

**Office of AIDS
HIV Education and Prevention Services Branch
June 2007 Update**

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HIV Community Prevention Section

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Scopes of work and budgets for FY 2007-2010 contract period have been reviewed and approved and submitted to Contracts Unit for processing. Contracts Unit's goal is to have the MOUs to the Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJs) early June.

The HIV Community Prevention Section is updating their site visit monitoring tool to incorporate items from the new guidance, and beginning next month will be scheduling site visits.

A new staff person has joined the section. Jen Rohde will have ten LHJs, mostly in the Central Valley. After six years of service to the section, Jim Castro is leaving the office for a promotion and his vacancy will hopefully be filled within the next couple of months. We are still in the recruitment process for a new Intervention Specialist.

The newly established trainings for Group Facilitation, CRCS, MSM and Outreach have been conducting pilots throughout the State and the schedule of trainings for the upcoming year will be advertised shortly.

HIV Prevention Policy and Program Development Section

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IDU

Syringe access has continued to expand across the state in the past few months. New syringe exchange programs are opening up in Los Angeles, San Mateo and Shasta counties, and the city of Sacramento has authorized syringe exchange for the first time. To date, fifteen county Boards of Supervisors and four city councils have authorized needle exchange. Currently, California has 39 Syringe Exchange Programs (SEPs), more than any other state.

On Friday, June 1, the results for the Syringe Exchange Programs RFA were announced OA's website. Funding was awarded to some amazing programs, included two rural programs and several programs with very small budgets. Awards were made to:

- City of Berkeley Public Health Clinic / Needle Exchange Emergency Distribution
- Drug Abuse Alternatives Center (Sonoma County)

- Harm Reduction Services (Sacramento and Yolo Counties)
- HIV Education & Prevention Project of Alameda County
- Homeless Health Care of Los Angeles / Common Ground
- Points of Distribution (Alameda and San Francisco Counties)
- Public Health Foundation Enterprises Inc. / Clean Needles Now, Los Angeles
- Santa Cruz AIDS Project
- St. James Infirmary (San Francisco)
- Tri-City Health Center (Alameda County)

The programs were awarded \$75,000 each per year for three years, for a total funding of 2.25 million dollars over the next three year period. Unfortunately, 18 agencies were disappointed that they did not receive funding. The fact that a total of 28 agencies applied, points to the historic under-funding of this worthy intervention.

Screen, Test, Diagnose & Prevent: A Clinician's Resource for STDs in Gay Men and Other MSM

In collaboration with the Office of AIDS, on March 7, 2007 the California STD Control Branch launched *Screen, Test, Diagnose & Prevent: A Clinician's Resource for STDs in Gay Men and Other MSM*. This initiative is a designed to improve clinicians' knowledge, skills, and comfort in effectively diagnosing and managing STDs in gay men and other MSM. Tools to support routine and periodic sexual history taking, laboratory screening for STDs including the use of highly sensitive and specific nucleic-acid based screening, as well as risk reduction counseling for those at highest risk, are included. Also offered is guidance for creating a safe clinical environment for gay, bisexual, and other MSM patients, as well as information about STD and HIV partner management, useful in preventing post-treatment STD re-infection and transmission of HIV. All of the included tools — along with additional resources and referrals for both clinicians and patients — may be found at www.stdcheckup.org.

HIV Partner Counseling and Referral Services

HIV Partner Counseling and Referral Services (PCRS) is a joint effort of the Office of AIDS and the STD Control Branch. In recent months PCRS staff worked with the California AIDS Clearinghouse (CAC) on the development of materials that local health departments, community based organizations, and HIV care clinics can use to promote the disclosure assistance services available to people living with HIV. The materials, titled "*You Care About Your Partner... and So Do We*", can be found on the CAC website, www.hivinfo.org. In addition, the CDHS/STD Control Branch is collaborating with OA on the development of a plan to train HIV counseling and testing providers in preparation for the greater emphasis that will be placed on the offer of HIV disclosure assistance services in the new HIV counseling and testing structure.

Perinatal Project

The Perinatal Project has received a 79% response to its survey of Rapid HIV Testing in Labor and Delivery Rooms. As of June 2006, approximately 60 hospitals have rapid HIV testing available in Labor and Delivery (RTLDD), although only about 30 offer it to every woman with an undocumented HIV status. Our technical assistance contractor, Pacific AIDS Education and Training Center (PAETC), has begun providing trainings for hospitals throughout the state to assist them in

implementing RTLD. OA expects that 30 additional hospitals will be providing RTLD by the end of 2007.

African American Initiative

The California Department of Health Services, Office of AIDS (CDHS/OA) continues to provide leadership to reduce the HIV incidence and prevalence among African Americans in California through the deployment of services which include: (1) the African American Gay Men/MSM Action Plans, (2) technical assistance and capacity building activities through ONTRACK Program Resources, and (3) working with the African American HIV/AIDS Coalition and their regional committees

African American Gay Men/MSM Action Plans:

Data has shown that African American gay men/MSM are disproportionately impacted by HIV in California. Following the CHPG recommendation that the top 18 local health jurisdictions (LHJ) create Action Plans to address this issue, OA has required Action Plans that must: (1) be in conjunction with local community planning priorities, (2) consider social, economic, cultural and political factors that contribute to risk, (3) be in the context of health and wellness, and (4) have C&T and HERR activities that target African American gay men/MSM. The first meeting with those LHJs was held on January 17, 2007 to begin the process. The next phase will be for CDHS/OA to create a more comprehensive Action Plan template that will include formative, program, and evaluation phases that will provide clear guidance and the ability to monitor the Plans. The Action Plans will be implemented in 2007.

Technical assistance and capacity building activities through ONTRACK Program Resources CDHS/OA awarded ONTRACK Program Resources a \$1.2 million (\$400,000 over three years) award to provide technical assistance and capacity building to HIV prevention providers that serve African Americans. The programs will provide: (1) on-site technical assistance, (2) training, and (3) an electronic service directory.

On June 1, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) put out an RFA totaling \$35 million titled "Expanded and Integrated HIV Testing for Populations Disproportionately Affected by HIV, Primarily African-Americans." The State of California is eligible for \$750,000 based on a formula derived by CDC for distribution of the \$750, 000 and is currently completing application requirements.

HIV Latino Initiative

Project Concern International (PCI) is the contractor charged with implementing the CDHS/OA funded HIV Latino Initiative. PCI is in the process of conducting a statewide needs assessment to identify gaps in HIV/AIDS education and prevention services to Latinos. In Fall 2007, PCI will begin providing training and technical assistance to those agencies providing HIV/AIDS services to the Latino community.

Additionally, on February 28th and March 1st, the state funded Latino Advisory Board (LAB) met to work on recommendations that will assist state and local jurisdictions in serving the Latino community. The LAB has 23 members who were selected by the LAB Steering Committee, through a competitive application process. The LAB membership brings a wealth of expertise and diversity of experiences to the fight against HIV/AIDS.

HIV Counseling, Testing and Training

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The HIV Counseling, Testing and Training Section (CT&T) is continuing efforts to restructure counseling and testing services in Office of AIDS (OA) funded sites. The new model that was previewed by CHPG at the November 2006 CHPG meeting has now been piloted in six representative Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJs); the data from this pilot process is now being evaluated by the Prevention Research and Evaluation Section (PRE). The results of this comprehensive evaluation process will be used to make final changes to the new model. Preliminary data has been encouraging and C&T staff has already made needed improvements to the model based on the evaluation. A new introduction to the program will be provided to CHPG at its November meeting.

In mid-April through early May of 2007, OA staff convened six regional trainings for LHJs and their Community Based Organization (CBOs) sub-contractors to ensure a smooth transition in implementing the new model that will begin January 1, 2008. CT&T staff will continue to be available for technical assistance as the model is implemented. There will be an updated CT&T Restructure presentation at the November 2007 CHPG meeting.

The HCV program is being expanded and integrated into the C&T Program. Program policies and procedures are being developed to ensure a smooth transition of services into the testing program. LHJs not previously offering Hepatitis C testing will begin testing in January 2008.

The UCSF AIDS Health Project has been awarded the Statewide HIV Counselor Training and Curriculum Development Program contract for the next funding cycle (FY 2007/2010). During July 2007, they will be revising the current HIV counselor training to be scaled down from 7 days to 6 days. In January 2008, they will begin the new HIV counselor trainings that are part of the C&T program restructure.

After an absence in 2006 because of the restructure efforts, the Annual CT&T/NIGHT Coordinators Meeting will return in the fall of 2007. This years meeting will focus on the restructure process with a focus on implementation. In addition, training on integrating and delivering Hepatitis C (HCV) testing services in C&T settings is in the planning stage and we anticipate this will be included in this year's meeting. The meeting will be convened in Southern California.

HIV PREVENTION RESEARCH AND EVALUATION SECTION

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Local Evaluation Online Activities

The HIV Prevention Research and Evaluation Section (PRE) are currently planning the development of our Local Evaluation Online (LEO) web-based system. LEO will build upon the existing Evaluating Local Interventions (ELI) system by also incorporating data from the Counseling Information Form (CIF), Partner Counseling and Referral Services (PCRS), and the HIV Information Processing System (HIPS). PRE is developing the new database model, forming recommendations to guide

programming of LEO, and developing trainings and guidance documents for planned LEO users. PRE has also collaborated with the STD Control Branch to standardize data elements collected by both groups; and collaborated with the ARIES team to identify opportunities for LEO/ARIES data sharing. PRE is working closely with the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) Information Technology Services Division (ITSD) to obtain all necessary approvals required before development of an Information Technology Project can commence. Receipt of these approvals is expected by the end of the current fiscal year with development beginning immediately thereafter. PRE continues to provide technical assistance for the current ELI system.

HIV Counseling & Testing Restructure Activities

PRE have been involved in numerous aspects of the HIV Counseling & Testing (C&T) restructure planning. PRE has contributed to the conceptualization of the restructured C&T system, has collaborated in developing the Client Assessment Questionnaire (CAQ), provided data support for determining the new reimbursement algorithm, and revised the CIF to reflect the C&T restructure. PRE has also taken the lead in evaluating the C&T Restructure Pilot. PRE has evaluated the Restructure Pilot in four critical areas: validity of the CAQ as a tool for identifying high- and low-level intervention clients; the effectiveness of different clinic-based client flow processes under the restructured program; client satisfaction; and frontline staff satisfaction. Based on the evaluations completed to date, several revisions have been made to the CAQ, and best-practice methods for implementing the restructured program in different type settings have been identified. The Pilot evaluations also revealed the overall effectiveness of the restructured C&T program to identify high- and low-level intervention clients, and to make the C&T program more efficient.

Universitywide AIDS Research Program (UARP) Activities

Community Collaborative Research Project grantees for the 2004-2006 funding cycle are in the third and final year of funding. Collaborative projects funded include three focusing on methamphetamine using men who have sex with men (MSM), three focusing on Latino MSM and non-gay identified (NGI) men, three focusing on African-American MSM, and one establishing a web-based community for MSM intended to promote safer sexual practices and use of HIV Counseling and Testing services. Several collaboratives have been identified as promising interventions for further dissemination, including treatment of methamphetamine dependency.

OA and UARP are also in the process of developing Request for Applications (RFA) for the 2007-2010 Special Initiatives Program and The Community Collaborative Research Project. Foci for these RFA's include: a feasibility and effectiveness evaluation of HIV RNA testing, an evaluation of HIV testing attitudes, the development and evaluation of an HIV prevention intervention for African-American women, evaluation of an evidence-based intervention for African-American and Latino MSM, and a prevention preparedness evaluation of the use of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PREP).

Satellite Syringe Exchange Activities

The Satellite Syringe Exchange (SSE) Targeted Initiative is in its third and final year of the current funding cycle. Collaborating agencies and OA are developing a best practices manual and curriculum to guide implementation of SSE programs in other jurisdictions. OA received 16 letters of intent in response to our SSE RFA for the next funding cycle (2007 – 2010). RFA's were reviewed on March 6, 2007, and Notice of Intent to Award was released on March 9, 2007. Five agencies were selected.

Data Dissemination Activities

The 2003 HIV Counseling & Testing State Report has been published and posted on the OA website. The 2004 and 2005 HIV Counseling & Testing State Reports are currently being prepared. PRE is currently developing semi-annual HIV Counseling & Testing summaries specific to populations of interest. A separate summary document will be disseminated for each of the following populations starting in Summer 2007: MSM, injection drug-users (IDU), African-Americans, Latinos/as, women, transgender, rapid testing clients, and youth/young adults.

African-American Action Plan

PRE is developing geospatial maps of HIV/AIDS and STD epidemiologic data, and Census data for formative activities of the African-American Action Plan. PRE is also assisting in the development of action plan guidance documents and Action Plan evaluation materials.