

Re-Introduction to the HPG's Discussion of the JHF/AFP Request for a Letter of Support

October 2024 HPG Meeting

The Division of HIV Health has a process by which Regional Grantees can request additional funds for new initiatives. Any proposal made is to include specific information to support the request, and that information is used by the Division to determine if they will approve the proposal.

One such request was submitted by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation (JHF) on behalf of the AIDS Free Pittsburgh (AFP) coalition for which the JHF is the fiduciary and facilitation support. The proposal is for a statewide initiative with the focus on ending the HIV epidemic in the commonwealth. The initiative is based on the success achieved in their local AFP initiative, which they have recently expanded to their surrounding counties.

The Division is interested in the proposal, seeing benefit to an external partnership that would provide a means of expanding efforts to non-traditional partners in ways not currently afforded to the Division, and providing a focused, coordinated effort utilizing regional expertise on both the care and prevention side, and recognizing existing "in-roads" to accomplish both.

The Division would only consider an initiative that would ultimately enhance the existing activities identified and implemented in its Integrated HIV Prevention & Care Plan (IHPCP). As the IHPCP is the "road map" defining the activities and demonstrating the necessary collaboration to accomplish its goals and objectives. Any initiative considered would need to demonstrate coordination and added value to the work already defined in the plan.

However, developing an initiative such as this, would also require a significant amount of time and work by Division staff. Additionally, something that is a little different about this proposal is that it would not be limited to the SW region, which is the region covered by JHF. It would be statewide. So, before the Division would consider undertaking the initiative, a request was made for the JHF/AFP to petition stakeholders across the commonwealth as to their interest/support of such an initiative. The HPG being one of those stakeholders.

To date, the JHF/AFP team has received letters of support from a host of stakeholders. Many of your organizations have already signed in support of this proposal. To date, one request for a letter of support was returned indicating it was against their organizations policy to provide written support for any external activity.

The intent is not for the HPG to approve or disapprove the initiative itself, the funding associated with it, nor the specifics of the plan, as those details have not been worked out. Exactly what the role of the HPG would ultimately end up being would have to be determined at the point the Division finalizes any details should they pursue this proposal.

Basically, what the JHF/AFP is seeking, is the support of the HPG for a JHF/AFP led statewide initiative to bring traditional and non-traditional partners to the table, and to coordinate regional experts and their activities in a common effort through data driven and measurable goals. This does not eliminate existing localized efforts but could potentially expand them. Nor does it eliminate current efforts in Division activities and programs, but it would collaborate and potentially further support/enhance them.

Should the Division pursue this initiative, the specific details would be worked out with the JHF/AFP including deliverables and timeframes. The Division would come back to the HPG for recommendations as to the HPG level of involvement. The HPG protocols already provide for recognition of a statewide effort, but to what level that entails, would be determined with input from the HPG itself.

So, the questions before you are if you (the members of the HPG) support a statewide initiative and, secondly, do you support the JHF/AFP team facilitating that effort. The support of stakeholders, including the HPG will be a consideration as to whether the Division moves forward with the initiative.

Additional questions?

**Entities Providing Letters of Support to JHF/AFP for a Statewide EHE Initiative
As of September 18, 2024**

Health Departments

Allegheny County Health Department

Montgomery County Health Department

Bucks County Health Department

Allentown Bureau of Health

Chester County Health Department

Bethlehem Health Bureau

Delaware County Health Department

Wilkes-Barre City Health Department

Erie County Health Department

York City Health Bureau

Regional Grantees

AIDSNET

North Central District Allied Connections

Northeast United Way

SC Family Health Council of Central Pa.

Northwest Pa. Thrive Partnership

Southwestern Pennsylvania Agencies

Pittsburgh Area Center for Treatment
Allies for Health & Wellbeing
Center for Community Resources
Community Care management
Hugh Lane Wellness Foundation
Persad Center
Pittsburgh Action Against Rape
Planned Parenthood of Western Pa

Shepherd Wellness Community
True T PGH
Senior Care Management
The Open Door, Inc.
Positive Health Clinic
CHS
City of Pittsburgh OCS

Ryan White Part C

AIDS Care Group
Keystone Rural Health Center

The Wright Center Medical Group

Minority AIDS Initiative

WVAC
Caring Communities
AIDS Resource
FIGHT

Action Wellness
SACA
Co-County Wellness Services

Additional Support

Fast Track Cities
The Rase Project
Unity Harm Reduction

Highmark Wholecare
Prevention Point Philadelphia
Lancaster Harm Reduction Project

*Lee Harrison

John Mellors

* Signed as Chair of Allegheny County Board of Health