

**Office of AIDS
Care and Treatment Program Update**

**HIV Care Branch and ADAP Section
March 2007**

HIV Care Branch

**Contact: Peg Taylor, Chief
(916) 449-5940**

Title II Ryan White CARE Act Application

OA submitted the Title II (now referred to as Part B) application for Base and ADAP Earmark funding which helps to fund ADAP, CARE/HIPP, Case Management Program, Care Services/HIV Care Consortia Program and a variety of other HIV care/treatment-related activities. The application was submitted to and accepted by Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) in December 2006. OA was informed by HRSA that the FY 07/08 funding award information will be provided on April 1 (approximately). All program allocations are on hold until the Title II funding award is received.

Ryan White CARE Act Reauthorization

On December 19, 2006, Congress passed the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act of 2006 (CARE Act). The Act authorizes the program for three years and includes a sunset provision ending the program on September 30, 2009. The Act includes language that may result in changes to the levels of funding for six of the nine California EMAs. For additional information, please refer to details included in the Power Point notes in the CHPG folder.

AIDS Regional Information and Evaluation System (ARIES)

The statewide installation of ARIES was successfully launched on July 17, 2006, and more providers are being migrated to ARIES each month. The OA ARIES Implementation Work Group completed the evaluation of the pilot phase and a Local Implementation Committee has been created to work directly with providers in preparation for migration to ARIES.

As of February 22, 2007, the ARIES system contains 9,998 unduplicated clients associated with almost 339,275 services. There are currently 53 providers with 594 users registered to use ARIES.

Additional accomplishments since September 2006 include:

- Two ARIES workshops were presented at the Case Management Program (CMP)/Medi-Cal Waiver Program (MCWP) Annual Conference on October 18, 2006.
- The ARIES Help Desk has published two issues of the ARIES Advisor newsletter (November 2006 and January 2007). They are available on the OA website.
- ARIES received two Best of California Awards from the Center for Digital Government on November 13, 2006.
- An ARIES demonstration was provided to DHS's Public Health Officer, Dr. Mark Horton, on January 9, 2007.
- The State of Nevada adopted ARIES in early 2007.

For further information, please contact your program representative:

Denise Absher (for Care Services Program/ Title II) at dabsher@dhs.ca.gov,

Elizabeth Brannon-Patel (for CMP/MCWP) at ebrannon@dhs.ca.gov,

Chris Paular (for Early Intervention Program) at cpaular@dhs.ca.gov,
or the OA ARIES Project Lead: Susan Sabatier at ssabatie@dhs.ca.gov.

CARE Section

Contact: Clarissa Poole-Sims, Chief
(916) 449-5950

HIV Care Consortia/Care Services Program (CSP)

CSP contract documents for fiscal years 2007-2010 are being prepared. The new contract period is April 1, 2007, through March 31, 2010.

CSP Service Delivery Plans are now being submitted and reviewed by CSP staff.

CSP Advisors will continue to conduct on-site contract monitoring and work with the California Department of Health Services, Audits and Investigations Division to complete audits of selected fiscal agents.

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS Program (HOPWA)

The HOPWA program is in the process of collecting client and expenditure data from HOPWA contractors that will reflect the new reporting elements required by Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The mid-year reports were due December 31, 2006 and staff is in the process of reviewing these reports for completion and accuracy. HOPWA staff is working with contractor staff in order to ensure that the final report is completed accurately and in a timely manner. Data from the final reports will be reviewed and incorporated into the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) that is due to HUD by September 30, 2007. Staff will resume continued monitoring of the highest need contracts in March 2007. Staff is continuing to work with the ARIES team to develop the HOPWA component of the data system.

Residential AIDS Licensed Facilities Program (RALF)

The RALF program is working with the Contracts Management Unit to prepare new contracts for the FY 2007-2008 allocation. Mid year occupancy reports are due to the Office of AIDS and notification will be sent to those facilities funded by the RALF program.

Community Based Care Section

Contact: Richard Iniguez, Chief
(916) 449-5974

Medi-Cal AIDS Waiver Renewal

The Medi-Cal AIDS Waiver was formally approved on December 26, 2006. The waiver was approved with the stipulation that the state would have a plan in place by July 1, 2007, followed by implementation by July 1, 2008. The plan must address how services are to be provided to eligible Medi-Cal AIDS Waiver clients on a waiver "waiting list". State Office of AIDS will be meeting with state Medi-Cal staff, federal Medicaid administrators, and project directors to develop a response and implement a plan.

Medi-Cal Aids Waiver Contracts

Contracts for those projects that provide services to Medi-Cal waiver clients are being prepared and will be sent to projects for full execution. The contracts will be for a 3-year period.

Medi-Cal Billing Codes

Program staff has reviewed and approved the alternative codes provided by Office of HIPAA Compliance (OHC). Program made decisions on best choice of codes and forwarded the selections to OHC. The OHC then worked with DHS Payment Systems Division to identify selected codes currently being used by Medi-Cal. Fiscal and system/operational impact assessments have been completed and submitted to initiate operational changes. Necessary Operational Instruction Letters (OILs) will be drafted and submitted to PSD.

Spring Project Directors Meeting

The spring project directors meeting is being held next week in Santa Rosa. Much attention at this meeting will be devoted to planning and budgeting for the new CMP contract cycle. Planning is beginning for the fall Project Directors (PD) Meeting which will be held in conjunction with the CMP/MCWP Annual Statewide Conference. PD's will be given the opportunity to discuss issues in relation to their regional physical location in the state: Northern California, Central California, and Southern California.

CMP/MCWP Annual Conference

Planning is also underway for the 2007 Statewide Conference. This year, the annual conference will be held in San Diego, California. The dates are October 22-25, 2007. Attendees include Project Directors, Nurse and Social Work Case Managers, Case Aides, and other CMP/MCWP staff. The conference steering committee, made up of various CMP/MCWP staff from projects around the state and CBC staff, will begin meeting shortly and work with program sponsors and coordinators.

Early Intervention Section (EIS)

**Contact: Carol Russell, Chief
(916) 449-5962**

Early Intervention Program

The Contra Costa County Women's Center and Los Angeles County, King-Drew, Early Intervention Program (EIP) projects were visited and site assessment reports were prepared.

Positive Changes

A Positive Changes meeting was held in San Francisco on February 14-16, 2007.

Therapeutic Monitoring Program (TMP)

As a result of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006-07 mid-year assessment process, 11,539 additional viral load test vouchers were distributed on January 9, 2007, to EIP sites, federal Title II areas and some Title I Eligible Metropolitan Areas (Contra Costa county, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego and San Francisco).

Requests for additional test vouchers continue to exceed available funding. Therefore, only viral load test voucher requests were filled during the FY 2006-07 mid-year assessment process.

An RFA process is currently underway for resistance testing for a three-year cycle to begin on July 1, 2007. The announcement date will be March 9, 2007.

AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) Section

**Contact: Kathy Russell, Chief
(916) 449-5942**

AIDS Drug Assistance Program Unit

**Contact: Thérèse Ploof, Chief
(916) 449-5553**

ADAP and Medicare Part D

ADAP continues to assist eligible clients who are also Medicare Part D beneficiaries with their out of pocket Part D costs by paying deductibles, prescription co-pays, and co-insurance. In January 2007, the Medicare Part D Premium Payment Program was implemented via the CARE/HIPP Program. Since CARE/HIPP is a health insurance continuation program, they already have the mechanism in place to accept applications and pay premiums. This collaboration enabled ADAP to add Part D premium payment assistance for ADAP clients who have a premium obligation. ADAP clients are able to enroll with any of the Part D plans that are available in California.

ADAP Federal Poverty Level Guidance Memo

There has been a recent increase in the federal poverty level. An ADAP Management Memo will be sent to all local ADAP coordinators on February 26, 2007, indicating the change in the federal poverty level. Four hundred percent of this figure represents the new minimum income level for co-payment obligations for ADAP participants. As in previous years, this change is effective April 1, 2007.

CARE/HIPP UNIT

**Contact: Cynthia Smiley, Chief
(916) 449-5934**

CARE/HIPP and Medicare Part D

On January 31, 2007, CARE/HIPP notified its local, community-based enrollment sites about the February 5, 2007, start date for the increased ceiling on allowable health premium costs. The ceilings were in place for over five years, and as health insurance cost rise annually, many people with HIV whose monthly premiums exceeded the ceilings could not access the program. The new limits were selected to accommodate most health insurance coverage, thus creating a positive impact by removing one of the program’s barriers to increased participation.

There are four new monthly premium ceilings, depending on the type of insurance coverage (e.g., individual or family policy, and Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA), or Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Conversion policies).

COBRA or Private Policy		OBRA or HIPAA CONVERSIONS (with Rx)	
<i>2/5/2007 Policy Limits</i>		<i>2/5/2007 Policy Limits</i>	
\$700	Individual Policy	\$950	Individual Policy
\$900	Family Policy	\$1,325	Family Policy

The ADAP/Medicare Premium Payment Program is well underway. The program pays Medicare Part D premiums on behalf of ADAP clients who are required to pay Part D premiums because they do not qualify to have their premiums paid by the Full Low Income Subsidy. Paying Part D premiums

enables ADAP clients to maintain their Medicare eligibility status and receive life-saving medications through Medicare. To date, Part D premiums have been paid for approximately 672 ADAP clients.