



Hepatitis C Task Force for Los Angeles County Meeting – April 16, 2008

Attendees: Dagmar Adamec, Israel Amrani, Leona Anderson, Marrisa Axelrod, Lauren Burwell, Deon Claiborne, Barbara Crofford, Joray Cubillos, Margaret Dooley Sammulu, Edgar Gonzalez, Omar Hernandez, Danny Jenkins, Aparna Kollipara, Rachel Naylor, Pierre Nsilu, John Palomo, Paul Prosser, Meghan Ralston, Brian Risley, Eve Rubell, David Treviño and Mary Vigil

- I. **Introductions:** Attendees made their introductions, and new members were welcomed.
- II. **Old Business**
 - A. 03/19/2008 minutes read and approved.
 - B. 2008 C-Retreat Planning Update – Danny Jenkins, Barbara Crofford and Mary Vigil
 1. C-Retreat Overview – based on the Shanti PLUS Model where consumers participate in a one- or multi-day educational, experiential and emotional support event. In 2007, The Task Force held their pilot C retreat, from which data was evaluated for inclusion in the pending SAMSHA grant. Besides the immediate benefits to the participants, another goal is to encourage consumers to participate in the Task Force’s annual Hep C Summit.
 2. The first C Retreat for 2008 will be held at St. Mary’s Medical Center in Long Beach on Saturday, May 10, from 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. The C Retreat will be open to approximately 60 participants who are mono and coinfectd with HCV. The participants will be divided into six groups, each lead by two co-facilitators. Volunteer technical staff are encouraged to help with registration, time keeping, music/sound, etc. Mary has been doing the outreach in the Long Beach area. Agencies include: Long Beach Health Dept., Tarzana Treatment Centers, BHS, New Image, Miller Memorial and the VA Hospital, along with private physicians, community service providers and within the LGBT community. At the former PLUS Seminars (HIV), participants’ experiences were overwhelmingly positive, and word of mouth “advertising” to other consumers was a byproduct. As such, outreach follow up in Long Beach is essential to help with the issues facing participants, including isolation, depression and challenges with treatment.
 3. Continental Breakfast and a box lunch will be provided. A raffle will be held at the end of the retreat as an incentive for participants to remain for the full-day event.
 4. Brian confirmed that Dr. Fred Poordad (Cedars-Sinai) will be the clinician presenting the “Understanding Hepatitis C and Coinfection” module in the morning.
 5. The C-Retreat is aimed at consumers; no CEUs will be provided.
 6. A phone conference will be scheduled to discuss final details of the C Retreat.
 7. Brian wrote a grant request to Roche for additional funds to support honoraria for Dr. Poordad and other new expenses not covered under the original grant that Roche funded. Eve submitted the request, and its status is pending.
 - C. NBC Telemundo Health Fair Update – Meghan Ralston and Aparna Kollipara presented the following comments:
 1. More resources in Spanish, which were in high demand (possibly due to Telemundo’s co-sponsorship and presence at the Fair. Also, include appropriate resources from GSK and Roche.
 2. Identifying the target audience the information is addressing – consumer/at-risk groups and/or the general public
 3. Developing a mini brochure which briefly addresses: 1) What is hepatitis? 2) Where is testing available? and 3) What do I do after receiving a positive result?
 4. A clinician working at the table would be able to address specific health-related consumer questions
 5. Overall, it was a “rich” experience for Meghan and Aparna.
- III. **New Business**
 - A. The final draft of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between LAC Public Health and the HCTF-LAC should be presented at the May Task Force meeting.
 - B. 2nd Annual Hepatitis C Awareness Month event at American Recovery Center co-sponsored by Beacons of H.O.P.E. will take place on Friday, May 16, 2008, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dean Page is asking for Task Force representation at the event. Dagmar Adamec will contact Dean regarding give-

aways/raffle prizes. Dagmar will also work with GSK regarding the hepatitis flyer, created by the Adult Hep C Franchise, to provide the updates suggested by Brian Risley, especially regarding sexual transmission of HCV among MSM.

- C. Brian is in discussions with Roche about several trainings targeting both primary care physicians and consumers to provide better education and awareness around HCV care and treatment. This may or may not be a Task Force program because Roche has already provided funds to Homeless Health Care Los Angeles. They prefer another agency with 501 c 3 status, so programs may be with APLA, partnered with the Task Force.
- D. After more than 11 years at HHCLA and as one of the Task Force's founding members, Eve Rubell sadly says goodbye to take a position with LAC Public Health in the Pandemic Flu Program. Danny and Brian shared their comments and thanks for Eve's constant efforts in striving for hepatitis C awareness within Los Angeles County. Eve stated that she has seen many accomplishments since the inception of the Task Force, including 1) establishment of the Task Force, 2) the creation of a hepatitis coordinator within the County's Public Health Dept., 3) acquiring current epidemiological data, and 4) developing a strategic plan for addressing hepatitis as a major health problem in Los Angeles County. She expects that the Task Force will keep up the good work. Specifically, Danny stated that Eve "represents the spirit and image of HCTF." Brian stated that Eve has acted as a "3rd co-chair" with him and Danny, always providing "welcome feedback." An open invitation was extended to invite Eve back as a presenter on behalf of the Pandemic Flu project. As Eve departs, Brian and Danny will speak to Mark Casanova, Exec. Dir. of Homeless Health Care Los Angeles (the Task Force's fiscal intermediary), regarding HHCLA's continued vested interest in the Task Force's mission.
- E. Margaret Dooley Sammulu, Drug Policy Alliance, presented an overview and answered questions regarding the Nonviolent Offender Rehabilitation Act (NORA), which DPA has secured enough signatures to have as a ballot measure in the November elections. The basic goal of NORA is to address prison overcrowding by reallocating funding sources as the means to get treatment instead of prison sentences for those who are appropriate – treatment versus incarceration is an accepted idea. There are three tracks of the Act: 1) deferred judgment (option which prevents a jail sentence), 2) treatment instead of incarceration for those sentenced, and 3) an overhaul of the prison and parole services created to serve drug offenders. Judges will be trained regarding general health issues as they relate to drug use. This is a "one-of-a-kind" plan which addresses known issues; \$2.5 billion in savings in capitol expenditures is expected; the Act can conceivably generate four times the \$25 million Prop 36 generates; reallocation of the \$460 million from the general fund will ensure that prisons remain under state control.

IV. Announcements

- A. 05/16/2008 – Beacons of H.O.P.E. and American Recovery Center are hosting their 2nd Annual Hepatitis Awareness Day. We still need some volunteers for this event.
- B. 07/16/2008 – 1st biannual Viral Hepatitis Coalition Meeting, of which the Task Force is a principal member.
- C. Deon Claiborne – announced UCLA CARE Center's current clinical trials, and that she is leaving her post to attend a Ph.D. program out-of-state.
- D. Meghan Ralston – Sale of syringes by pharmacies is now legalized. Meghan also asked the membership to visit <http://www.helpstopaids.com/> website for review and feedback, i. e. which resources and links should be added.
- E. Marrisax Axelrod is looking for a nursing position, specifically with hepatitis C emphasis.

SAVE THE DATE

6th Annual Hepatitis C Summit

The Center for Health Communities – California Endowment

Friday, 11/21/2008

Mark your calendar for next month's meetings:

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

2330 Beverly Blvd., 2nd Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90057

Street parking available