

**WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA RYAN WHITE CARE COUNCIL**

**HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**VIRTUAL GOTOWEBINAR**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2021**

**1:30 P.M. – 3:00 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

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| **CALL TO ORDER** | The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair, Kim Molnar, at 1:30 P.M. |
| **ATTENDANCE** | Members Present: Elizabeth Rugg, Terry Law, Michelle Keyes, Elizabeth Rugg, Peggy Wallace, Amanda Miller, Kim Molnar  Members Absent: None.  Guests Present: Marylin Jones, Stephanie Hengst, Denise Mote  Recipient Staff Present: Maria Teresa Jaureguizar  Lead Agency Staff Present: None.  Health Council Staff Present: Lisa Nugent, Naomi Ardjomand-Kermani |
| **CHANGES TO AGENDA** | None |
| **ADOPTION OF MINUTES** | All minutes were tabled until in-person meetings reconvene in 2021. |
| **CARE COUNCIL REPORT** | Recipient, Aubrey Arnold, informed Care Council members that the Funding Year (FY) 2020-2021 is ending at the end of February 2021. FY 2021-2022 begins on March 1, 2021 with a partial award of $2,307,619 (approximately 1/5 of anticipated $10.5 million total award) received. These monies will fund the Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) and general Part A services. The full award notice is expected within the next couple of months, but all service contracts have already been renewed with allocations established. He went on to note that the continuum of care will remain intact until the full award is received, and minor reallocation adjustments may be needed depending on the final grant award.  Although the last year has been extremely challenging for many reasons, financials are currently under review and Part A anticipates expending over 95% of their total funding award. Some funding lines, such as Oral Health, have had challenges spending down their funds due to clients’ inability to access services during the pandemic. An updated expenditure report will be presented to the Resource Prioritization & Allocation Recommendations Committee (RPARC) at their next meeting.  Part A has finished their year one site review for Ending the HIV Epidemic with positive comments received related to the area’s Early Intervention Services (EIS) and Health Education and Risk Reduction (HERR). Participants in the site review included Chrissy Abrahms-Woodland, Chief of the HIV Metropolitan Programs with Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA). They discussed interactions with clients engaged in Ryan White services and held a dialogue with other stakeholders and community organizations regarding planning coordination. A report will be shared with the Care Council, once received.  Arnold noted that although vaccines are being rolled out for high-risk populations, many are still waiting to hear when they will be able to access the vaccine. Thus, Arnold emphasized the need for in-person quorum for any actionable business, although meetings will allow for participants to join in virtually or by way of conference line. This is necessary to remain in compliance with the Florida Sunshine Law.  Lead Agency staff, Yashika Everhart, began Part B’s update reminding participants that they are moving into their last quarter of the funding year and will have expenditure reports available as soon as possible. Everhart went on to note that President Biden has decided to re-open enrollment to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace beginning February 15 – May 15, 2021 for those who were unable to enroll during the usual enrollment period. Those who were unable to obtain proper documentation for their marketplace application were assisted in paying their insurance premiums by way of the Insurance Services Program (ISP). This allows for the client to be back in the Ryan White system until the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) can enroll them in ADAP Premium Plus.  Lead Agency staff, Darius Lightsey, continued the lead agency’s reports by addressing a question posed by Care Council Chair, Nolan Finn, last month regarding the prioritization of vaccinating People with HIV (PWH). Lightsey shared that Dr. Beal, the medical director for the HIV/AIDS section, recommends that PWH be vaccinated as soon as possible, but not official documentation confirms this information.  Planning Council Support (PCS) staff, Katie Scussel, thanked members for participating in January 2021’s leadership development training, led by the National Minority HIV/AIDS Council (NMAC). She added that the final report has not yet been received, but that internal conversations regarding NMAC’s recommendations are already underway. PCS staff, Naomi Ardjomand-Kermani, went on to review the month’s meeting schedule, noting that there will be no reason to hold an in-person Care Council meeting until March 2021, as no committee-level business will be conducted in February 2021. They pointed out that the Planning and Evaluation (P&E) committee will have to meet in-person at their March 2021 meeting to review and vote on the funding year’s epidemiology and care continuum reports.  Quality Management (QM) Consultant, David Cavalleri, reviewed the Assessment of the Administrative Mechanism (AAM) and explained that this process is mandated by HRSA as an annual process review of how money is being spent based on the EMA’s priorities. He went on to say that the program’s performance measures were reported at the December 2020 QM workgroup meeting and that he is amid wrapping up all monitoring.  Recipient, Aubrey Arnold, updated the Council about Hillsborough County’s Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) progress by informing attendees that their virtual review was conducted on January 26-27, 2021 with the Healthcare Services department, contracted service provider Metro Inclusive Health and other community partners like The AIDS Institute in attendance. A forum was held for clients to discuss their views and observations of the Health Education and Risk Reduction and Early Intervention Services (EIS) programs. Lead Agency Staff, Darius Lightsey, updated the Council on Pinellas County’s EHE progress. The County’s EHE planning council meet quarterly and in the most recent meeting all nine (9) awardees were asked to briefly discuss their goals and initiatives and answer any clarifying questions. Lightsey shared that Pinellas’ EHE initiative is not holding each currently funded partner to a 5-year contract, but rather they will be evaluated annually to determine if goals and objectives are being reached. They will determine their partners accordingly and adjust, each year, if necessary.  Members then held a discussion regarding their return to in-person meetings and Care Council Chair, Nolan Finn, began by asking members if they felt monthly meetings are necessary, when no action is conducted. Some members suggested meeting quarterly, while others reminded members that no business has been conducted since October 2020, but that all virtual meetings since have been robust and changing the meeting schedule may disrupt retention of current and recruitment of new members. Member, Kamaria Laffrey, mentioned that we are currently unaware of what the National Minority HIV/AIDS Council (NMAC) schedule will be for the ELEVATE curriculum, once initiated. Member alternate, Michelle Keyes, added that meeting less will mean more information all at once which can become overwhelming, especially for people who are new to the Care Council and Ryan White services. Lead Agency staff, Darius Lightsey, suggested that meetings conduct business every other month and provide a speaker or educational training for others. Member, J. Carl Devine, echoed the need for continuity to keep the community involved and engaged.  Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) representative, Kayon Henderson, expressed concern that their agency is unable to report on housing due to the length of the meetings and being short-staffed, on their end. PCS staff and Finn agreed that a housing-specific agenda item will be added prior to committee reports going forward.  Michelle Keyes, on behalf of Care Council Vice-Chair, Myles (Edward) Myles, announced that Metro Inclusive Health’s Ybor office is participating in Infectious Disease Elimination Act (IDEA) Tampa, every Tuesday from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. in partnership with the University of South Florida (USF) Health. Testing and syringe exchange services will be provided, and hygiene bags will be distributed as incentives to exchange used needles. This initiative will take place throughout Hillsborough County, as part of the Opioid Taskforce’s efforts. Keyes added that this ordinance was recently passed for Pinellas County as well. |
| **REVIEW OF IMPACT OF ADAP & ACA** | Co-Chair, Kim Molnar, reported that Paul McKeel, of the state AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), provided a presentation at the Medication Access Committee’s (MAC) January meeting. McKeel also provided preliminary data on marketplace enrollment, from Broward Regional Health Council, that they have received 8,115 clients’ data at this time. A discussion related to the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines took place as well and members were told that links regarding eligibility and other important information can be found of the Department of Health’s website. Members expressed concern that all materials were only provided in English and Dr. Laura Reeves agreed to research materials in alternate language and distribute this information accordingly. At this time, only residents and staff of long-term care facilities, those over 65 years of age, healthcare workers, and individuals deemed high risk are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine.  Molnar went on to report that the state is considering ways to eliminate or reduce the annual cost of a medical marijuana identification card ($75), with an approved motion to recommend a sliding scale process. They await approval and comment from the office of medical marijuana use especially as it relates to the piece of legislation regarding the copay accumulator. Stephanie Hengst, from The AIDS Institute (TAI) explained that the copay accumulator prevents manufacturer copay assistance and other medication-related costs to be applied to a client’s deductible and out of pocket costs. Several patient organizations, focused on chronic diseases, has formed an advocacy group to require insurers to apply all out-of-pocket costs towards their deductible. This has been introduced and assigned to three committees in the Senate for *Senate Bill (SB) 1078*:  *Health Insurance Cost Sharing; Requiring specified individual health insurers and their pharmacy benefits managers to apply payments by or on behalf of insureds toward the total contributions of the insureds’ cost-sharing requirements; requiring specified individual health insurers to disclose on their websites and in their policies their applications of payments by or on behalf of policyholders toward the policyholders’ total contributions to cost-sharing requirements; requiring pharmacy benefits managers to apply payments by or on behalf of insureds and subscribers toward the insureds’ and subscribers’ total contributions to cost-sharing requirements, etc.*  *House Bill (HB) 1111* has only just been introduced to the House:  *Health Insurance Cost Sharing; Requires specified individual health insurers, group health insurers, HMOs, & their pharmacy benefits managers to apply payments by or on behalf of insureds & subscribers toward total contributions of insureds' & subscribers' costs-sharing requirements; requires such individual health insurers, group health insurers & HMOs to disclose on websites & in policies & health maintenance contracts, certificates, or handbooks such application payments; requires pharmacy benefits managers to disclose to insurers & subscribers such application payments; provides applicability; requires small employer carriers to conform provisions to changes made by act.*  Planning Council Support (PCS) staff, Naomi Ardjomand-Kermani again reminded members that enrollment to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace has been re-opened beginning February 15 – May 15, 2021 for those who were unable to enroll during the usual enrollment period. Plans purchased will go into effect the month after application approval. |
| **ANNOUNCEMENTS/**  **COMMUNITY CONCERNS** | Member, Michelle Keyes, announced that the University of South Florida (USF) is recruiting participants for a new community advisory board to research HIV and ageing. All participants will receive $50 per virtual meeting but must commit to a two-year term to qualify. They will focus on the effects of social isolation, depressive symptoms, and in doing so, they will create a virtual village for resources.  Co-Chair, Kim Molnar, announced that the Florida Comprehensive Planning Network’s (FCPN) spring meeting will be hosted virtually on April 27 and April 28, 2021. An agenda is in process and will be sent out, once finalized, along with meeting registration information.  Maria Teresa Jaureguizar, from the Recipient’s office, announced that medical data sharing was released on January 22, 2021 for e2Hillsborough’s provider database. |
| **ADJOURNMENT** | There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m. |