

**Minnesota Council for HIV/AIDS Care and Prevention
Community Voices Committee Meeting
Monday, September 12, 2022
4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Hybrid In-Person/Microsoft Teams Meeting
Meeting Minutes**

Committee Members Present:	
Verneice Acevedo	James McMurray
Danielle Brantley (co-chair)	Lesa Nelson
Johnson Carter	Rodney Newman
Paul Collins	Sherry Outten
Antwon Davis	Donald Smith
Jason Dewitt	Gage Urvina
Stephen Jensen	Jo Ann Vertetis (co-chair)
Hennepin County (Part A) Representative:	DHS (Part B) Representative:
Aurin Roy	Shea Amaro
	Thomas Blissett
MDH (Prevention) Representative:	MCHACP Staff:
None	Carissa Weisdorf, Coordinator
	Bryan Bick, Administrative Specialist (minutes)

I. Welcome

- Jo Ann Vertetis called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. and introductions were made.
- The proposed agenda was reviewed and approved as printed.
- The July 11 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as printed.

II. Community questions and concerns: Jo Ann reviewed the topics that were brought up in the July meeting and topics people wanted to discuss further.

- Jo Ann stated that dentistry and dental issues were discussed.
- An attendee at the July meeting wanted to know more about resources for gender-affirming hormone therapy. No one in attendance today had any questions or concerns about this topic.
- Concerns about access to transportation, both in Greater Minnesota and in the Metro, were brought up in the last meeting. Jo Ann asked meeting participants to talk about their experiences with transportation.
 - One individual shared that they have mobility challenges, and they use Metro Mobility often. They also use Uber. Metro Mobility can be slow, but the vehicles are easy to identify, and the ride costs \$4.50 both ways.
 - Another individual shared that they use Metro Mobility too. They agreed the service can be slow sometimes. They liked it more when COVID restrictions were in place because there was only one passenger allowed in the vehicle at a time, but now they're back to three or four riders at a time.

- Shea Amaro added that transportation providers in Greater Minnesota requested and were granted an increase in the reimbursement rate for medical transportation.
 - The rate was increased and now matches the rate of the U.S. General Services Administration.
 - Shea was asked if the overall budget for medical transportation had increased. They explained that transportation dollars had been underspent recently, especially during COVID when more telehealth appointments were happening.
 - As in-person appointments are becoming more common, the need for transportation services have gone up, with gas prices having increased and options like cabs and rideshare not being as available in greater Minnesota.
 - Carissa Weisdorf said similar concerns were brought up by the Needs Assessment and Evaluation Committee, so she was glad to hear the news about the change in medical transportation reimbursement rates in Greater Minnesota contracts.
- Jo Ann Vertetis introduced the topic of access to mental health services and asked meeting participants if they had thoughts to share.
 - Carissa Weisdorf asked if anyone wanted to share experiences about using online mental health services which are becoming more readily available.
 - A participant said their son has a therapist who does virtual visits. The therapist has a good microphone and video system, and the experience works well.
 - Some online therapy services have surveys where a patient can explain what they are looking for and get connected to a provider who may be a good match.
 - A committee member mentioned that there is limited availability of mental health providers. They have friends who started online therapy but after a few weeks were switched to different providers because the people they started with were completely booked. It is especially challenging for people of color who want to work with a therapist who looks like them.
 - A meeting attendee mentioned that online therapy services might have more flexible ways to connect with providers. People can communicate with providers via text message, or schedule a quick check-in, or get appointments outside of traditional hours.
 - A committee member mentioned that some communities have guidebooks for women-owned and women-focused businesses that have descriptions and pictures of providers. Provider guides from insurance companies don't usually have that detailed information. Participants agreed that something similar for mental health services for the HIV community would be beneficial.
 - Carissa added that the Disparities Elimination Committee is looking more into mental health services. Ryan White-funded mental health services tend to be underspent. Conducting an inventory of providers and their demographic information is something that can be suggested.
- Jo Ann said she would like to find a presenter for the next Community Voices Committee meeting and asked for ideas on topics.
 - A committee member suggested a broad overview of the Ryan White program. They said they were learning about all the services offered through Ryan White funding

and it became confusing. They wanted to know enough to be able to understand it for themselves and to be able to explain it to others who need information.

- A committee member suggested that a speaker could talk about which services Ryan White provides, and how to access those services as a consumer.
- Thomas Blissett asked for clarification on the request. A committee member shared that they want to be an ambassador for the Ryan White program and be able to explain it to their community. They stated they feel like they sign a lot of papers but do not get a thorough understanding of what they are for.

III. Connecting the Work: Council members provided summaries of recent council meetings and issues currently before the council and committees. The ***Committee Report Summaries*** document was displayed.

- **Council and Executive Committee:** Lesa Nelson reviewed the Executive Committee report summary.
- **Disparities Elimination Committee**
- **Planning and Allocations Committee**
- **Membership and Training Committee:** Stephen Jensen reviewed the Membership and Training Committee report summary.
- **Needs Assessment and Evaluation Committee**
 - Lesa Nelson reviewed the Needs Assessment and Evaluation Committee report summary.
 - Carissa Weisdorf provided more detail on the 2022-2026 HIV Prevention and Care Integrated Plan.
 - Work on the plan is being directed by a steering committee of council co-chairs, council staff, and staff from the three government recipients. Lizzie McNamara is a consultant who is providing support.
 - The plan is a roadmap of what goals we want to achieve in the next five years and how we hope to achieve them.
 - The guidance for the plan comes from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
 - The workgroup that is creating the plan is finalizing the needs assessment portion of the plan now. Public input will be sought at the council meeting on September 13, and anyone can attend.
 - Discussion about the plan's goals and objectives will take place in October. The workgroup has decided to base the plan goals on the Ending the HIV Epidemic pillars.
 - One pillar is about responding to new and emergent HIV outbreaks and needs. Since there are two HIV outbreaks in Minnesota now (Hennepin/Ramsey Counties

and the Duluth area), the workgroup wanted to include outbreak response in its plan.

- Carissa Weisdorf suggested that Lizzie McNamara could come to the November meeting to collect input from the Community Voices Committee on the goals and objectives of the integrated plan.
 - There will also be a combined meeting of the Needs Assessment and Evaluation Committee, the Planning and Allocations Committee, and the Disparities Elimination Committee on October 26 at 9:30 a.m. to discuss goals and objectives. There will also be discussion at the council meeting on October 11 at 9:00 a.m.
- **Ad hoc committee attendance:** Jo Ann Vertetis reviewed the Attendance Policy Ad Hoc Committee report summary. She explained that the committee is proposing a leave of absence policy which the council will discuss and vote on.

IV. Wrap-up

- Unfinished or new business
 - No unfinished business was discussed.
 - No new business was discussed.
- Bryan Bick announced that Hennepin County Ryan White will hold a public input meeting September 13, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The purpose is to discuss the Ryan White Part A core medical service expenditure waiver.
- Jo Ann Vertetis encouraged participants in today's meeting to consider joining the council. Carissa Weisdorf invited participants to remain in the virtual meeting for a presentation of council information.

Meeting summary:

- The Community Voices Committee (CVC) discussed concerns that are affecting the community such as transportation and access to mental health care.
- CVC heard updates on the work of the council and its committees, including the 2022-2026 HIV Prevention and Care Integrated Plan.
- Information about the role of the council and the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program was presented.

Documents distributed for the meeting:

- Proposed agenda
- July 11, 2022 Community Voices Committee meeting minutes
- September 2022 CVC Meeting flier

Additional documents displayed during the meeting:

- Committee Report Summaries

BB/cw