

**RESEARCH & EVALUATION COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

Monday, July 15, 2019 at 10AM
Willing Heart Community Center
555 Martin Luther King Blvd. Newark, NJ 07103

PRESENT	EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED
1. Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. 2. Summer Brown 3. Natalie Brown-Muhammad 4. Kasny Damas 5. Corey DeStefano 6. Travis Love 7. Debbie Mohammed 8. Sharon Postel 9. Providencia Rodriguez	10. Patricia Moore	11. Warren Poole 12. Jamir Tuten

- 1. Welcome and Moment of Silence**
 Ann Bagchi, Chair of the Research and Evaluation Committee, called this meeting to order at 10:05AM. A moment of silence was observed for all those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, and for those who have passed.

- 2. Roll Call**
 Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, conducted the roll call for this meeting and quorum was established. Ann Bagchi announced that Sandra Haim resigned from her position at the REC.

- 3. Public Testimony**
 No public testimony at this meeting.

- 4. Review Action Steps**

<u>Action Steps</u>	<u>Responsible Party</u>
1. REC members are asked to review the Consultant tabulations and offer feedback via email	REC Committee
2. Create Summaries of REC responsibilities from the Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan	Kasny Damas
3. Email the Tool template for viral load suppression used by the Recipient last year	Kasny Damas
4. Make the following revisions	
a) On the Consumer Survey Behavioral Issues Initial Data Tabulations Crosstabulation of tables 13 & 14 (Number of respondents who that said that they were taking medication and who are also aware if virally	Sharon Postel

<p>suppressed. If virally suppressed, then how many knew their viral load values.</p> <p>b) Include the list of programs used to improve trends in substance abuse</p> <p>c) Develop a Behavioral Health Cascade</p>	
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5. Approval of Meeting Summaries from March 18, and April 15, and June 17

The March, April and June Meeting summaries were reviewed, and edits were recommended. Ann Bagchi, Chair, asked members for a motion to approve the meeting summaries. Debbie Mohammad motioned to accept all meeting summaries with edits. Summer Brown seconded the motion. All members approved. There were no abstentions.

6. Updates from other Committees

- **COC – Continuum of Care Committee**

Tania Guaman, Support Staff provided the COC report. The last Continuum of Care Committee meeting was held on Thursday, July 11th at the Willing Heart Community Center in Newark. The following occurred at that meeting:

- Quorum was established
- Mario Portilla, Chair, requested an update on the Newark EMA website. Tania Guaman, Support Staff, will follow up with the Recipient’s office. Kasny Damas, Recipient, mentioned that there are ongoing discussions about this project.
- The June meeting summary was approved with edits.
- Old Business:
 - The Emergency Financial Assistance Standards were reviewed and approved by the COC Committee. The Committee will present the Emergency Financial Assistance Standards on July 17th to the Planning Council for approval, as well as the Home Delivered Meals Standards of Care.
 - Announcement on August meeting decision: The COC will not have a meeting in August.
- New Business:
 - The Medical Transportation Standards will be reviewed at the next meeting on Sept. 12th.
 - Discussion on issues regarding Aging and eligibility to health benefits by Ms. Elizabeth Kocot from the Medicaid District Office in Essex County:
Elizabeth Kocot provided hand-outs with information about Medicaid and Medicare programs in aging population since there are a lot of changes happening when people reach the age of 65 on eligibility for services. Elizabeth Kocot mentioned that Eligibility changes every year based on poverty level. She also mentioned the different parts that Medicare has and what they cover. All Handouts discussed at this meeting will be kept with COC Meeting records for reference.
- Support Staff is conducting outreach to consumers in the community. On Monday, July 8th, Support Staff attended the Peter Ho Memorial CAB Meeting. On July 11th, Support Staff will be going to the PROCEED for a CAB Meeting. Tania Guaman, Support Staff, asked members to share dates of upcoming CAB meetings where outreach can happen. This outreach is aiming to increase consumer participation in the Planning Council since there is a 29% consumer representation on PC instead of the HRSA required 33%. Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, asked how consumer is defined. Tania Guaman, Support Staff, mentioned that, as per HRSA,

a consumer is considered to be someone receiving Ryan White Services but not receiving financial benefits from agencies (or working for agencies)

The next COC meeting will be held on Sept. 12, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

- **CPC – Comprehensive Planning Committee**

Guaman, Support Staff, reported that there was no meeting in July. Guaman also reported that, in August, the CPC will review the 2019 Funding Stream Analysis and the 2019 Ryan White Utilization of Services presentation will be provided by the Recipient's Office.

The next CPC meeting will be held on August 9, 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 an update for the CIA. The CIA met on June 26, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center in Newark. The following occurred at that meeting:

- The CIA developed mutual agreements on expectations from each member in regards of being respectful, starting the meeting on time. The agreement will be posted at each meeting moving forward.
- A Long-Term Survivors discussion was held where all attendees shared their stories and experiences with living with HIV by asking them 4 questions:

1. At what point in time of your journey did you wanted to give up? What three things did you do to keep moving forward?

People mentioned some of the challenges throughout their journey and had a long discussion about some of the things that helped them to move forward. Some of those things were positive affirmations either from themselves or people around them (loved ones or friends), faith, self-acceptance and other support systems, which included health education interventions, as well as being able to deal with stigma in different situations. One of the most important things they mentioned was family support especially when first diagnosed.

2. What would be different if there would be no stigma to HIV?

Consumers mentioned that if there was no HIV stigma, people would be able to talk about it and more people will get tested. They also think there will be less depression, less violence, and less suicide related to HIV.

3. If a cure would be found today, what would be different in your life?

Consumers had different perspectives about this question. Some consumers were concerned about losing their current benefits and others were happy to not take medications or go to multiple doctors' appointments.

4. If you had an opportunity to disclose your status to a newly diagnosed person, would you tell them your status to help them?

There was some controversy about this topic since some consumers were concerned about privacy issues. There were some consumers who mentioned that once they get to know the person and they will be comfortable sharing to help this person.

- During the CIA meeting, tips for a successful public testimony narrative were shared with consumers.

- Announcements:
 - The CIA will not have July Meeting.
 - A healthy Kids Day event will be held on July 19 for children of people affected by HIV/AIDS.

On August 20, the CIA/CC will hold a Cookout event inviting all PLWH to come out. This event was planned in collaboration with the Peter Ho Clinic and will be held at 268 MLK Jr. Blvd. in Newark, NJ from 5 to 7PM.

7. Old Business

- 2019 Needs Assessment Follow Up/Draft (Full Needs Assessment)
 - Present Findings from data tabulations – Sharon Postel, Consultant, went through the draft data tabulations. The Consultant asked REC members to make recommendations for cross-tabulations to include in the Needs Assessment.
 - **Consumer Survey Behavioral Issues Initial Tabulations:** Kasny Damas, Recipient, suggested a crosstabulation between tables 13, 14 and 15. The first tabulation would compare the number of respondents who said are taking medication to how many are aware that they are virally suppressed. Another table would compare the number of respondents who actually know their viral load values. Postel noted that the survey data may not be accurate since this was a self-reported survey. Under Behavioral Service Needs, Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, suggested using the total number who responded “yes” as the denominator in percentage calculations. Where clients receive care should be based on the numbers who said they needed that care in the first place.
 - **On the handout given, Initial Tabulations Substance Abuse, Trends, Needs.** Question 28A needs to specify the programs used to tackle trends in substance abuse.
 - **Agency Survey Behavioral Issues Initial Data Tabulations:** Sharon Postel noted that for depression and alcohol abuse screening, agencies used more standardized tools compared to other services. A recommendation was made that agencies use a standardized tool especially for stigma screening. Ann Bagchi, PhD suggested that she is in the process of developing a tool that could be used to standardize Stigma Screening and that could be shared with all agencies. On this section, a clarification was made between refer and refer out. ‘Referring’ means offering initial services through the agency and additional services where needed. ‘Referring out’ happens when the agency is not able to offer the services and refers the patient out to a different agency.
 - Sharon Postel suggested that Support Staff review the complete list of agencies funded with resources for mental health and substance use services, and to find out if mental health resources are being utilized for Ryan White clients.
 - Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, suggested that the Consultant develop a Behavioral Health Cascade as discussed initially.
 - Postel, Consultant, mentioned that this portion of the Needs Assessment is used to make recommendation for the Priority Resource Setting Allocations to the Planning Council

8. New Business

- Discussion/Update on the 2017-2021 Integrated Prevention and Care Plan

- Kasny Damas, Recipient, will review the Integrated Prevention and Care Plan and create summaries to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Kasny Damas, Recipient, will also share the tool used last year for a case study on viral load suppression.
- 2019 Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism (Not a full Assessment) – Tania Guaman, Support Staff, announced that two proposals were received.
 - By the end of the week, proposals will be reviewed, and a decision will be made
 - The report needs to be approved by REC first
 - The report has to be approved by the PC before September 30.
- 2018-2019 Workplan Review – the workplan was reviewed and updates made in July and Aug.

9. Administrative Issues

Tania Guaman, Support Staff, requested the following:

- Send Resumes or CV to complete membership applications.
- Guaman also reported that Support Staff is updating current records for reflectiveness and it will be done by Wednesday.

10. Announcements

Kasny Damas, Recipient, introduced a new member of the grantee's office. Karen Ehiri.

Tania Guaman, Support Staff, made the following announcements:

- July 19th – Peter Ho Memorial Kid's Day.
- July 23rd – Beyond Survival – HIV Stakeholders Engagement Conference
- August 20th – Summer Cookout hosted by Peter Ho Memorial and CIA

Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, made the following announcements:

- Ann Bagchi, PhD stepped down from her positions as Chair of the NJHPG – Stigma Committee.
- Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, announced that she is conducting 2 research studies:
 - 1) Bagchi will conduct stigma reduction workshops (StepUp! to Stamp Out Stigma) for 3 groups of 15 PLWH, people affected by HIV or the community in general. The workshops will be held in Newark, New Brunswick, and Camden. Recruitment is now open. Those interested can reach out to Kasny Damas (Recipient's office).
The Newark-based workshop will be held on September 7th from 10am to 1pm at the Rutgers Nursing School in Newark. The study will offer incentives to participate such as meals, travel reimbursements, and a gift card. The other workshops will be held on August 17th in New Brunswick and August 24th in Camden.
 - 2) Rutgers received pilot funding to conduct a Needs Assessment to measure the access of underserved communities to telehealth /telemedicine services in Newark and Atlantic county. This study will focus on staff and clients at agencies serving PLWH. Consumers and providers will complete surveys, participate in telephone interviews, and participate in 3 focus groups in the Newark area (1 in English, 1 in Spanish and 1 for young African American gay/bisexual men) and 1 in Atlantic County. Recruitment is also open for 12 people, mainly community members, but providers are also welcomed, to join the study's Research-Driven Community Advisory Board, which will help with the study design and data analysis.

11. Next Meeting

The next REC meeting will be held on Monday, August 19, 2019 at 10:00AM at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

12. Adjournment

Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Debbie Mohammad motioned to adjourn. Natalie Brown-Muhammad second the motion. All agreed to end the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:39am.