV Services in East Oakland

LifeLong Medical Care is proud to announce the start of HIV testing and treatment services at LifeLong East Oakland Health Center. The new services will offer both primary medical care and essential medical case management services to persons living with HIV/ AIDS in the East Oakland community.

LifeLong Medical Care is committed to helping people with HIV/ AIDS maintain and improve their health. Our primary medical care services are patient-centered and designed to anticipate and respond to the needs of the people we serve. Our medical case management services team focuses on working closely with clients to make sure they are adhering to treatment and seeing doctors for medical care, as well as providing assistance with client needs related to emotional support, mental health/ substance abuse treatment programs, and the AIDS Drug



Assistance Programs (ADAP).

LifeLong East Oakland is located at 10700 MacArthur Boulevard, Suite 14B.

Clinic Hours are Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm

For referrals or more information regarding our new HIV services, please contact David Greenberg, RN/Case Manager at:

510-932-1034 (mobile) or 510-563-4300
dgreenberg@lifelongmedical.org

OAA 2011 World AIDS Day - Community Service Awards

The Office of AIDS Administration held its annual World AIDS Day and Community Service Awards Ceremony at the Lake Chalet Restaurant at Lake Merritt on Thursday December 1, 2011. This year's World AIDS Day theme was "Getting to Zero."

This year's award winners were:

Youth

Alex Williams, East Bay AIDS Center

Volunteer

Ramon Eli, Peer Navigator Program

Non-Traditional Community Partner

Coalition of 100 Black Women

Caregiver

Willie Dudley, Casa Segura / HEPPAC

Prevention

Lania Watkins, Cal-PEP

Care and Treatment

Julia Castillo, Alameda County Medical Center Highland Substance Abuse Program

Dr. Robert C. Scott Trailblazer Award

Steve O'Brien, VP of Medical Affairs, Alta Bates Medical Center



Getting to ZERO:

- ⊘ New HIV Infections
- ⊘ Discrimination
- ⊘ AIDS Related Deaths

OAA's new Deputy Director, Leroy Blea

by Duran Rutledge

Trying to sit down with LeRoy Blea, the new OAA Deputy Director of Operations for this interview was like a roller coaster at Great America, you just have to hold on and enjoy the ride. He speaks with such quickness and passion about his work in HIV and what he envisions for the OAA and HIV services for Alameda County that you can't help but be inspired. No stranger to HIV, LeRoy has been in the fight against HIV since the earlier days of the epidemic. He comes to the OAA from the City of Berkeley where he was the AIDS Director.

He says that this work in HIV is his way of paying homage to those heroes who fought and died in the early days of the epidemic so that 30 years later we could continue the fight.



In addition to working closely with the OAA Director, Kabir Hypolite in steering the OAA's HIV/AIDS overall activities, LeRoy will also be responsible for supervising program staff as well as helping to effectively shape how the OAA will work with increased collaboration and leadership with the PLWHA, community leaders and service providers to address the HIV epidemic within Alameda County.



Cal-PEP's New Location

at
2811 Adeline Avenue
Oakland Ca 94608
www.calpep.org

Cal-PEP has moved from their previous location on Franklin and 14th to their new location on Adeline since October 2011.

In addition to HIV testing, the agency will soon open a Family Planning Clinic at its new location. The services will offer STD testing, birth control, and PAP Smears. The clinic will open on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month from 1 to 5 PM starting in February 2012.

The agency will soon be offering drug treatment services as well.

For more information on Cal-PEP services, call (510) 874-7850.

PLWHA Valentine's Day Event

The People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) Committee invite you to attend its annual social event. The theme for 2012 is Valentine and is open to anyone living with HIV/AIDS as well as those who love and support them. The event will also be a great opportunity to meet, mingle, dance and have a great time. There will be door prizes and other giveaways, as well as good music and food.

This year's event will be held at Everett and Jones Barbeque (126 Broadway, Oakland). The event goes from 6:30 pm to 10:00 pm. For more information on the event please call 510.278.5229 or to RSVP go to <http://www.hivccpc.org>

For those who may not be familiar with the PLWHA Committee – it is a group of dedicated HIV positive community leaders and volunteer members who lend their time and expertise in helping to direct how Federal HIV funding is spent for care and treatment for those living with HIV/AIDS in Alameda and Contra Costa County. The committee meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. For more information about the PLWHA Committee, please call 510.326.3479

First Annual PLWHA Valentine's Ball

February 11th 2012

6:30 pm to 10:00 pm

Presentation from
GILEAD

by Dr. Anthony Jones

MC: Ms Jelousy

Photos by

Jesse Brooks

Music By:

DJ Divinity

Raffle and Prizes

Held at:

Everett & Jones
Barbeque

126 Broadway

Oakland, CA
94617

Presented by the
PLWHA

committee for
the TGA area

Representing
Alameda and
Contra Costa
Counties

Please RSVP at:

[Http://www.hivccpc.org/](http://www.hivccpc.org/)

Or Call 510-278-5229

Sponsored by Gilead

Planned Parenthood will be at HEPPAC

On Monday and Fridays 10:00am – 5:00pm

WE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

- ✓ Pregnancy Testing
- ✓ HIV Testing
- ✓ STD Screening
- ✓ Condoms
- ✓ Hormonal Contraceptives
- ✓ Emergency Contraception
- ✓ Pap Smears and Cancer Screening



Medi-Cal, Family PACT, and Sliding Scale Fees
For appointment please call (510) 300-3800
or (800) 230-PLAN

The mission of Planned Parenthood Mar Monte is to ensure that every individual has the knowledge, opportunity, and freedom to make every child a wanted child and every family a healthy family.

Safer Sextravaganza!

Tuesday February 28, 2012
9:00 PM til ???



Dorsey's Locker
5817 Shattuck Avenue
Oakland Ca. 94608

HIV Testing

Free Food and Drinks

Games and Prizes

FUN FUN FUN



For more information, please contact Shelley Stinson at
(510) 268-7647



OAA News Briefs

- Ryan White Part A final site visits are currently underway.
- Part A Year-End Progress Reports are due by March 15, 2012 by 12 noon.
- OAA, CCPC members and Contra Costa County HIV Service Representatives are currently working on the Comprehensive Plan due to HRSA by May 2012.
- OAA is currently conducting Quality Management chart reviews for agencies funded to provide Ryan White Part A Core Services.
- Anyone interested in becoming a member of the Community Collaborative Planning Council should contact Patricia Sweetwine at Patricia.Sweetwine@comcast.net or visit www.hivccpc.org.

Article or Announcement Submissions

The Office of AIDS Administration encourages community members to submit articles relevant to HIV/AIDS in Alameda County

- Approximately 250 words (one double spaced page)
- Include contact information
- Submit by email only
- Submit as word document or in the body of email
- Due to space constraints, not all submitted articles may be published.
- For more specific guidelines, contact Lorenzo Hinojosa at Lorenzo.Hinojosa@acgov.org

For a subscription to the OAA Quarterly Newsletter, please send email to Lorenzo.Hinojosa@acgov.org



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