



Executive Committee

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, October 16, 2019, 1:00-1:30PM
 Willing Heart Community Center
 555 Martin Luther King Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102

Present	Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences
1. Ketlen Alsbrook 2. Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. 3. Cezar Dumago 4. Robert L. Johnson, MD (Chair) 5. Patricia Moore 6. Aliya Onque (Non-Voting) 7. Mario Portilla 8. Warren Poole	9. Joann McEniry (Vice-Chair)	

Staff: Tania Guaman, Vicky Saguay

1. Welcome & Moment of Silence

Dr. Robert L. Johnson, Chair of the Executive Committee, welcomed all members and called the meeting to order at 12:58 PM. A moment of silence was observed for all those living with, those affected by, and for those who have passed from HIV/AIDS.

2. Roll Call

Cezar Dumago, Secretary, conducted the roll call. Quorum was established.

3. Approval of Meeting Summary from September 18, 2019

Dr. Robert L. Johnson, Chair, called for the approval of the September 18th meeting summary. Pat Moore recommended an edit. Moore noted that the August meeting summary should be corrected as Ketlen Alsbrook was marked as a non-voting member for all committees. However, Moore stated that Alsbrook should have voting rights to all NEMA committees. All Executive members agreed and asked Support Staff to make the changes. The September meeting summary was approved unanimously with recommended edit.

4. Report from the Recipient

Ketlen Alsbrook provided the Recipient's report.

- Alsbrook mentioned that the Ryan White Part A Grant was submitted on September 27, 2019 requesting the maximum allowable funds of \$13,129,646. This figure included about \$1.3M in Administrative costs, \$656,000 in Clinical Quality Management and \$11.1 million for Care and Treatment. The Part A distribution was approximately 72/28, presuming Core Service Waiver approval for FY 2020 and close to 75/25 adding the MAI component.

- The Recipient also submitted a Grant Application for Ending the HIV Epidemic, A Plan for America (ETE) on October 15. There were three tiers that established a different maximum amount to be requested. The minimum funding allowed was \$750,000 for all tiers. The Recipient's office was in the tier two category and was able to request a maximum amount of \$4M. This is a 5-year Grant Cooperative agreement with HRSA with technical assistance and involvement of HRSA in the implementation and evaluation of the program. The Recipient requested \$21,814,001 for the five-year period with the application having a focus on pillar two and pillar four, which is rapid treatment and responding quickly to outbreaks and clusters.
- The Recipient's application for the ETE directed 57% of funds to wrap services like Emergency Financial Assistance to pay for short term medication assistance for those that are newly engaged but have not completed the ADAP enrollment process or other health insurance. Enrollment will also include Primary Medical Care and Medical Case Management.
- The Recipient is focusing on housing for low income people living with HIV who are not virally suppressed or have identified housing as a barrier to remain virally suppressed. The Program's parameters are still under discussion. The Recipient also wants to support the HOPWA program by focusing on the waiting list or people who haven't been able to get into the program because of reduced funding.
- The Recipient met with the Assistant Commissioner, Christopher Menschner on October 2nd, to discuss the state's CDC funded Ending The Epidemic plan, which focuses on Hudson and Essex counties. The Recipient also met with representatives from Hudson County. The initial steps are to develop a task force for both regions and conduct a situational analysis to determine the needs and gaps in both regions as well as the commonalities and differences. Chris Menschner acknowledged the fact that the State is going through a transition now. Therefore, the initial plan to establish a data bridge between the HIV surveillance system at the state level and our CHAMP system is not doable during year one or two. The focus for year one is to build data bridges between our CHAMP system and the Electronic Medical Record system that PMC/MCM providers use.
- The grant period for the Ending The Epidemic is concurrent with the Part A grant period. There is a section in the Part A grant application that agencies can respond to request funds from the End the Epidemic grant. Consequently, the Recipient's office does not have to issue a separate RFP.
- The RFP for FY 2020 was released on October 4th. Letters of Intent are due on October 18. The proposals are due on November 8th by 4pm. The Recipient intends to have those contracts executed within 90 days of completing the negotiations. The Recipient highlighted to potential applicants the following:
 - o Security deposits are no longer an allowable cost under Housing
 - o EFA is now open to other Part A providers as long as it is a service provided on a one-time urgent short-term basis
 - o Telehealth was incorporated into the Ambulatory Care definition as well as for Non-Medical Case Management

Dr. Johnson mentioned that one of the pillars on End the Epidemic refers to the consistent use of medication. To that end, Dr. Johnson advised that health insurance companies requiring prior authorization can be a challenge, even for people who have been on medications for a long time. Dr. Johnson suggested that this might not be an issue for agencies that have employees to handle those situations, but it is not the case for all agencies. For instance, Dr. Johnson shared his experience with a patient. He commented that a patient who moved from New York to New Jersey did not have medication for two months. Dr. Johnson explained that the patient had the same type of insurance and the same medication, but one was from New York and the other one from New Jersey, so the company required another prior authorization. The patient was unable to obtain his medication because he could not find a person to get him through the process. Eventually, the patient obtained his medication after a Nurse Practitioner was on a call with the insurance company for almost half a day. The patient was fortunate to stay undetectable during that process.

Dr. Johnson suggested that if insurance companies would instead approve certain medications for patients to choose from, also that prior authorization is no longer a barrier to medication access. He also noted that large clinics, especially with lots of patients, might not always have the resources to monitor patients on a case-by-case basis.

Ann Bagchi, PhD., (REC Chair) commented that there are many policies in place that do not consider the needs of low-income consumers. Bagchi, PhD., as an example, noted Cezar Dumago's case mentioned during the COC meeting which explained how a patient was not able to get a taxi after their colonoscopy was done. Bagchi explained that hospitals will not let you leave if you do not have someone accompanying you after certain procedures. She also shared that she experienced something similar where they did not let her walk back home after her procedure. Bagchi asked what could be done on those situations. Kellen Alsbrook, Recipient, mentioned that during her meeting with Chris Menschner, he stated that there was a recommendation on the State plan to remove this prior authorization requirement, similar to what was done for the opioid epidemic. The Recipient also mentioned that at the State level, there is an effort to work closely with Medicaid to address this issue.

Mario Portilla, COC Chair, asked if the issue about people with resident status not being able to get state assistance is being addressed. Bagchi, REC Chair, asked if that was put on hold because a judge ruled it was not valid. Support Staff commented that this issue is under court review and has not yet taken effect. Portilla mentioned that people have started to avoid asking for benefits. Kellen Alsbrook, Recipient, also mentioned that a couple of our doctors brought up clients' concern to use ADAP or Ryan White services fearing that this would impact their ability to become citizens.

Cezar Dumago, Secretary, shared his experience in addressing the issue of prior authorization. He shared that during the wait for prior authorization, his organization gives out free samples for about a month and a half which are donated by Gilead or Janssen when patients need medications. Once the prior authorization occurs, providers are able to prescribe medications so that patients cannot be denied. To this point, Dr Johnson mentioned that this cannot be done in a public clinic.

5. Standing Committee Updates

- COC: Mario Portilla

- Housing Standard of Care (*Introduced to the Council in June 2019. Need approval*)

- For introduction: Early Intervention Services; Mental Health Services; Medical Transportation.

Dr. Johnson reiterated that the Housing Standard needs approval from Planning Council and that Early Intervention Services, Mental Health Services, and Medical Transportation Standards were going to be introduced at the Planning Council today. Dr. Johnson asked the COC Chair if there were any other comments regarding the Standards. Mario Portilla, COC Chair, indicated that all the definitions were updated and there were a lot of edits on the Medical Transportation Standard.

The next COC meeting will be held on Thursday, November 14, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

- **CPC: Joann McEniry**

- FY2020 Priority Setting and Resource Allocation

Tania Guaman mentioned that there was only a note that the Priority Setting and Resource Allocation report was completed. The report was shared via email with all members. There was no meeting in October, therefore CPC does not have any updates.

The next CPC meeting will be held on Friday, November 8, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

- **REC: Ann Bagchi, Ph.D.**

- 2019 Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism
- 2019 Epidemiological Profile

Ann Bagchi, REC Chair indicated that the REC will start discussion for the next Needs Assessment in November. However, it was noted that according to the NEMA contract, the consultant's contract won't be in place until March which is when United Way of Greater Union County confirms the receipt of the award. Support Staff mentioned that the Needs Assessment process starts earlier than the contracting process every year. Ann Bagchi, REC Chair, questioned if the consultant should attend the meetings. Tania Guaman also commented that she wanted to bring this up for discussion.

Pat Moore asked if Support Staff will send the Needs Assessment for a bid. Moore also mentioned that the consultant started the work even before she got paid. Dr. Johnson stated that a public bid is required since the Planning Council is a public body and that the bid should be put up even before starting the contracts. Bagchi suggested that this could be worked on at the next REC meeting in November.

Dr. Johnson asked about the due date for the final Needs Assessment. The REC Chair stated that it is needed by June. Pat Moore asked if it was a Full Needs Assessment or an update. Support Staff explained that a Full Needs Assessment was done this year and next year should be an update. Pat Moore agreed that an agreement needs to be in place with the chosen Consultant who will be working in the next Needs Assessment before March.

Cezar Dumago asked if Sharon Postel should be added to the Executive Committee as a Non-Voting member. Dr. Johnson explained that she would have to be a member of the Council to be included in the Executive Committee.

The next REC meeting will be held on Monday, November 18, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

- **CIA/CC: Warren Poole**

o CIA Workplan

Support Staff shared that CIA is preparing a Workplan based on the recommendations to build a structure for the CIA. Support Staff mentioned that CIA established an agenda for this upcoming meeting. Guaman also mentioned that an Agenda and Workplan was shared via email and included in Executive Committee's packets.

Warren Poole, CIA Chair, will provide a report to the Planning Council meeting earlier since he needs to leave soon.

The next CIA meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 23, 2019 at the Willing Heart Community Center located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

6. Treasurer's Report

Pat Moore provided the Treasurer's Report. The Planning Council's budget is seven (7) months (58%) into the fiscal year. We have spent approximately 50% of the contractual amount. All budget lines are within projected amounts except for consumer travel as noted last month and networking. *[What is included in networking?]*. Pat Moore, Treasurer, asked to clarify networking and mentioned she was assuming it is the office networking. Support Staff agreed that the budget category was referring to the outside network the office uses. Pat Moore mentioned she was not aware the network came from an outside source and it is running over.

Projecting expenses, for the next five (5) months, we will probably be able to stay within the budgeted amounts. Partial payment for the consultant is being processed. Ketlen Alsbrook asked if treasurer foresees going overbudget. Moore stated that everything seems within budget. Treasurer mentioned that the networking expense could be picked up by other expenses categories. The Treasurer mentioned that the Networking budget is about 50% of the whole budget amount. Moore mentioned that consumer travel is over budget, which was previously discussed.

Dr. Johnson asked about the costs associated with the meeting space rental. Moore mentioned current rent is within budget. Tania Guaman stated that rent should be within budget because of some meeting cancelations. Moore asked about the price for each meeting. Guaman stated that all meetings cost \$200 except for CIA, which is \$450 which includes the cost of a security guard outside during the evenings. Moore mentioned that rent monthly is about \$2,000 and there is \$10,000 left for five months. Moore commented that rent budget would be close to its maximum if meetings stay at the current location.

7. State & National Updates

- Report from the NJ HIV Planning Group (09.19.19)

Tania Guaman mentioned that Christopher Menschner, Assistant Commissioner, provided the following updates:

- o Judith Persichilli is the New Commissioner for New Jersey.
- o The Deputy Commissioner position is still open. They need someone with physician experience.

- The new HIV director position is also open, but they were expecting a decision a few weeks ago. An update is expected this Thursday.
- The Epidemiological Services Division Director, candidate Elendira Alfajhd who will start on October 15.
- On October August 21, the harm reduction workshop was held in Trenton. The importance of harm reduction programs to be part of the HIV epidemic was emphasized because CDC is providing funds to the New Jersey Harm Reduction Coalition to address stigma. Data has shown that harm reduction programs work, therefore discussions about expanding harm reduction initiatives are being held. Chris Manchester requested grassroots support to move that forward. Union and Elizabeth are having conversations about this, but the counties are waiting on decisions from elected officials.
- There is also new CDC funding for County-based trauma reduction care, where emergency responders would receive trauma informed care training. A social media campaign will be created. Ideas on how to use and implement the harm reduction fund and the County-based trauma funds are welcome.
- The health insurance enrollment period is starting November 1 to December 15. The Department of Health is planning to include some information about the public charge rule depending on how that goes with it still coming up.
- Congratulations to one of the Morris county consumers who provided a recommendation to create a Long-Term Survivors event for next year. This event was approved with 18 out of 19 votes and will be held on June 2020.
- The End the epidemic initiative report was held back because high ranking staff left, they are waiting to bring the discussions back. However, they are supposed to review the report as soon as the new Commissioner starts. Then, it will be sent to the NJDOH and then to the governor's office again. Lastly, the task force is going to be contacted for follow up.
- There is a video about the End The Epidemic Initiative that was posted on the NEMA Facebook page. There is a lot of emphasis on U=U, PrEP, leadership support, removing barriers to care by using community health workers and trauma informed care with a focus on stigma and cultural competency.
- Support Staff attended the Gay's Men Awareness Day, the queer glossary was updated to LGBTQIA+ instead of LGBTQ.

Dr. Johnson clarified that in New Jersey, the law requires the Commissioner to be a MD. If not, the Deputy Commissioner must be an MD.

- Report from the Governor's Advisory Council (09.26.19)
Dr. Johnson provided the Governor's Advisory Council report.
 - Dr. Johnson stated that there was a long discussion with Ellen Crowley about insurance. Dr. Johnson explained that most of the discussions held at the NJHPG were also discussed at this meeting.
 - Ann Bagchi mentioned that the State did not let the members of the Taskforce review the report, given that they initiated the whole process. The report was published as it was. Ketlen Alsbrook, Recipient, mentioned that Chris, Assistant Commissioner reviewed the plan. The plan includes directives and changes from other departments, they do not want to release it to anybody to bring all those people into the conversation.

8. Old/New Business

- Consumer Travel (PC Budget/Collaboration)
Pat Moore asked about the collaboration part on the Consumer travel. Support Staff explained that it was suggested to collaborate with agencies in the Tri-County area to provide transportation to consumers having a pool of funds for agencies to use. Support Staff mentioned that this does not affect this year's budget and it is a pending conversation.
- PC Budget – Phone Bill
Pat Moore, Treasurer, explained that during a previous meeting it was stated that the phone bill was running close. However, Moore stated that the phone bill has a set rate which would help balance out the budget by the end of the year.

9. Administrative Issues

- New Meeting Location; Media Release Form
Support Staff reported their visits to the TREC and The Waterfront as recommended by the Committee.
 - o Support Staff was able to meet with the person in Charge of the Waterfront facility. The facility asked for additional fees for evening meetings. The site manager also asked for at least a month in advance for cancellations.
 - o Support Staff also visited the TREC who was able to match the \$900 rental fees that the Waterfront charged for all meetings. The facility Manager was flexible and only required 48 hours for meeting cancellations. The facility has a large parking lot available. They are able to wait to submit an invoice before payment. Guaman mentioned that Warren Poole concern was that there is only one bus line that goes there. Warren Poole, CIA Chair mentioned that there are two bus line that passed by the facility, the 59 and 24. Poole mentioned the bus line 24 is very chaotic but will leave attendees one block away. On the other hand, the bus line 59 will leave them four or five blocks away from the facility. Mario Portilla, COC Chair, asked if the area is safe to walk. Poole replied that the area is safe to walk but the issue would be the bus line 24 itself. Poole mentioned that he has seen fights on that bus line and tries to avoid it as much as he can. Moore asked if this facility was one of the ones who would not charge for cancellations. Guaman mentioned that if the notice is given 48 hours prior, there would be no charge for that meeting. Guaman mentioned that if committee decides to move forward with this new facility, a smooth transition could be made as well as providing them with dates for 2020-2021.

10. Announcements

11. Next Meeting

The next Executive Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 20, 2019 at 1:00PM at the Willing Heart Community Center, located at 555 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102.

12. Adjournment

Dr. Robert L. Johnson, Chair, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Members supported the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 1:33 PM.