



**RYAN WHITE CARE COUNCIL
MINORITY ADVOCACY COMMITTEE
METRO CENTER – TAMPA
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2009
11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

- CALL TO ORDER** The meeting was called to order by Ramon Baez, Chair, at 11:10 a.m.
- ATTENDANCE** Members Present: Ramon Baez, Robert Bailey, Jackie Colunga, Laura Dunn, Lolita Emanuel-Brown, Tonicia Freeman, Brenda Grove, Millie LaTorre, John Melartin, Darlene Smith, Lewis Williams, JaDawn Wright
- Members Absent: Maria Aponte, Anthony Frederick, Catheline Lamour
- Guests Present: Cecillia Carothers, Ann DePoole, Andrew Maldonado, Myleen Mercado
- Grantee Staff Present:
- Health Councils Staff Present: Nicole Brown
- CHANGES TO AGENDA** None.
- ADOPTION OF MINUTES** The minutes from August 14, 2009 were approved as written (**M:** Melartin, **S:** Dunn). There were 9 yes votes, 0 no votes and 0 abstentions.
- ELECTIONS** Ramon Baez was elected Chair and Laura Dunn was elected co-chair of the committee. Members decided to keep the meeting on the second Friday of the month from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm but chose to alternate the meeting between Metro in Tampa and St. Petersburg.
- MEETING DATE, TIME AND LOCATION**
- MAC WORK PLAN** The committee discussed the proposed committee work plan for program year 2009-2010. Members added updates from the RESTORE (Restoration thru Education Skills Training & Occupational Renewal for Excellence) and CRCS (Comprehensive Risk Counseling Sessions) programs as part of the work plan. The following motion passed (**M:** Wright, **S:** Dunn) with 9 yes votes, 0 no votes and 0 abstentions:
- Motion 09/09-01** **APPROVE THE 2009-10 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN WITH CHANGES.**

MAC SURVEY

Members brought completed surveys to the meeting. There are about 30 completed from Hernando and Pasco, 40 from Hillsborough and 16 from Pinellas. Members agreed to try and get a few more surveys to meet the committee goal of 150 surveys. Members said that the survey is proving to be easy to fill out and clients are responding well. The committee hopes to have the survey data compiled by the October meeting.

MOTION FROM CLIENT SERVICES

The committee discussed the motion from the Client Services Committee. Members shared that they thought the suggestion was excessive and that clients need to have some responsibility for themselves in receiving services. There were concerns about having to keep backing up the planning of eligibility appointments to allow time to make all the proposed contacts and members had concerns about inadvertently giving away someone's status by contacting the emergency contact. It was also noted that clients are often already getting reminders about eligibility and that possibly more education on the importance of keeping eligibility current will help clients keep their eligibility appointments. Some members also expressed a desire to know how many clients were missing their eligibility and not receiving services before changing the minimum standards of care for everyone. The feeling being that this would be an excessive change if it was really only a very few clients affected. There were also concerns raised as to the definition of what a pattern of non-compliance is. In addition, members stated that hopefully once the MAC survey is completed they might be able to offer information on why some clients are not keeping their eligibility current. It was also stated that it is only recently that clients are feeling the repercussions of not getting their eligibility. Some members stated that people will make more of an effort to keep the eligibility current once they see the importance. Some ideas shared to help educate clients were to create posters with a big red stop sign for agencies about the importance of eligibility. These posters could also list all the services for which eligibility is required. Having a card that would fit conveniently in a wallet instead of a piece of paper was also suggested. Members said that different educational pieces should be used because clients will all be motivated by something different and one thing cannot be generalized to fit everyone.

CARE COUNCIL REPORT

Laura shared that the Care Council passed MAI (Minority AIDS Initiative) funding allocations and a bylaw change to the conflict of interest section. The Care Council also adopted minimum standards of care for peer support. In addition it was announced that ADAP (AIDS Drug Assistance Program) will soon be allowing qualifying clients to get 90 days of medication at a time.

CLIENT INPUT

There was no client input shared.

**OTHER
COMMITTEE
REPORTS**

Lolita passed out new brochures for the RESTORE program. RESTORE is currently trying to reallocate money in their budget to hire two peer counselors. Lolita also stated that staff is working on ways to make the lengthy required pre and post program survey more manageable for their clients. RESTORE will be doing HIV testing for their clients but being HIV+ is not a requirement to receive services.

**COMMUNITY
CONCERNS &
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Andrew shared information on the “MAN UP: The Crisis of HIV/AIDS Among Florida’s Men” initiative from the state Bureau of HIV/AIDS. He stated that this report is about all men in Florida and there will also be community education and training as part of this program.

Lewis shared information that he received from attending the National Minority AIDS Council grant writing conference in Atlanta. He stated that there are billions of dollars of grant money available for HIV services from the government and private foundations.

Lewis shared information on the US Conference on African Immigrant Health that will be held April 7-11, 2010 in Atlanta, GA.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Minority Advocacy Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.