



Meeting Minutes  
Needs Assessment Committee

December 2, 2005, 9:30 AM–11:30 AM  
GMHC Room 405 (119 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street)

**Members Present:** Ivy Gamble-Cobb (Chair), Eli Camhi, Mary Ann Chiasson, John Chin, Guillermo Garcia-Goldwyn, Janet Goldberg, JoAnn Hilger, Jennifer Irwin, Rosemary Lopez, Howard Marcus, Mindy Nass, Carline Numa, Ann-Gel Palermo, Howard Schwartz

**Members Not Present:** David Abramson, Christine Campbell, Peter Catapano, Alison Chi, Orbit Clanton, Myron Gold, Cynthia Knox, Julie Lehane, Frank Oldham, Victor Rodack, Teresita Rodriguez, Judy Sackoff, Melissa Shurkin, Daniel Weglein, Gregg Weinberg, Victoria Williams

**DOHMH Staff:** Robert Shiau, Jan Carl Park, Darryl Wong, David Klotz, Stephen Bailous

**Guests:** Angela Aidala

### **I. Welcome/Introductions/Review of Minutes**

Ivy Gamble-Cobb opened the meeting and introductions were made. Minutes from the November meeting were reviewed and approved. The contents of the meeting packet were reviewed.

### **II. Process Review: Identification of Data Gaps/Needs and Research Projects**

Rob Shiau reviewed the process used prior to the Planning Council restructuring and presented a flow chart of a proposal for the Planning Council's Identification of Data Gaps/Needs and Research Project as it relates to data requests from CHAIN and for commissioning special studies & research initiatives.

The proposal was reviewed discussed and amended. It was also forwarded to the CHAIN TRT for comment/review and incorporation.

### **III. Presentation: Delayers & The Unconnected, Angela Aidala**

Angela Aidala presented data from her study on "Delayers, Drop-Outs, the Unconnected and Unmet Need." The data sources for the study included:

- Qualitative and quantitative data provided by PLWH, HIV service providers and stakeholders
- CHAIN cohort study provided information about patterns of delayed entry into care and drop-out or continuity of care over time
  - representative sample of PLWH receiving services
  - n=684 interviewed in 2002-2003
  - n=968 previous cohort interviewed 1994- 2002
- Separate ethnographic effort to locate and interview 'unconnected' PLWH
  - in 2004 (n=25), 1998 (n=24), 1995 (n=48)
- Informant interviews with 32 providers working with PLWH with high rates of delay and/or drop out
- Client focus groups to discuss barriers to entry and engagement with care
- Community Advisory Group

The study questions for this report were:

- Better understanding of 'unmet need' defined by HRSA as persons aware of their HIV infection but not receiving regular HIV primary care Who are the "unconnected" and how might they be

located? How do they compare to persons better integrated into the HIV care system? Do they compare to persons outside of the HIV care system in earlier stages of the epidemic?

- What program or policy recommendations would facilitate entry and sustained engagement with care?

At the end of the presentation Dr. Aidala made the following recommendation:

- Multiple strategies required to reach and engage the currently unconnected and to maintain PLWH marginally connected to the service system  
Infected persons at different stages of 'readiness' to manage their HIV
  - Some beginning to manage but motivation and capacity limited - would use community based services but less successful in conventional care
  - Some not developed awareness of need nor intention to use services and require active individual outreach to reach them where they gather or go for non-medical services
- Outreach and community based services are necessary not only for first entry into HIV care but to maintain continuity of care for many PLWH/A
  - Storefront clinics, mobile units, medical teams at SRO or soup kitchen not simply link to services but have become primary source of care
- PLWH outside or marginally connected to medical care have contacts with other service systems should review as source of outreach, education, engagement
- Testing site perhaps most important point of intervention
  - Pre-test counseling should include treatment education stressing the role of regular assessment and monitoring and sensitive treatment of medication issues
  - Post-test efforts should include actively linking PLWH with appropriate care via direct contact between test site and medical treatment facility
- AIDS housing policies – e.g. use of limited stay SRO facilities – should be reviewed with understanding of negative effects of homelessness and housing disruptions on engagement with medical care

#### **IV. Special Populations for the 2005-2006 Planning Cycle**

The committee discussed the process for identifying the special populations for the EMA. The committee looked at the special populations identified by the IOC Committee, as well as those that were identified in our Title I application to HRSA and added a couple of other populations to the list. The committee then decided that the best way to rank them would be through individual member ranking via Survey Monkey. The staff liaison for the committee agreed to set it up and send it to members.

#### **V. Public Comment/Announcements**

Dr. Angela Aidala's presentation slides, the flow chart of the process for identification of Data Gaps/Needs and Research Projects as well as the list of special populations to be ranked are available upon request.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned. Next meeting will be Thursday, January 5, 2006.