



## **CONSUMERS COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, December 17, 2019 1:00PM – 3:05PM  
LGBT Center, 208 West 13th Street, NY, NY

### **MINUTES**

**Planning Council Members Present:** Randall Bruce (Co-Chair), Lisa Best (Co-Chair), Atif Abdul-Haaq, Paul Carr, Billy Fields, Charmaine Graham, Ron Joyner, David Martin, Leo Ruiz, John Schoepp

**Committee Members Absent:** Asia Betancourt, Maria Diaz, Justin LiGreci, Monique Mackey, Jesus Maldonado, Rob Walker

**NYCDOHMH:** David Klotz, Melanie Lawrence

**Other Attendees:** Michael M., Theodore B.

#### **Agenda Item #1: WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

*Lisa and Randall*, Consumers Committee Co-Chairs, opened the meeting, followed by introductions and a moment of silence. The October 22, 2019 minutes were approved with no changes. Melanie stressed the importance of asking for everyone's preferred gender pronoun to make everyone feel comfortable at meetings.

#### **Agenda Item #2: 2019 POWER OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CONFERENCE**

*Paul* presented on the results of the Consumers Session that was held at the November 25<sup>th</sup> QI Conference, "Meeting Client Needs for Oral Health Services". Over 40 conference participants attended the session a record for a Consumers Committee session. The session began with a panel of three presenters: Angela Aidala (CHAIN) presented data from the CHAIN cohort on the high prevalence of oral health issues among CHAIN participants and the low utilization of dental services; Dr. Judy Moy (Mount Sinai Medical Center) presented an overview of the importance of oral health care for PLWH; and Gregg Bruckno (GMHC, consumer) discussed his barriers to accessing oral health care from his personal perspective. The panelists were all very well received and generated a large number of questions from the audience.

After the panel, participants broke out into four small groups facilitated by Rob, Leo, Paul and David K. Two small groups brainstormed what intake questions should be added to Ryan White Part A programs' intakes so that providers can assess the needs for and make referrals for oral health services (e.g., "When was the last time you were seen by a dentist", "Is there anything preventing you from eating your food"). The results of the small group

session were reviewed. They have been transmitted to the DOHMH BHIV Care & Treatment Program for consideration.

The other two small groups brainstormed what service elements should be included in the Oral Health Service directive that the Planning Council's Integration of Care Committee will develop in 2020. The results of the small group session were reviewed (e.g., preventive services, linkage, accompaniment). They have been transmitted to the IOC when they begin developing the service directive in 2020.

Thirteen participants filled out the evaluation and rated the session very highly. Overall, the participants found the session highly informative and relevant. The main complaint was that there just was not enough time, particularly for the Q&A session after the panel. There was also an evaluation done by the conference organizers, and the respondents rated the Oral Health session very highly.

Fact sheets with oral health resources were distributed to all attendees in the conference folder and sample oral health care kits were distributed at the workshop (toothbrush, floss, toothpaste, instructions). Leo was thanked for putting together the packets. A thank you was given to everyone who participated in putting the session together: all the Consumers Committee members who participated in the planning sub-committee, everyone who helped greet attendees, facilitated small groups, and especially Paul, who pushed for the topic of oral health to be addressed. A summary of the discussion follows:

- It would have been good if the Oral Health panelists were able to present during the plenary session to all the conference attendees.
- The time between the plenary and the session was useful for networking, but some of that time could also have been allotted to the session.
- Any oral health service should also include a treatment plan so that clients can know what services to seek going forward.
- There is one Part A dental service in Tri-County, and consideration of any expansion needs to start with the TC Steering Committee assessing the unmet needs in that region, leading to a request for an increased allocation in order to fund more services.
- Special oral health questions are needed for Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) providers so that they can tailor meals for people who have dental issues that make it difficult to eat certain foods. The new FNS programs, which will start in February 2020, include medically tailored meals, as well as nutrition counseling and education.

### **Agenda Item #3: Planning Council Committee Reports**

*Paul and Melanie* reported that the Needs Assessment Committee (NAC) is working on addressing the needs of PLWH with Serious Mentally Illness. At the last meeting, NAC heard a presentation from DOHMH on mental health diagnoses among people enrolled in Ryan White Part A (RWPA) programs. The data showed that people with mental illness in RWPA programs are engaged in care at higher than average levels, but have lower viral load suppression rates. It was noted that many general mental health providers do not know about HIV and it is important for patients to disclose their status for multiple reasons, including letting their providers know about possible drug interactions.

*Melanie* reported that Integration of Care is working through the standards of care for all the service categories, which is a HRSA requirement. In January, they will begin discussions around developing a service directive for oral health services in NYC.

*David K.* reported that Priority Setting & Resource Allocation began discussing the FY 2020 spending scenario, which is a methodology for implementing a possible reduction to the RWPA grant award. PSRA discussed funding for the new service category of Psycho-social Support for TGINBNC people. The service directive has two components: a resource directory of gender-affirming services and training curriculum, and the actual program services. The directory and curriculum will be funded in 2020 at \$50,000 and updated in subsequent years. The program services will be funded in 2021. PSRA is asked for more data to help determine how many programs to fund and at what level, particularly the geographic distribution of transgender PLWH generally and enrolled in RWPA programs.

*David* reported that the Tri-County Steering Committee approved its FY 2020 funding request, which calls for holding all services at their current level, with the exception of Housing, which needs an enhancement of \$175,000 in order to maintain services for clients who were over-enrolled.

#### **Agenda Item #4: Brainstorming: Issues for the Consumers Committee in 2020**

The Committee discussed the following ideas for issues that the Committee may want to tackle in the upcoming year:

- The domains in the EMA's Quality Management Plan (community engagement, capacity building, racial equity).
- New Planning Council Website: have a presentation to the Consumers Committee, possible enhancements to make it more consumer friendly, creation of an app, using it as a portal/ entry point to services (there were concerns that the Council's website would not be the appropriate venue for this).
- Emergency Financial Assistance
- HIV and Aging: Services to help people stay independent, lessen social isolation (especially for people who do not have a support system). Possible services that would be needed (home care, accompaniment). Conducting a public forum that can help the NAC get a jump start on the work of assessing needs.
- Expanding participation in the Consumers Committee.
- Participation in the recently funded STAR (Stigma and Resilience Coalition) initiative that is forming to develop activities to fight stigma.
- Substance use (including smoking) and its effect on care.
- Policy changes that will affect services for PLWH.
- Enhancing participation from Rockland and Putnam Counties.
- Benefits, entitlements and insurance issues.
- HIV-affected populations (families, support networks).

There was a consensus to conduct a survey of the listed items asking Committee members to prioritize them in rank order. At the January meeting, the Committee can flesh out the higher ranked items.

### **Agenda Item #5: New Business/Public Comment**

*Paul* reported that Health + Hospitals is closing some detox clinics. He is trying to get a list of all the detox clinics in the area.

*Billy* reported that his friend Gregory Williams has published an inspiring book called “The Power of Words”.

*David M.* encouraged everyone to see the critically acclaimed new play “One in Two”, which explores HIV among Black gay men.

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned.