

# Research & Evaluation Committee

## MEETING SUMMARY

**Monday, July 20, 2020 at 10:00AM**

<https://www.gotomeet.me/UWGUC/recmeeting>  
 (872) 240-3311 / Access Code: 734-124-149

PRESENT	EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED
1. Ann Bagchi, Ph.D. (Chair)	8. Corey DeStefano (Vice-Chair)	10. Natalie Brown
2. Summer Brown (Secretary)	9. Patricia Moore	11. Kasny Damas
3. Karen Ehiri (Non-Voting)		12. Travis Love
4. Debbie Mohammed		
5. Warren Poole		
6. Sharon Postel (Consultant Non-Voting)		
7. Providencia Rodriguez		

**Guests:** N/A

**PC Support Staff:** Tania Guaman, Vicky Saguy

**1. Welcome and Moment of Silence**

Dr. Bagchi called this meeting to order at 10:03 AM. A moment of silence was observed for all those living with, those who are affected by, and those who have passed from HIV/AIDS, as well as for those affected by Covid-19.

**2. Roll Call**

Brown conducted the roll call. Quorum was not established.

**3. Public Testimony**

There was no public testimony at this meeting.

**4. Review Action Steps**

<u>Action Steps</u>	<u>Responsible Party</u>
1. Prepare final NA 2020 report	Postel
2. Prepare final 2020 Funding Stream Analysis	Support Staff
3. Send the approved Administrative Mechanism Evaluation Tool to the Recipient on July 13	Support Staff

All action steps were done.

**5. Approval of the Meeting Summaries from June 15, 2020**

Quorum was not established at this meeting. Therefore, the June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting summary will be reviewed and approved at the next meeting.

## 6. Updates from other Committees

- **COC** – Support Staff provided the COC report. The last Continuum of Care Committee meeting was held on Thursday, July 9 2020. The following occurred at the meeting:
  - The Committee reviewed and approved the Non-Medical Case Management and Emergency Financial Assistance Service Standards.
  - These two standards and the Medical Case management Service Standard were introduced to the Planning Council this month.
  - Also, the NEMA website for the Service Standards is now updated to reflect the new format. Those interested can visit the latest service standards at <https://www.nemaplanningcouncil.org/newark-ema-service-standards>.

The next COC meeting will be held on Thursday, August 13, 2020 at 10:00AM via GoToMeeting.

- **CPC** – Support Staff provided the CPC report. The last Comprehensive Planning Committee meeting was held on Friday, July 10, 2020. The following occurred at the meeting:
  - The committee reviewed and updated the funding Allocation Guidance from the narrative portion of the Priority Setting and Resource Allocation (PSRA) report;
  - The committee received the following presentations and identified important data considerations for PSRA planning:
    - The 2020 Needs Assessment Update by Sharon Postel, PC Consultant;
    - The Ryan White service utilization and spending data presentation by Ketlen Alsbrook, Recipient's Office;
    - A review of the 2020 Funding Stream Analysis prepared by Tania Guaman, Planning Council Support Staff.
  - The committee is on track to submit the full Priority Setting and Resource Allocation report to the Planning Council at the August 2020 meeting. This will allow the council sufficient time for a 30-day review period prior to a Planning Council vote in September.

The next CPC meeting will be held on Friday, August 7, 2020 at 9:30am via GoToMeeting. All are encouraged to attend.

- **CIA/CC** – Support Staff provided the CIA report. The last Community Involvement Activities Committee meeting was held on June 24, 2020. The following occurred at the meeting:
  - Committee members received updates about the REC's progress on the needs assessment and some of the findings were discussed.
  - Committee members received a brief overview of the priority setting and resource allocation process and its importance in planning for Part A funding for FY'21. Support Staff provided a worksheet and service category definitions for the priority setting ranking activity. Consumers then engaged in discussions to prioritize in rank order the 16 Newark EMA service categories.
  - Telehealth services were also mentioned as a service that will help clients to keep their appointments. But the accessibility to technology devices was noted as a barrier to care.
  - During the community conversations about COVID-19, most consumers were feeling optimistic about the reopening. Some consumers reported having a lack of sleep but overall, they are doing okay.

The next CIA meeting will be held on August 26, 2020 at 5:00PM via GoToMeeting. All are encouraged to attend.

## 7. Old Business

- **2020 Needs Assessment Update** – Postel provided an overview of the 2020 Needs Assessment Update with a PowerPoint presentation. The following was mentioned:
  - CHAMP data showed that people with stable housing have better health outcomes. As of 2019, the EMA Viral Load Suppression rate was 86.4%, for those in stable housing it was 88.0%, for temporary housing it was 84.0%, and for unstable housing it was 73.2%.
  - Retention in Care was 86.2% EMA-Wide, 87.3% for those in stable housing, 85.0% for those in temporary housing, and 68.9% for those in unstable housing.
  - Key informants – the AIDS Resources Foundation provided a housing presentation for the REC, which featured the New Jersey Housing Assistance continuum and the two Ryan White Funded Agencies who have special housing services for clients. These agencies are able to fill the gaps and manage a housing continuum, including HOPWA, Section 8, and other Federal Programs. These agencies also work with landlords to prevent eviction and with clients to help them manage their housing responsibilities. Postel recommended that these two components be included in any housing program that is developed.
  - Consumer focus group held at the CIA Meeting in February – Onque and PC Staff attended the meeting
    - There were 32 individuals and about 25 more or less gave input.
    - Forty percent had doubled up at one point. Only two thirds had stable housing.
    - Some consumers had diverse housing situations, which included unsanitary housing conditions, having rodents, and poor maintenance. One consumer had late rent payments due to change in subsidy.
    - Most consumers reported taking their medication on time because they want to stay healthy and it is a habit. However, consumers mentioned that people in shelters might not be able to take their medication on time.
    - Consumers noted that stable housing could improve stability and mental health.
    - Some consumers felt that priority should be given to those who are non-virally suppressed because it might stop transmission, help them get healthy, and move them from unstable housing. Others stated that giving priority to those who have reached viral load suppression can keep them stable.
    - Consumers added that 24 months is not enough to find stable housing, get a job, fix their credit, and get their life together.
    - Rents are too high. Consumers have a fixed income and cannot afford to pay their full housing costs. The average rent in Newark for a single apartment is about \$1,100-\$1,200/month and about \$14,000/year and the poverty level is about \$13,000 for a single individual. Sixty percent of Ryan White clients have incomes below the poverty level.
  - Agency key informant – The survey was sent to 32 agencies and 25 responded, including 1 legal assistance agency.
    - Consumers “yo-yo” between temporary and unstable housing, which is compounded by active substance abuse and mental health. There is stigma related to HIV and poverty. Housing is not affordable.
    - Agencies noted challenges for people living with HIV who have not attained viral load suppression. Behavioral Health is an important factor, according to 90% of respondents. Other barriers to care include unstable living arrangement that prevent

their viral suppression, lack of access to health insurance, and health issues, including comorbidities and denial.

- Agency recommendations for a housing program included: The minimum eligibility criteria for the program can include retention in HIV medical care with 2 visits per year, participation in behavioral or mental health support, medical case management, availability of a non-medical case manager, peer support, and life skills training. The length of the program should depend on the client circumstances. Some agencies mentioned that the housing program should last 18 months or longer.
- Agencies also suggested a need to improve service coordination between medical and housing agencies. Existing housing agencies administer housing programs based on their expertise and collaborate with others to have a seamless system using the HOPWA model of 70-30.

- **2020 Assessment of Administrative Mechanism Update**

The 2020 Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism was sent to the Recipient's office on July 13<sup>th</sup>. The REC will review the response at the next meeting.

- **2020 Funding Stream Analysis**

The Part A funding allocations were shared with the CPC. This presentation was also shared with the REC for reference. The full 2020 FSA was also reviewed with the following highlights:

- Overall, state funding for prevention, education, counseling, testing, and treatment is about the same as in the prior year.
- The State Community health program is still getting funding for prevention and education. This program may be discontinued, but this information is not based on official comments.
- Funding from state revenues and ADAP rebates are expected to have dramatic shortfalls in 2021. Cuts are expected, but the amount of the cut is not yet known.
- Self-HIV testing kits are available for FQHCs.
- CPC members requested that other types of funding, such as the New Jersey Community Affairs Housing Program, be added to this report. Committee members were asked to submit funding information, even if those are not necessarily HIV-related. These funds could be included under resources.
- Postel recommended to ask the New Jersey AIDS Services, Hyacinth, and the AIDS Resources Foundation about other housing funds.

The Funding Stream Analysis will be voted on at the next meeting.

## **8. New Business**

There was no new business.

## **9. Administrative Issues**

Dr. Bagchi asked if there were members who missed 3 or more consecutive meetings not including those who were excused. Brown reported that no one has had 3 or more consecutive absences. However, there is a member who has had 3 absences since the beginning of the year. Dr. Bagchi requested that attendance be monitored consistently.

Support Staff mentioned that calendar invites are sent before each meeting to ensure quorum is met during meetings. If a member is unable to attend, they can just decline this meeting invite.

**10. Announcements**

None.

**11. Next Meeting**

The next REC meeting will be held on Monday, August 17, 2020 at 10AM via GoToMeeting.

**12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 AM.