

**WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA RYAN WHITE CARE COUNCIL**

**PLANNING AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE**

**EMPATH HEALTH - CLEARWATER**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2023**

**9:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.**

**MINUTES**

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| **CALL TO ORDER** | The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair, Nolan Finn, at 9:39 a.m. |
| **ATTENDANCE** | Members Present: Nolan Finn, Jeffrey Lluberes  Members Absent: Sheryl Hoolsema, Angela Kellogg, Nicole Kish, Gina Puglisi, Elizabeth Rugg  Guests Present: None  Recipient Staff Present: Aubrey Arnold  Lead Agency Staff Present: Joshua Cardwell  Health Council Staff Present: Abigail Machtel, Lisa Nugent, Katie Scussel |
| **CHANGES TO AGENDA** | There were no changes to the agenda. |
| **ADOPTION OF MINUTES** | Members reviewed the minutes and did not make any changes. The committee could not vote to adopt the minutes due to lack of quorum. |
| **CARE COUNCIL REPORT** | All members and staff present at the meeting were also present at the Care Council meeting, so members agreed a full Care Council report was not necessary and reviewed a short summary. The Care Council met April 5, 2023 on GoTo Meeting. Each committee gave an update on their first meeting, announcing committee chairs and meeting times and frequency. Members reviewed an all-committee work plan and a schedule of major work products for the year. David Cavalleri reviewed the quarterly HRSA performance measures.  Katie noted that at the time of the meeting, Part A had not received its full award. Part A Recipient, Aubrey Arnold, said that Part A had received the notice of award that morning. The program received an award of $10,779,094, which is a 1-2% increase from the previous year. The Minority AIDS Initiative (MAI) award dropped slightly. The program spent out 96% of the previous year’s award, so will be receiving approximately $400,000 in carryover funding later this year. Ending the HIV Epidemic spent 97% of its award, which was a significant improvement over the previous year. |
| **2022-2023 EPIDEMIOLOGY REPORT** | Staff, Katie Scussel and Abigail Machtel, prepared a PowerPoint presentation with highlights from the Epidemiology and Care Continuum reports, but were unable to present due to the inability to connect to the presentation system.  Katie went over the report verbally, going over basic epidemiology terms and explaining each graph in the report. Overall, HIV incidence in the EMA decreased drastically in 2020 and increased in 2021. The decrease in cases in 2020 was likely due to the decrease in testing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The increase in 2021 may have been due to the increase in testing from the previous year. Overall, cases decreased from 2019 to 2021. Katie pointed out that cases in cisgender women and Hispanic/Latinx people of all genders did not follow the expected trendline and have increased over the past three years.  Katie went over a graph showing the rates of HIV per 100,000 population for each of the eight Total Services Area (TSA) counties, noting that the rate in Polk was higher than Hernando and Pasco. Katie said she wanted to show this information because there tends to be a lot of focus on the EMA counties. Polk has a higher rate of cases than some of the EMA counties, but does not receive Part A funds or EHE funds. Members discussed whether HRSA might consider adding Polk to either the Tampa or the Orlando EMA. Nolan pointed out that many people are moving out of Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties, because of the rent prices and insurance rates. Lisa Nugent said that there are services available in Polk, so it shouldn’t matter that they aren’t part of the EMA. She then said that we need to know what services are available in Polk, to know if there is a true disparity there. Aubrey commented that one of the issues in Polk is that all services are through the health department. There are no community-based organizations (CBOs) providing Ryan White.  Nolan Finn requested that staff update some paragraphs to include percentages where parts of the populations are referenced. |
| **2022-2023 CARE CONTINUUM REPORT** | Abigail Machtel presented the Care Continuum Report, going over the definitions of each stage of the continuum and reviewing each graph within the report, including the overall care continuum, the care continuum by race/ethnicity, and the care continuum in youth. All numbers in the care continuum have improved since 2017.  Nolan asked if viral suppression is still being defined as a viral load less than 200 copies/mL, because his private provider considers it to be 50 copies/mL. The CDC definition is 200 copies/mL. Nolan asked if providers are reporting the actual viral load number or just whether the client is suppressed.  Members discussed the plan for the next meeting. Katie and Abigail will present the Epidemiology and Care Continuum reports again. Members will also need to update the Minimum Standards of Care. Staff will bring drafts that are near complete, so hopefully members will just be able to give their input and will not have to spend much time wordsmithing. Katie said it will be a busy meeting but that she believes the committee can get everything done that it needs to. |
| **EHE OUTCOMES UPDATE** | Aubrey presented a table of outcomes from EHE-funded activities, including Early Intervention Services (EIS) and Housing, for the fiscal year that ran from March 2022 to February 2023. The tables showed outcomes broken down by the two providers. Aubrey pointed out that for EIS, viral suppression rates were not very high (74% and 68%), but that we have to remember the purpose of this service is to get people engaged into care who are newly diagnosed or who were previously lost to care, so it makes sense the rates are low. Viral suppression rates from clients enrolled in the housing services were 91% and 96% for one provider, across two counties, and 100% for another provider, which is fantastic. Aubrey commented that it has been frustrating looking at some performance measures for the area and numbers, such as viral suppression rates, being stuck and not improving, but that these EHE-funded services really show a positive impact on the community. |
| **COMMUNITY INPUT/**  **ANNOUNCEMENTS** | Aubrey mentioned that the Medicaid unwinding process is continuing, with many people rolling off Medicaid that were kept on during the federal pandemic response. It is uncertain what the impact will be on our area. Aubrey said it’s fortunate we have the local Insurance Services Program (ISP) to hopefully absorb some of the clients seeking private health insurance plans. Clear Health Alliance did some analysis of the numbers of clients who would be rolling off Medicaid, which Aubrey said was around 200 for the area. The program may need to look at increasing funding to ISP. Fortunately, there are also the Hillsborough and Pinellas County Health Care Plans.  Nolan announced that Mara Michniewicz, HIV Prevention Manager and Interim Administrator of the Florida Department of Health’s HIV/AIDS Section, was resigning from her position and that her last day would be April 28, 2023. Nolan noted that there were not many staff members left with a lot of history with the program.  Nolan also announced that Equality Florida had recently issued an advisory against LGBTQ+ individuals traveling or moving to Florida, due to discriminatory laws passing in the Florida legislature. Nolan said he was particularly concerned about transgender populations. |
| **ADJOURNMENT** | There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m. |