



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION ON HIV



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WOMEN'S CAUCUS

Virtual Meeting

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

2:00PM-4:00PM (PST)

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION ON HIV



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WOMEN'S CAUCUS

Virtual Meeting Agenda

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|---|-----------------|
| 1. Welcome + Introductions + Check-In | 2:00PM – 2:05PM |
| 2. Executive Director Report | 2:05PM – 2:45PM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee, Caucus and Task Force Updates• Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) Updates• Child Care Services Updates• Take Me Home Testing Kits Follow Up | |
| 3. Co-Chair Report | 2:45PM – 3:30PM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2021 Work Plan<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Virtual Lunch & Learn○ EHE Activities○ Ongoing review of women-centered data○ Address technology challenges for consumers/monolingual Spanish speakers○ Other suggestions | |
| 4. WeCanStopSTDsLA / Project Fierce | 3:30PM – 3:45PM |
| 5. Meeting Recap + Agenda | 3:45PM – 3:50PM |
| 6. Public Comments + Announcements | 3:50PM – 4:00PM |
| 7. Adjournment | 4:00PM |



Women's Caucus November 16, 2020 Virtual Meeting Summary

In attendance:

Shary Alonzo (Co-Chair)	Dr. LaShonda Spencer (Co-Chair)	Alejandra Campos
Guadalupe Avendano	Jayda Arrington	Katja Nelson
Kiana Dobson	LeShea Brown	Maria Scott
Melissa Bernabe	Rebeca Ruiz	Shellye Jones
Thelma Garcia	Ursula Urndt	Bridget Gordon
Kathy Klein	Dawn Mc Clendon (COH Staff)	Cheryl Barrit (COH Staff)

1. Welcome + Introductions

Dr. LaShonda Spencer and Shary Alonzo, Co-Chairs, welcomed all attendees and provided opportunities for introductions.

2. Co-Chairs Report:

Co-Chairs thanked everyone for participating in the special 4-part Virtual Lunch & Learn (VLL) series and for those who shared their stories. Ms. Alonzo suggested that as a follow-up, subsequent VLLs in 2021 should be centered around self-care, healing and resilience.

3. Executive Director Report:

Commission, Committee and Caucus/Task Force Updates:

Cheryl Barrit, Executive Director, provided updates on the Commission and its committees as follows:

- Commission held its Annual Meeting on November 14 which featured Harold Phillips, Senior HIV Advisor and Chief Operating Officer of Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America. Mr. Phillips shared updates on the federal initiative Ending the HIV Epidemic Plan and indicated that Biden Administration mentioned it intends to end the HIV epidemic in five years - 2025 (versus ten per the current administration), however, have not received additional information regarding that strategy and whether there will be additional funding attached. Wendy Garland (DHSP) provided a presentation on the Take Me Home test kits program and invited the community to submit any questions or concerns to her at wgarland@ph.lacounty.gov. Concerns were shared that the kits were geared toward men and that women were not reflective in the marketing. Also, a request was made to include a disclaimer regarding status and test results. Lastly, there was a discussion led by Naina Khanna, Executive Director of PWN surrounding HIV and racial justice.

- Planning, Priorities & Allocations (PP&A) Committee will meet tomorrow (Nov 17) and will discuss fiscal reports provided by DHSP for the current program year. DHSP reported that they will maximize Part A and roll over MAI funding. The Committee will also review the Aging Task Force's set of recommendations and discuss the outcome of HOPWA's consolidated plan. Lastly, a Prevention Planning workgroup was formed to discuss and develop strategies to ensure prevention planning is including in the priority setting and resource allocation (PSRA) process.
- Standards and Best Practices (SBP) Committee is currently updating the Child Care Services standards of care. Focus groups were convened to assess the needs and barriers of those needing childcare and the Committee is awaiting the summary reports to conduct a more in-depth analysis to ensure the standards of care are reflective of the community's needs. The Committee is also reviewing its Universal standards of care and Patient Bill of Rights for potential updates. Additionally, the Committee is updating its HIV Continuum to incorporate clearer language around U=U and TASP (Treatment As Prevention). Lastly, DHSP reported that it will utilize Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) monies to fund the Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) service. Training for providers and outside contracted agencies will be provided. For more information on the EFA, contact Paulina Zamudio at pzamudio@ph.lacounty.gov.
- Operations Committee continues to fill vacancies and are currently implementing the long-awaited Mentorship Program. Lastly, the Committee is developing a speaker's kit to assist members in promoting the EHE in their communities.
- Public Policy Committee is continuing its efforts in collaborating with the Black African American Community Task Force and other subordinate working groups to help champion policies promoting health and wellness among priority populations. The Committee is also working with the Transgender Caucus on AB 2218 (Transgender Wellness and Equity Fund) to ensure the legislative is being rolled out in the way intended.

Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) Activities + Updates

Ms. Barrit shared DHSP recently formed its EHE Steering Committee and Commission Co-Chair Al Ballesteros is the liaison for the Commission and is responsible for reporting activities + updates. Ms. Barrit encouraged the Caucus to think of activities to promote the EHE pillars. **The Caucus requested staff to send the list of the EHE Steering Committee members.*

Child Care Services Update

Ms. Barrit shared that the focus groups were convened in English and Spanish and were largely successful. While the official summary analysis has not been received by DHSP, concerns shared during the focus groups included:

- Concerns w/ COVID
- Transportation insecurities
- Snacks/Lunch; if appointment go over into lunch time. Concerns w/ not having money for lunch
- Separate space for older children/dependents
- Accommodation for special needs children
- Childcare only available for children up to age 17?

Ms. Barrit shared that DHSP submitted the Child Care Service standard of care with County Counsel to ensure the standard met all legal requirements; awaiting feedback.

Shellye Jones suggested that DHSP send out a survey for those community members who were not able to participate in the focus groups to compile more feedback. **Staff to submit suggestion to Paulina Zamudio.*

4. WeCanStopSTDsLA Collaboration Opportunity Re: STD Prevention and Treatment in Young Cis and Trans Women of Color

Kiana Dobson, Program Coordinator, introduced the new Project Coordinator, LeShea Brown, for Project Fierce and again provided a brief recap of the program by sharing that WeCanStopSTDsLA is strengthening its work with young Black and Brown women of color (to include transwomen) and using CDC grant recently awarded to jumpstart and lead the project. Ms. Brown shared that she is currently forming a CAB of ten women ages 18-24 to conduct community assessments, identify key projects to help reduce the STD epidemic, among other activities, and will send application shortly.

5. Virtual Lunch & Learn Series | Women-Centered Discussions

Co-Chairs thanked the Caucus for attending and supporting the VLLs as they have been very successful and have resulted in overwhelming positive feedback. In planning for 2021, the Caucus overwhelmingly agreed to continue the VLL series and center many of the sessions around self-care, resilience, recovery in dealing with trauma and uplifting each other.

6. Planning for 2021

- The next meeting will be January 18, 2021 and all members are asked to attend ready to contribute ideas in developing a 2021 work plan.
- Coordinate efforts with the newly elected Supervisor Holly Mitchel (D2) to develop a policy agenda around women.
- Open 2021 with a refresher presentation on reproductive justice.
- Ongoing review of data regarding women living with HIV by demographical and geographical areas to determine areas of improvement and prevention planning
- Find solutions for technical insecurities among consumer members, especially monolingual Spanish speakers

7. Meeting Recap + Agenda for Next Meeting:

- Update on Child Care Services; request Paulina Zamudio to attend and present
- 2021 Work Plan Development
- WeCanStopSTDsLA Project Fierce Updates

8. Announcements:

- Charles Drew University World AIDS Day event honoring Dr. Wilbur Jordon on December 1st
- PAETC World AIDS Day event

9. Adjournment

**Los Angeles County Commission on HIV Annual Meeting
November 12, 2020
Chat Messages and Questions | DHSP Report & Presentations**

Responses to the COH questions/comments (grouped by topic area) regarding the EHE updated are below in red.

Aside from hookup apps and sites would it be possible to partner with Sex shops/Lingerie stores. Also Porn sites that include HIV fetish

Partners outside the non-traditional HIV sector will be important to achieve our Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) goals. If there are specific businesses in your community that you have in mind and you are willing to serve as an EHE ambassador in recruiting and engaging partners, please email Julie Tolentino at jtolenino@ph.lacounty.gov.

Thanks Julie for all your information you shared with us.

Great presentation, Ms. Julie Tolentino! jj

Thanks Julie!

Responses to the COH questions/comments (grouped by topic area) regarding the TakeMeHome (TMH) program presentation are below in red. We welcome any additional feedback from COH meeting attendees to improve the reach of the TMH program.

I am sure being alone while receiving their HIV status can be a traumatic experience. What are we doing to address this?

How are we addressing the outcomes of individuals testing positive at home? What is the plan?

TMH is intended to expand access to HIV testing for LAC residents who want to take an HIV self-test at home. Interested residents access the program website and order a test to be delivered to them where they reside. This program may not be appropriate for all residents and other self-HIV testing or in-person testing services may be a better option (as they are available during COVID-19). In addition to order the self-test through the TMH website, DHSP will be working with currently contracted HIV testing providers to offer self-tests through their organization. A protocol is being developed to allow clients to set-up a virtual appointment with a testing counselor who will be able to walk the client through taking the test and be present when the client receives the test result.

The Oraquick test is a screening test, it is not a diagnosis. A reactive screening result is about 92% accurate (detects HIV) and a non-reactive (HIV not detected) screening result is about 99.9% accurate. Any client who receives a reactive test is directed to seek a confirmatory test in a clinic and a direct phone line to DHSP is provided for support.

Are women targeted as well or only men, as I noticed that most of those dating sites looked like they were male focused.

And to answer Shellye Jones I would recommend Bumble as an app for reaching out to women.

Thanks for letting us know how women are being targeted as well and the percentage of women reached. Thanks.

And if women were not included, maybe why they are not being included. Looks like a great project but I'd like to see women included.

Can you discuss outreach through dating apps? Expand outreach and partnerships with other dating apps besides Grindr.

TMH was developed to increase access to HIV screening for MSM using dating apps. This was in response to data suggesting that 75% of MSM reported using apps to meet a partner, that 22% of MSM using dating apps reported they had never tested for HIV and that 77% of app users reported they wanted to be able to order a home test through a dating app.

Efforts are currently underway by DHSP to better promote TMH among women locally, including in collaboration with Building Health Online Communities (BHOC). We have shared with BHOC the recommendation to work with the Bumble app to better reach some women.

BHOC is working to expand the reach of the program by allowing jurisdictions to define their own priority populations and eligibility criteria.

In 2021, BHOC will also be expanding TMH promotion beyond apps, including through targeted online campaigns and palm cards that can be distributed at events or by community partners.

When getting tested by a counselor, clients have the ability to have many questions answered. I would recommend a chat box option to help guide them to take this test and answer any questions.

Clients participating in TMH are directed to the Oraquick website (<http://www.oraquick.com/Taking-the-Test>) which includes resources on how to take the tests and resources to understand the results and to connect to counseling and care. While it does not include a chat box, it does include a 24/7 customer support hotline. In addition to the Oraquick resources, clients receive local HIV resources from TMH including PrEP,

confirmatory testing and counseling and HIV care. It also includes a direct phone line to DHSP.

As mentioned previously, in addition to ordering the self-test through the TMH website, DHSP will be working with contracted HIV testing providers to offer self-tests through their organization. A protocol is being developed to allow clients to set-up a virtual appointment with a testing counselor who will be able to walk the client through taking the test and be present when the client receives the test result.

The two options to access self-tests (through TMH and through test kits available through community partners) offers additional HIV testing options for Los Angeles County residents.

Do we have a STI's testing take home kit for women ages 25 and older?

TMH does not currently offer STI testing but will roll these services out in 2021. DHSP will need to modify the service contract to include these services and is currently reviewing this option. Home testing kits for chlamydia and gonorrhea will be available for women aged 12-26 through the "Don't Think Know" program that is being re-launched in early 2021 and will be able to ~~can~~ be accessed at <https://dontthinkknow.org/location.html> and separately through the DHSP website.

How was the decision made to make the home tests available for folks who haven't tested in a year part of the eligibility?

This was determined by BHOC (and prior to LAC becoming a partner) as they were trying to reach people who had not tested recently or who had never tested. In 2021 jurisdictions participating in TMH will be able to modify this eligibility criteria.

If Black MSM are target population, how do we ensure Take Me Home efforts are reaching this group?

Numbers are very low in Black MSM

Exciting program. Considering the disparate impact on Black and Brown communities, I would like to see a targeted approach to Black/AA and Latinx men and women, specifically in Spa 6.

Testing responses among Black MSM was low, considering this is a priority population. What efforts are being made to reach this population with TMH?

This is a priority for DHSP and for TMH as other jurisdictions have also noted lower uptake among Black MSM. We will be working with TMH to expand advertising through additional dating apps, through other online venues and through community partners.

Do you have positivity rate data yet for the TMH initiative?

We do not yet have a TMH associated positivity rate but will be working to match this with our HIV surveillance data. In addition, we will be working with TMH to improve the response rate on the follow-up survey that participants are asked to respond to that includes testing results.

TMH It's a great idea. However, I'm not sure younger and persons living with family are necessarily going to take it home; they might be taking it and using it somewhere else; maybe the car, maybe work, a friends place, somewhere else? So, maybe the messaging should be thought about.....?

This recommendation has been shared with the team and we are re-framing messaging to include HIV self-testing versus home testing as we continue to evolve this program in partnership with our contracted agencies.

If someone makes it to the TMH website, is the option of going into a clinic as well offered, so they wouldn't have to do it at home if they didn't want to?

What if you don't have a home? Are there alternatives for persons experiencing homelessness?

TMH is one strategy to increase HIV testing options and may not be an appropriate option for everyone. We are working with our contracted agencies to develop alternative HIV self-testing services that include the option of having a test counselor on the phone or video while the client completes the test or providing space at the agency for clients to self-test. We are also exploring strategies to distribute HIV self-test kits to other community partners, including non-traditional community partners, such as street medicine or homeless healthcare teams, to further expand testing access points.

Is there any special focus on sex workers?

Especially for sex worker due to COVID

There has not been a specific focus on sex workers but they represent an important group to prioritize, particularly as we expand HIV self-testing opportunities with more diverse community partners that serve this sub-population but may not be a current HIV testing provider.



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON HIV 2021
(DRAFT) WOMEN'S CAUCUS WORKPLAN (1.26.21)**

Caucus Name: Women's Caucus		Co-Chairs: Shary Alonzo & Dr. LaShonda Spencer		
Caucus Approval Date:		Date: 2.2.21		
<p>Purpose of Work Plan: To focus and prioritize key activities for COH Committees and subgroups for 2021.</p> <p>Prioritization Criteria: Select activities that 1) represent the core functions of the COH and Committee; 2) advance the goals of the Comprehensive HIV Plan and Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) Plan; and 3) align with COH staff and member capacities and time commitment.</p>				
#	TASK/ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	TARGET COMPLETION DATE	STATUS/NOTES/OTHER COMMITTEES INVOLVED
1	Reproductive Justice Refresher Presentation to Caucus		Early 2021	As suggested by the Caucus at its November 2020 meeting.
2	Plan Virtual Lunch & Learn sessions centering around Women & HIV and focusing on healing, resilience, self care, etc.		2021	
3	Address technical challenges among consumers especially monolingual Spanish speakers			
4	Request and review data on women & HIV from a demographical and geographical lens to determine gaps and prevention strategies			
3	Coordinate efforts with District 2 to align priorities around women			



**JOIN OTHER YOUNG
WOMEN OF COLOR
AND MAKE AN IMPACT
ON OUR COMMUNITY
ADVISORY BOARD**

- Young women (including trans women) of color
- Ages 18-24 in LA County
- Interest in reproductive / sexual health issues
- Bi-weekly meetings
- Networking opportunities
- Build up your resume
- Incentives will be provided

APPLY HERE!

<http://bit.ly/ProjectFierce>

QUESTIONS? vmontenegro@chc-inc.org



Project FIERCE
A WeCanStopSTDsLA Project

**WE CAN STOP
STDs LA**
— Let's Take a Stand —

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