

**Office of AIDS
HIV Education and Prevention Services Branch
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HIV Counseling, Testing, and Training Section

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HIV Counseling and Testing Restructure (C&T)

The HIV Counseling, Testing and Training (CT&T) Program began rolling out the new restructure on January 1, 2008. One of the main goals of the C&T restructure is to use resources such as staff and time spent with clients more efficiently. By focusing staff resources on those at highest risk for acquiring HIV, while still serving those at lower risk seeking a test, prevention value is maximized. Guidance documents that included information on all the aspects of the restructured program were provided to Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJs), and are available on the Office of AIDS website at <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/aids/Counseling/LEO/CTGuidanceDocs.htm>. CT&T Program Consultants have been providing technical assistance regarding the restructure and guidance documents, and site visits are planned by OA C&T Program Staff during the spring and summer of 2008.

HCV Integration

LHJs submitted their plans for integrating HCV into their HIV programs. The goal of this program is to increase the numbers of individuals at risk for HCV who know their Hepatitis C virus (HCV) antibody status, and receive appropriate risk reduction counseling for HCV and HCV education and referrals. OA has focused the HCV testing as an incentive to attract larger numbers of injection drug users (IDUs) into HIV counseling and testing (C&T). The plans are currently being reviewed by the Program Consultants, and training resources are being evaluated.

The Client Assessment Questionnaire (CAQ)

LHJs are now utilizing the CAQ form. The CAQ is a self-administered form that assists in determining if a client is to receive the low-level or high-level intervention based on responses to the CAQ. A Spanish version of the CAQ is currently being released for LHJs that see monolingual clients. Additionally, the CAQ will be translated into other languages and available for use in the spring/summer 2008.

Counselor Training

UCSF, AIDS Health Project (AHP) in collaboration with OA is currently developing the Counselor 1 curriculum and revising the Basic I training. The Counselor 1 training focuses on the low-level intervention that can be provided by an HIV Counselor 1 or an

HIV Counselor 2. Topics covered in this training include basic HIV 101 information, the window period, and administration of the OraQuick ADVANCE Rapid HIV Test.

The Basic 1 training is developed for the HIV Counselor 2 which provides HIV C&T services to high-risk clients. The HIV Counselor 2 is required to take the four day Basic 1 training that also includes rapid HIV testing proficiency. The Basic 1 training focuses on, 1) Risk Assessment, 2) Client Centered Counseling, and 3) Administration of the OraQuick ADVANCE Rapid HIV Test. Three months following the Basic 1 Training, the Counselor 2 is required to take the Basic 2 Training.

HIV Rapid Testing Update

Rapid HIV testing is continuing to be implemented throughout the State. Approximately 41 of California's Local Health Jurisdictions (LHJs) have implemented rapid testing (RT) into their existing HIV C&T programs, and NIGHT programs.

HIV Prevention Policy and Program Development Section

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African American

The California Department of Public Health, Office of AIDS (CDPH/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

1. 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, CDPH/OA has required Action Plans. All of LHJs have submitted Action Plans and they have been reviewed by the Gay Men/MSM Task Force. Additionally, a number of LHJs have provided requested updates to their report. Two Task Force workgroups have continued to meet to develop an Intervention Template that will help identify interventions in use focusing on African American gay men/MSM and to develop African American gay men/MSM testing goal numbers for these LHJs.

2. ONTRACK Program Resources Technical Assistance

ONTRACK Program Resources has successfully brought their website (www.onloveca.org) online. This comprehensive resource website provides information and links on HIV and over health disparities disproportionately impacting the African American community. ONTRACK has also provided successful regional DEBI trainings in Los Angeles, Oakland and San Diego and has future trainings scheduled in the

Inland Empire and the Sacramento/Central Valley area. ONTRACK will be providing technical assistance to individual organizations in the near future.

3. Technical Assistance to Regional Coalitions

ONTRACK has continued to provide support to the 5 regional CAAHAC bodies as they finalize their structural and sustainability plans. The regional bodies will be contributing members to participate in the statewide CAAHAC Board.

IDU

Lake County, which has been host to an “underground” needle exchange program for over a decade, is poised to vote on official authorization of the program. In Los Angeles, over-the-counter (OTC) pharmacy sale of syringes is still moving forward: after a slow start, hundreds of pharmacies are now participating. In Long Beach, the city council approved OTC sale of syringes after a tremendous community organizing effort.

AB 110, which allows OA funds to be used to purchase syringes, passed the legislature, was signed by the Governor and went into effect January 1st of this year.

OA has funded two educational videos that will be available for distribution in May through the California AIDS Clearinghouse. The first is a “roll-call” video for police department education on syringe exchange and needlestick injury prevention. This video is being produced in response to a CHPG recommendation. The second video addresses pharmacy sale of syringes and is geared towards pharmacists.

Latino Initiative

The OA/CDPH Latino Advisory Board (LAB) Steering Committee convened recently to plan for the LAB’s activities for the year. At this meeting, they met with CDPH/OA Chief Michelle Roland to discuss the LAB’s role and how best to maximize its advisory role to CDPH/OA. In May, the full LAB will be meeting in Sacramento for a comprehensive CDPH/OA presentation which will include overviews from many of CDPH/OA’s key programs. This will enable the LAB to provide advisory to CDPA/OA in an informed and productive way.

Asian Pacific Islander

CDPH/OA will be partnering with CHRP, API Wellness Center and Asian Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF) to convene an API HIV consult meeting on June 19th and 20th in Sacramento. This meeting will, in part, serve to open a dialogue between CDPH/OA and API HIV prevention, care and research experts to focus efforts on the complex and diverse API community in California.

HIV Community Prevention Section

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Local Health Jurisdiction contract amendments for the \$5,600,000 augmentation have been approved and forwarded for processing.

Two intervention specialists have been hired, Dona Marshall joined the section January 22nd, and Dennis Fleming on February 19th. With the filling of these two positions, the section is now fully staffed. Dona and Dennis are joining the program consultant staff on site visits and will be providing support and directions on 08/09 scope of work revisions and ELI/LEO training/technical support.