



HOPE Notes

News from your HOPE Center
Summer—Fall 2008

North Central Health District



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Exciting announcements!
- 2007—2008 Needs and Gap Assessment
- June Consumer Satisfaction Surveys and Statewide Survey
- Clinic announcements
- Did you know?



Have you heard the Good NEWS???



So many wonderful, exciting and beneficial changes have occurred at the Center since the last newsletter! We are so thrilled to share with you the good news that....

First...last summer all Part C (Federal funding) grantees (that's us) were given the opportunity to write for a \$200,000 ongoing Expansion Funding grant. The HOPE Center grant writing team got busy and submitted our grant. In the fall we received a letter stating our grant was approved but unfortunately the money was not available from the Federal government (...bummer). The letter continued by stating that should the money become available we would receive the amount which was approved by HRSA. We were happy that our grant was approved but very disappointed that the funding was not released by the Federal treasury. Quite honestly we figured we would never receive an additional penny due to the financial state of the US economy. But lo and behold in May we received a NGA (Notice of Grant Award) for an additional \$158,462!!

Second...in April all Part B (State funding) grantees (that's us too) were given the opportunity to submit a "reasonable" budget request for additional funding. In the past Part B has always told grantees that their programs were "flat funded" (fancy term meaning all Ryan White programs were getting the same dollar amount that they had always received year after year after year after....) And year after year we protested (fancy word for whined). The process wasn't fair. Our clinic was growing and caring for more consumers while some other clinics, who were receiving more money, were caring for less consumers. We think they finally got tired of hearing us whine so once again the grant team sprang into action and submitted a "reasonable" budget request. Lo and behold in April the Center received notification that our program would be receiving an additional \$165,183!!

When you combine the two grants that's \$323,645 ADDITIONAL dollars for the program!!!

"Great news but how does this help me?" So glad you asked! Let's see....

- ◆ **Comprehensive dental/oral health services are now available!** 
- ◆ **New service...Visual services! If the doctor refers you for a visual exam and you are eligible, RW funds will pay for your visual exam and, if needed, one pair of glasses.** 
- ◆ **The Center is once again able to supply nutritional supplements to consumers who are ordered supplements!**

- ◆ Starting in September the Center will once again have a part time Registered Dietitian!
- ◆ Education material is now available for consumer education and out reach programs; e.g. health fairs, faith based organization, etc!
- ◆ The Center will be able to help off set increasing fuel cost transportation consumers to/from medical visit with proper notice!
- ◆ Allows the Center to actively seek to identify and hire a Primary Care Physician to fill Dr. Waite's position!
- ◆ Provide a modest salary increase to our Infectious Disease doctors who graciously volunteered and relinquished half their salaries for over 6 months in order to prevent further cuts in services or staff lay offs!



THANK YOU! The 2007—2008 Needs and Gap Assessment is completed!

The Needs and Gap Assessment is a tool used to see how you think the program is doing in meeting your needs, what needs you have that are not being met and an opportunity to voice your comments, complaints, recommendations or anything else on your mind. It is also used to obtain a "general" overall picture of the consumers enrolled into care at the Center. For example; 63% of the participants were male, 74% were Black/African American, average age was 44 years; 36% do not have a Primary Care Physician, 61 participants would like financial help with paying for medications other than HIV medications, 67 participants would like help finding affordable housing, etc.

The survey was started in November 2007 and completed in April. Approximately 275 consumers participated by responding to the 61 questionnaire. The results of the survey was presented to the CQI committee in July and steps are currently underway to help meet your needs. The survey will also be included in our grant applications later this fall. Again, thanks to everyone!

A BIG thanks to all of you who willing participated and to the staff of Central City AIDS Network for conducting the assessments.



Survey Says....

The first STATEWIDE Consumer Satisfaction Survey is underway! In the past other State Ryan White clinics, like the HOPE Center, have conducted their own Consumer Satisfaction Surveys but there has never been a standard satisfaction survey available for all the clinics to use and provide the clinics with a Statewide picture of how consumers believe their needs are being served throughout the State. The survey, which was started July 14th, will be conducted for one month and end on August 22th. The anonymous information will be sent to Part B Division Administration in Atlanta where it will be compiled, analyzed and the results will be made available to all the Ryan White clinics throughout the State. You may be asked to participate. If so, please be willing to share a few minutes and complete the survey.

The second quarter "HOPE Center" Consumer Satisfaction Survey for 2008 was done in June. 87% of consumers who visited the clinic in June participated in the survey. A few interesting questions were asked and we'll try to answer:

- Q. Can we have more comfortable waiting room chairs, (sofas and/or recliners) and a place to sit outside?
- A. Sorry but not at this time. Our waiting room chairs are still in excellent condition and we don't want to spend money unnecessarily. We have discussed a bench under the outside front porch but afraid it would be stolen. There is very little traffic during the week-ends and business in our area are subject to break-ins. Recently someone tried to take our 600 lb. cement picnic table so we figure a bench would not last long.
- Q. Less wait time...speed things up during clinic.
- A. We constantly try to reduce your wait time but please remember, on Tuesday's, the doctors are teaching the medical students from Mercer. The HOPE Center staff can not proceed until the doctors are finished writing their orders for your care.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey in June. The next "HOPE Center" survey will be conducted in September so please take a minute and let us know how we are doing, how we can improve and ask questions.



Clinic Announcements

New and exciting changes have happened and will be happening during the upcoming months. First, join the staff in welcoming new employees.....

Program Assistances Rowena Woodford and Danita Cain who joined the department the first of June.

RN Nurse Specialist Elisha Funk joined the staff the first of August.

Barbara Cowen, Registered Dietician. Ms. Cowen, who will provide dietary services, will start the first of September and will not be an employee of the HOPE Center but will work under a Memorandum of Agreement.

We have new educational material available in the waiting area. Please take a minute and check out the magazine rack..you may find some booklets of interest. Let us know what you think of the new material and if it is helpful to you and/or your family members.

Dr. Katner and HOPE Center Administration are working hard to identify and secure a Primary Care physician who will provide primary care services at the Center. We all miss Dr. Waite and know that finding a replacement is not an easy task but the search will continue until a doctor is found!

District 5-2 Health Department may soon close one day a week however, the final decision has not been made. *Why?* To help save energy, off set the high cost of fuel and facility operational costs, e.g. water, electric, etc. Public Health employees are dedicated, caring professionals who have chosen to work for less money than they can make working in the private sector, hospitals, etc. and many drive long distances to/from their work site. But now, due to increase in gas and no increase in salary, some employees are forced to make the difficult decision of seeking employment elsewhere. To try and prevent losing employees and reduce the day-to-day costs of operating the clinics, the District may decide to work four, ten hour days. Other State governments, (Colorado) are already working this schedule and many US school systems have followed because they can't afford the extra cost of gas necessary to run the buses 5 days/week. We believe eventually many other agencies will follow the 4 day work week.

Of course we know that everyone is being affected by the high cost of gasoline, food, housing, and etc... NOT just Public Health employees. But our District Health Director wants to be pro-active...to continue to provide services to the community and continue to employ the talent men and women who provide these services. Once the decision is finalized we will give you plenty of notice.

The HOPE Center hosted the sixth, annual Mentor Program on July 17th. The Mentor Program is targeted to "high risk" teenagers who are at risk for dropping out of school, teen pregnancy, etc. We are honored to be asked to provide this service and thank Dr. Katner who spoke to the teenagers regarding HIV/AIDS and risk reductions.



Did you know.....

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced on Aug. 4th that an estimated 56,300 HIV infections occurred in the US in 2006. That estimate differs from the agency's previous estimate of 40,000 because CDC is now using a more precise method for estimating annual HIV incidence, which is the number of individuals who become newly infected with HIV in a given year. "These data, which are based on new laboratory technology developed by CDC, provide the clearest picture to date of the U.S. HIV epidemic, and unfortunately we are far from winning the battle against this preventable disease," said CDC Director Dr. Julie Gerberding. "We as a nation have to come together to focus our efforts on expanding the prevention programs we know are effective."

The new estimate is derived from the first national surveillance system of its kind that is based on direct measurement of new HIV infections and builds on a new laboratory test that can distinguish recent from long-standing HIV infections. CDC's prior annual HIV incidence estimate was based on indirect and less precise methods available at the time.

A separate CDC historical trend analysis published as part of today's study suggests that the number of new infections was likely never as low as the previous estimate of 40,000 and has been roughly stable overall since the late 1990s. "It is important to note that the new estimate does not represent an actual increase in the number of new infections, but reflects our ability to more precisely measure HIV incidence and secure a better understanding of the epidemic," said Kevin Fenton, M.D., director of CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention. "This new picture reveals that the HIV epidemic is – and has been – worse than previously known and underscores the challenges in confronting this disease."

Burden Greatest Among Gay and Bisexual Men of All Races and African Americans. Results confirm that the impact of HIV remains greatest among gay and bisexual men of all races and among African American men and women. Infection rates among blacks were 7 times as high as whites almost 3 times as high as Hispanics.

Separate Trend Analysis Sheds New Light on History of U.S. Epidemic. Results confirm dramatic declines in the number of new HIV infections however, findings also indicate that new infections increased in the late 1990s, but have remained roughly stable since. "Prevention can and does work when we apply what we know," said Richard Wolitski, Ph.D.. More people are living with HIV and living longer than ever before due to advances in treatment

To read the entire transcript please visit our Web site at www.myhopecenter.org or for information on HIV prevention, visit www.cdc.gov/hiv or www.aids.gov.

And finally.....Consortium is held the third Thursday of each month starting at 2 PM. Our next meeting will be 2 PM on August 21st. We'd love to have **you** attend and take an active role in **your** health-care and **your** clinic!