

The Pennsylvania HIV Prevention and Care News Bulletin



Summer 2019

Vol. 1, Iss. 3

Announcements from the Pennsylvania Department of Health

• The Pennsylvania (Pa.) Department of Health received National Public Health Accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). This prestigious honor took many years of preparation to achieve. Congratulations to Pennsylvania, the Department of Health, and everyone involved in the process!



• The Division of HIV Disease is pleased to announce that the 2018 Annual HIV Surveillance Report for Pa has been published. Please find it online at: <https://tinyurl.com/2018SurveillanceReport>

• The Division is currently working on grant close out activities and preparing the report that is due to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for the previous year. Stay tuned for HRSA's response to that report soon.

• The Division's new shared human resources services model has resulted in some slower than usual HR transactions. The Division hopes all its available positions will be filled soon. The following positions are open:

- Public Health Program Administrator Assistant
- Capacity Building Coordinator
- Clinical Quality Manager
- Clerk Typist 3

• Find all open positions at <https://tinyurl.com/PADOHPositions>



• The Data-to-Care pilot study has expanded to Allentown and Bethlehem and will continue to expand throughout the state. Stay tuned for more information and program findings soon!

• The state's condom order form has been updated to include dental dams and personal lubricant. Please reach out to Katina Blair at katblair@pa.gov if you are interested in ordering.

Announcements from the Pa Department of Health (cont.)

- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced the Housing Opportunities for People Living with AIDS' (HOPWA) 2019 funding. Pa's HOPWA program will receive \$3,546,141, a **13.8 percent increase** from 2018. The funds will be received upon completion of Pa's portion of a five-year consolidated plan. Once completed, it will be sent out for comments and then sent to HUD for finalization. Current funding will continue until the process is complete.



- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) media campaign entitled "Let's Stop HIV Together" has officially rolled out in Pa. The Division is continuing to work with the Pa. Department of Communications on a Pa-specific media campaign to reduce HIV stigma. For more information on the CDC's campaign, visit:

www.cdc.gov/actagainstaids/campaigns/lsht/index.html

- The CDC has initiated a new system for requesting capacity building trainings. All capacity building requests must be submitted to the DOH through Katina Blair at kblair@pa.gov.

- Mari Jane Salem-Noll (Prevention Program Manager) and Michelle Rossi (PrEP Coordinator) have been meeting with the Department of Drug and Alcohol providers on HIV testing and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). Dr. Lauren Orkis, the state's Viral Hepatitis Prevention Coordinator, has also been co-presenting with them on Hepatitis C.



- Dr. Lauren Orkis is in the process of establishing a Hepatitis C virus stakeholder group that will meet a few times a year. Please reach out to Dr. Lauren Orkis at lmt61@pitt.edu if you are interested in supporting this important work!

Announcements from the Philadelphia Area

- The Philadelphia area's planning body "The HIV Integrated Planning Council" has been developing a racial equity work group. The process and logistics are still being developed. Stay tuned!

- The "Philly Keep on Loving" campaign was launched on February 14, 2019. The campaign encourages people to consider PrEP in their sexual health. Advertisements will be on buses, at corner stores, and on social media in English and Spanish.



Announcements from the Philadelphia Area (cont.)

- Philadelphia has developed a group called “The Positive Committee” which is made up of those living with HIV and affected by HIV. This group uses their experiences to inform the Philadelphia HIV planning process and is now developing specific recommendations for council membership.
- The Metropolitan Area Neighborhood Nutrition Alliance (MANNA) organization delivers nutrition and meals to individuals with serious illnesses to parts of nine counties in the Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey area. MANNA can also accommodate clients that live outside of one of the counties, provided the delivery comes to a relative, friend, or provider in one of the nine allowed areas. Walk-ins are also encouraged. If you or anyone you know needs assistance, visit www.mannapa.org for more information.



- The city of Philadelphia and the University of Pittsburgh are collaborating on a research study called “Check it Out”. The study examines the question: Does providing financial help to those living with HIV help improve their overall financial stability? This study aims to provide knowledge to the field of how to help those living with HIV. Go to www.actionwellness.org for more info.
- Philadelphia is also working on providing informal listening sessions and “Brown Bag Lunches” to the community. These events are an effort to reach out to providers in the suburbs of Philadelphia to gauge what resources are needed and where. These sessions will also host experts or providers to come and speak to the community about different topics, such as terminology around sex and gender terms.



The Special Pharmaceutical Benefits Program (SPBP)



Upcoming Meeting

October 24th,
10a.m. - 3p.m.
Raddison Hotel -
Harrisburg

- The SPBP drug formulary continues to be updated regularly to include new HIV or other medications to ensure optimal health.
- SPBP implemented a new electronic enrollment system (MRx Enroll) this past February. This new enrollment platform will make it easier for clients to sign up for services.

The Special Pharmaceutical Benefits Program (cont.)

- SPBP is also working on launching a Case Management Portal which will allow case managers access to their clients' profiles for easier benefits management. This process is in the early stages and will hopefully start testing soon.
- To apply for a seat on the SPBP Advisory Council, please contact SPBP Advisory Council Chair John Haines directly at c-johaines@pa.gov or by phone at (717) 703-9171.

The HIV Planning Group (HPG) Stakeholder Meetings

- The Pennsylvania HIV Planning Group (HPG) and the Division hosted the state's second stakeholder meeting this year in State College, PA on Wednesday, July 31st. The purpose of this meeting was to engage rural stakeholders around the Integrated HIV Plan for Pennsylvania and hear their expectations and concerns.
- The HPG and the Division hosted around 75 attendees, as well individuals and watch parties through web-casting technology. Presentations centered on The Pennsylvania HIV Integrated Prevention and Care Plan, The Department of Health, Division of HIV disease, AIDS Resource, and Caring Communities. A town hall forum was also conducted to get stakeholder feedback.



- Attendees had the opportunity to fill out feedback surveys. Those surveys are currently being reviewed. Stay tuned in the coming months for a report on the feedback from this meeting, as well as one from the April Stakeholder Meeting in Pittsburgh!

Announcements from HPG Community Members

- HPG member Dr. Teresa Lowery works at Reading Hospital where the Ob/Gyn Department Chair implemented a Transgender Program almost two years ago. Dr. Lowery's department, The Center for Public Health at Reading Hospital, was instrumental in starting the program by bringing attention and awareness to the need for Transgender care and service at the hospital. The Transgender Program is aimed at training care providers how to discuss and administer health care to the transgender community. Since its inception, the program has been in high demand, and will start new operations at Phoenixville Hospital and Pottstown Hospital soon. Congratulations, Dr. Lowery!



Announcements from HPG Members (cont.)

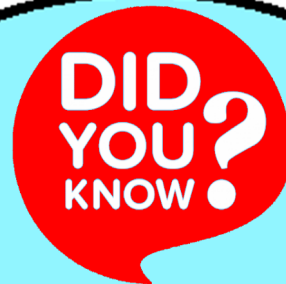
- HPG member Atticus Ranck has accepted a new position, and therefore will be departing from the HPG. We wish them well in their future endeavors. Thank you, Atticus, for your service on the HPG!

Announcements from HPG Planning Partners

- The Pennsylvania Expanded HIV Testing Initiative (PEHTI) has started giving Hepatitis C tests to those who receive HIV tests. Of the 7,889 tests administered in 2018, nearly 1 in 3 tests were antibody reactive. Providers serving uninsured individuals are encouraged to reach out to Jeremy Sandberg at jts32@psu.edu. PEHTI is working to find clinics to partner with throughout the Commonwealth, particularly in the more sparsely populated areas.



- The Medical Monitoring Project (MMP) completed its interviewing cycle on May 31st. Pa. interviewed 47 percent of all those eligible, plus 2 additional individuals. Well done, MMP!



In Pa., the rate of people who resolve the Hepatitis C infection on their own is only 20 percent, on par with the national average. Many are lost to care after their initial test. Testing and keeping individuals engaged in treatment is key to reducing the spread of Hepatitis C in Pa.

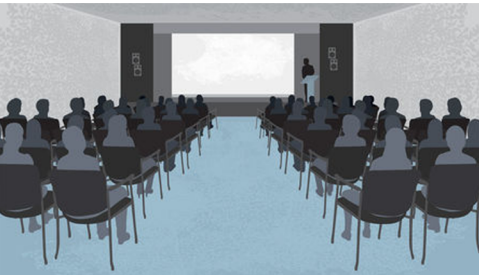
- The Pennsylvania Tuberculosis (TB) Program has developed a one-page risk assessment to identify individuals who should be tested for TB. The assessment has three questions and a 'yes' answer to any one question indicates a risk factor for TB. The assessment is modeled after a document developed by the California TB Program. The form can be found at www.tinyurl.com/TBRiskForm. Contact Jamie Durocher of the Pa. TB Program at jdurocher@pa.gov for more information.

Mid Atlantic AIDS Education and Training Center (MAAETC)



- The MAAETC offers a Hepatitis C preceptor one day observation course for clinicians who want to start providing care or improve their care. A Medical Assistance Treatment (MAT) preceptor is also provided to help providers who work with substance abuse. Visit www.maaetc.org for more information.

- The MAAETC website also features a Routine HIV Testing training video, as well as one on reimbursement for HIV testing that were developed in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Expanded HIV Testing Initiative (PEHTI). Please encourage all interested parties to watch these videos and complete the evaluation quizzes.



- Upcoming MAAETC trainings and seminars in Pa. range from topics such as “HIV Testing and Counseling Training” to “Case Management Coordination Project: HIV 101 & Beyond”. There will also be a “PrEP Summit” held in Pittsburgh. Visit www.maaetc.org/events/browse for a complete list of trainings and seminars throughout the Commonwealth.

The HIV Prevention and Care Project (HPCP)



- In 2017, the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) selected the Pa. HPG as an excellent model for a planning body enacting stakeholder engagement. This year, Iowa selected Pa. to provide support around how their planning body, technical assistance, and stakeholders are set up. The HPCP provided this technical assistance.

- A Project SILK location, called GLO, for young black men-who-have-sex-with-men (MSM) and trans-identifying youth (and allies!) will be opening in Harrisburg soon! This project is a collaboration between UPMC Pinnacle - REACCH Program, Hamilton Health Center, the LGBTQ Center of Central Pa., and Valley Youth House. The team is currently finalizing a location and staff for the project.

- The STD to PrEP project has been approved! The HPCP is currently conducting staff interviews for this demonstration project investigating linking frequent STI testers to PrEP.



The HIV Prevention and Care Project (HPCP) (cont.)

• A new Community Outreach Specialist, Maura Bainbridge, has been hired at the HPCP. Her primary responsibility will be to engage with communities and stakeholders throughout the Commonwealth. Look out for her at HPG and stakeholder meetings and feel free to reach out to her at mab630@pitt.edu with any questions or inquiries!



• To find out more about what the HPCP does, visit www.hivpreventionandcareproject.com.

Capacity Building Trainings

• The HPCP provides many Capacity Building (CB) and technical assistance services, including specialized technical assistance around engaging men-who-have-sex-with-men (MSM), programming assistance, needs assessments, and many more!

• The next available Capacity Building training is for **Motivational Interviewing** and is scheduled for **September 25th-26th** in **Harrisburg, Pa.**

• For more information about all upcoming trainings and services offered, visit www.stophiv.com



This News Bulletin is Intended for YOU!!!



As Community members, Planning Partners, and Stakeholders, The HIV Planning Group would like to thank you for bringing your hard work and dedication in providing prevention and care for HIV to the state of Pennsylvania. Our work depends on your drive and ambition. Let's keep up all of our great efforts!

Visit www.health.pa.gov or www.stophiv.com for all the latest information

Feedback, News to Share, or Questions?
Please email stakeholders@stophiv.com to contact us or to unsubscribe