



Los Angeles County Commission on HIV

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MEETING SUMMARIES • NEWS ON KEY DISCUSSIONS

Joint Public Policy (JPP) Committee

January 7, 2009 – Summary Notes

- Commission Meeting
- Executive Committee
- Joint Public Policy (JPP) Committee
- Operations Committee
- Priorities and Planning (P&P) Committee
- Standards of Care (SOC) Committee
- Other Business

Julie Cross, benefits consultant, reported that the Medicare Part B Gap Assistance Program will temporarily offset the loss of State monthly Medicare Part B premium payments for those with Medi-Cal shares-of-cost over \$500. In January, those clients who are impacted can receive \$90 in food vouchers through the program. The vouchers will be distributed by AIDS Project Los Angeles, AIDS Service Center, AltaMed, Northeast Valley Health Corporation and St. Mary's Medical Center. Ms. Cross is still investigating other possible longer-term solutions. It is hoped that the temporary voucher solution will prevent patients from dropping their coverage: cancelling coverage will prevent them from accessing medical outpatient care and will result in them becoming dependent on County and Ryan White-funded care.

The Medicare Part D benefits cycle starts over every year. Only one consumer accessed the Medicare Part D Gap Assistance Program that was created in 2008 to help clients escape the Medicare Part D donut hole. The Committee agreed that it should ask providers and consumers to help monitor the impact of the Medicare Part D donut hole in 2009. JPP will also develop a policy brief encouraging support for True Out-Of-Pocket (TrOOP) legislation to address the issue on a federal level.

Ms. Cross is drafting a health care reform brief for the work group. It will address issues such as setting "reasonable and customary" procedure fees that are currently arbitrarily determined by insurance companies. Given the new national priority of health care reform, the work group will expedite its work.

The Committee agreed to send a letter to the Board of Supervisors opposing the "provider conscience rule", recently adopted by the current Federal administration. The conscience rule prohibits withholding federal funds when a provider refuses services based on moral or religious grounds.

The President-Elect's transition team recently hosted an HIV/AIDS conference call with 141 stakeholders participating. Participants discussed topics such as the national HIV/AIDS strategic plan, health care reform, CDC funding and Ryan White reauthorization.

Learning that there is some local disagreement over the approach to Ryan White reauthorization, the Committee agreed to re-prioritize the work groups to address the six issues resulting from the Ryan White Reauthorization Principles document.

Dr. Douglas Frye reported that approximately 13,000 HIV/non-AIDS and 4,000 AIDS name-based cases have been submitted since April 2006 and there are approximately 7,000 cases that still need to be investigated. With an amendment to the CDC-LAC Code-to-Name HIV Reporting Transition Plan, HIV Epidemiology was able to match some 700 code-based Kaiser

Permanent cases reports with laboratory names that had otherwise not been re-reported by name since SB 699 was passed. Still in dispute are an additional 600 cases that Kaiser claims to have reported by name, although HIV EPI has no record of this. County Counsel has stated that the legislation does not allow the County to force Providers to re-report its coded case again by name, post-699, even if a new laboratory test indicative of HIV is received. HIV EPI staff continues to work with Kaiser to report as many of these cases as possible within the guidelines of CDC and County Counsel.

A surveillance work group was created to address such issues as County Counsel's interpretation of the County's authority over name-based reporting requirements, as well as the extension of the time period to allow name-based systems to mature, measures to make HIV and AIDS reporting practices the same (since they are the same disease), and continued/expanded surveillance funding. The Committee felt that as time passes, focus on converting case reports retroactively becomes less important because the number of relevant case reports declines, but additional and continued surveillance funding to ensure that all cases are investigated in a timely fashion becomes more important.

The corrections work group will resume its work. While it had done a lot of work on county jails and state prisons, there is still a lot of information it must gather on Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), municipal facilities, and youth correctional institutions. The work group is seeking additional community members with expertise in the area.

Ms. Cross reported the Governor is intending to reduce the 2008-09 and 2009-10 budgets. In his latest proposal, rebate funding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) is referenced for the first time, which concerns some that it might be used as an excuse to lower general fund contributions to ADAP in the future.

The Committee's annual extended meeting to review pending HIV-related state legislation in the new legislative session is scheduled for March 4th from 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm.

Whitney Engeran-Cordova and Lee Kochems were re-elected Committee Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs and Craig Vincent-Jones will draft a document on non-Commissioner Committee member criteria to guide recruitment of additional Committee members to be appointed by the Board o