

**MN Council for HIV/AIDS Care and Prevention  
Community Voices Committee Meeting (CVC)  
(Remote Mtg.)**

**July 12, 2021**

**4:00 pm – 6:00 pm**

**Meeting Summary/Minutes**

<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	
Vernice Acevedo	James McMurray, Co-Chair
Chris Bonneville	Lesla Nelson
Belinda Charleston-Green	Sherry Outten
Calvin Hillary Hylton	Cody Rogahn
Stephen Jensen	Jo Ann Vertetis, Co-Chair
Teresa Jones	
<b>Guests:</b>	
Nurselin Akbulut	Brenda Senyana
<b>Hennepin County (Part A) Representative:</b>	<b>DHS (Part B) Representative:</b>
Thuan Tran	Dennis London
<b>MDH (Prevention) Representative:</b>	
None	
<b>MCHACP Staff:</b>	
Richard Puella, Council administrative specialist (minutes)	Carissa Weisdorf, Council coordinator

**I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:**

- The proposed agenda was approved unanimously.
- The March meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**II. Open Forum:**

- James McMurray asked if there are any concerns folks have in the community.
  - Cody Rogahn mentioned that Greater Minnesota has been lifting COVID-19 restrictions since July 1, 2021 and asked when can the CVC expect to have in person meetings again.
  - Carissa Weisdorf explained that Hennepin County, Department of Human Services, and the Department of Health’s current operation guidelines state that in person meetings are not allowed. Since we are a government body, we must follow the rules and regulations of our administrators. We are closely monitoring any change and will work with the council to make necessary changes as they occur.
  - Chris Bonneville mentioned when renewing the Ryan White application for HH, he found the application confusing.
  - Cody mentioned his concern about being denied medical appointments because of past due invoices and is currently not receiving health care.
  - Belinda Charleston-Green mentioned Every Penny Counts has a new program that pays towards medical deductions. Clients can submit a copy of their bill and the program will pay towards the bill.
  - Chris suggested that Cody reach out to RAAN for additional assistance.

**III. Connecting the Work:**

- James opened the floor for other committees to provide updates with the community.

- Executive Committee: No update.
- Disparities Elimination: Teresa Jones mentioned that the committee did not meet, and their next meeting will be on Thursday, July 15, 2021.
- Planning & Allocations: No update.
- Membership & Training: Stephen Jensen mentioned that M&T did not meet, and their next meeting is Friday, July 16, 2021.
- Needs Assessment & Evaluation: No update.

#### IV. Listening Session:

- The Positively Hennepin coordinator Brenda Senyana presented, “*Positively Hennepin Listening Sessions*” for community feedback on Positively Hennepin’s updated strategies.
  - Jo Ann Vertetis asked if there will be targeted services for groups that have higher incidences.
    - Brenda mentioned that one of the program’s goals is centered around working with communities that are disproportionately affected.
  - Jo Ann asked if the groups who are experiencing HIV disparities are also the most unvaccinated for COVID-19.
  - Thuan Tran mentioned that vaccine hesitation is higher in Black African-born and Black African American communities, not only locally but nationally as well, because of historic trauma. He mentioned that Hennepin County is in the process in rolling out a vaccine incentive program. There will be more information coming soon.
  - Vernice asked if conversations are happening among the senior population regarding the importance of routine screening for HIV.
    - Brenda mentioned that there are measures in place to ensure that outreach campaigns are reaching all populations and age groups.
  - Jo Ann Vertetis suggested information be shared to bring awareness that after teenagers, the senior population are at a high risk for STDs and HIV.
  - Jo Ann suggested presenting awareness/sex education at local senior centers.
  - Jo Ann questioned how aggressively efforts are to ensure post-incarcerated populations are connected to health care, since it is difficult to keep track of those individuals once they leave the prison system.
    - Brenda mentioned that she is part of a committee that is working with Hennepin County to establish more formal transitions for people who are exiting correctional facilities.
    - Belinda mentioned that there was an incentive program in New York for those recently exiting a correctional facility to get in care and stay in care for a year.
    - She also mentioned that individuals are tested entering the correctional facility but not upon exit and feels that testing upon release is an important change to adopt.
    - Brenda mentioned that she does not know if the correctional facilities test upon release but would keep that in mind moving forward.
  - Chris commented on the importance mental health plays in an individual’s ability to remain in medical care.
  - Belinda asked how this program would provide incentives if HRSA doesn’t allow incentives.
    - Brenda noted the concern and will follow up with Belinda.
  - Vernice mentioned it is important to have these conversations with communities outside of Minneapolis and suggested working with local faith-based organizations.
    - Belinda suggested working with homeless youth shelters, shelters, domestic violence shelters, and women’s health clinics.

- Vernice suggested to use the stories of real people to help develop marketing campaigns to reduce the stigma in disproportionately affected communities.

**V. Review CVC engagement survey results:**

- Carissa asked if review of the survey should be postponed until next meetings since there wouldn't be adequate time to discuss.
  - Jo Ann suggested going through the responses of the survey and leave the discussions for the next meeting.
- Carissa presented the, "CVC engagement survey 2021 results" to the committee.

**VI. New or Unfinished Business:**

- No new or unfinished business was discussed.

**VII. Set agenda for next meeting:**

- No discussion

**IX. Announcements and Adjourn:**

- Jo Ann mentioned that there will be an event sponsored by The Aliveness Project on August 5, 2021.
- Carissa mentioned that there will be a town hall on the Minnesota HIV outbreaks on Wednesday, July 14, 2021 at 5pm.

**Meeting summary:**

- Heard updates from each standing committee and government recipients
- The committee participated in a listening session with the Positively Hennepin coordinator Brenda Senyana.

**Documents Distributed for the Meeting:**

- 2021.07.12 agenda
- 2021.05.10 CVC Minutes
- 2021 CVC engagement survey results
- FY 2021 CVC work plan
- 2021 CVC meetings flier

**Documents Displayed during the Meeting:**

- Positively Hennepin Listening Sessions