

Sample Narrative

Play Safe Always Six Month Report First Period: July 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020 Community Based Prevention Funding

Progress on Goals and Objectives

The Play Safe Always Center has been funded to provide Community Based Prevention (CBP) services to MSM of color under the age of 30 at high risk for HIV. The Center uses the RESPECT curriculum for its Individual Level Interventions and the Many Men, Many Voices (3MV) curriculum for its Group Level Interventions. Services are provided in a client centered, culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate manner. Efforts are made to ensure that the services are delivered in a respectful manner that utilizes the concepts of harm reduction.

In the past six months, our CBP funded staff have provided 35 Individual Level Interventions, 7 Group Level Interventions, 8 knowledge assessments, 4 Community Events (one – time workshops) and 30 Mobile Encounters. We have distributed approximately 5,000 condoms and lube packets, 360 bleach kits, and 4,000 health educational materials, some of which have been translated into Spanish. We have had the opportunity to provide services in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Creole within the first quarter. We have made 69 and confirmed 49 referrals for various services (please see below for a detailed description of referrals made and confirmed).

Program Status and Activities

The program is fully staffed and is reaching the contracted number of clients. The majority of clients live within a close proximity of the Center. Approximately half have previously been receiving services at our drop-in center, with the other half new to the program this quarter.

The program staff has been meeting with staff at other health centers to explore ways to work collaboratively. They discussed ways of supporting clients using *4th gen rapid testing* on their outreach van. We are in the process of developing an interagency agreement for cross referral and collaboration.

Noting a recent rise in Latino clients, the Program Director has had conversations with a local Latino ASO about accepting referrals for Group Level Interventions and Counseling and Testing for HIV. It is important for the clients to have access to early treatment of HIV if testing positive, or PrEP and other prevention efforts if testing negative. The goals of the staff are to improve early detection and to inform clients of how to stay healthy. Some of these clients may be targeted for the Ryan White funded Prevention Case Management Services.

For a detailed review of our progress in meeting our contractual outcomes, please see the attached Scope of Service Tracking Log.

Program Activities of Play Safe Always

During the first six months, 6 Community Events were conducted, the peer leadership cycle was completed, 7 Group Level Interventions were provided, and 30 Mobile Encounters were conducted.

Community Events:

8/15/2020: "What Your Children Need to Know About HIV"

- Conducted at Community Center A
- 27 people attended this forum aimed at educating parents on risk factors
- 50 condoms, 75 brochures (sample attached) and 30 safer sex kits distributed

8/25/2020: "Staying Negative: Avoiding Infection"

- Co-sponsored by the Gay Alliance at the Connection.
- Peer leadership program for teens ages 14 – 18
- 24 people attended
- 50 condoms, 50 brochures (sample attached) and 40 safer sex kits distributed

9/5/2020: "What is PrEP? Is It For Me?"

- Forum at Club Café
- 40 people attended this forum intended to raise awareness for MSM
- 100 condoms, 75 brochures distributed

9/17/2020: "HIV: Yes, It's Still a Big Deal"

- Conducted at the Stanhope Drop-In Center
- 30 young MSMOC, aged 17 – 25 attended this session designed to increase risk factor awareness
- 50 brochures (sample attached) were distributed

10/15/2020: "Syringe Services and Needle Exchange: Are They the Same?"

- Conducted at the Stanhope Drop-In Center
- 25 young PWID/PWSUD MSMOC, aged 17 – 25 attended this session designed to provide clarity
- 50 brochures (sample attached) and 50 clean syringes were distributed

11/22/2020: "I'm Negative and He's Positive – Can We Have Safe Sex?"

- Conducted at the Stanhope Drop-In Center
- 15 young MSMOC, aged 17 – 25 attended this session designed to increase risk factor awareness
- 25 brochures (sample attached) were distributed

Group Level Interventions

During the first six months, the agency recruited 10 MSMOC for the first cycle of 3MV. The sessions occurred on Thursdays, from 5 – 7:00pm at the Center's Drop-In space. The cycle began on 8/11/2020 and concluded on 9/22/2020. Of the 10 recruited, 8 successfully completed the cycle and attended all 7 sessions. A basic risk assessment was conducted at the beginning and end of the cycle (sample attached) and pre-post tests were conducted at the end of each session. A summary of the pre-post test results and basic risk factors for group participants was generated and is included with this report for your review. Findings indicated an increase in knowledge from session to session and an overall increase in knowledge from the start to completion of the cycle. Recruitment is underway for the next cycle of 3MV which will start in November.

Individual Level Interventions

During the first six months, the agency provided 35 ILI sessions with 15 unduplicated clients. Each of the clients has completed a comprehensive risk assessment and has developed an Individual Service Plan, complete with risk reduction goals and

timelines for completion. A summary of the client risk factors is included for your review.

Mobile Encounters

During the first quarter, the agency conducted 30 Mobile Encounters reaching 600 members of the target population. 3,300 condoms and lube, 2,000 pieces of educational materials and 200 bleach kits were distributed. Mobile Encounters occur three nights a week with the following schedule:

- Mondays: 9pm – 1am @ the Back Bay Fens
- Wednesdays: 4pm – 8pm @ Dudley Square and surrounding areas
- Fridays: 10pm – 2am @ Club Nirvana

During the first six months, clients were assisted with the following services through referral:

	Scheduled:	Confirmed:
Hepatitis A & B Vaccines	27	15
Substance Abuse Treatment	6	5
Mental Health Counseling	6	5
Primary Medical Care	4	4
Detox	7	5
HIV Drug Assistance Program	2	1
Housing	8	6
MassHealth	2	2
Peer Support Groups	3	3
Total:	65	46

Personnel Status

As previously noted, Melissa Miller has left us to take a position with the World Health Organization addressing the growth of the AIDS epidemic in Central America. She had been with the center for three years as the Program Coordinator. We will certainly miss her and wish her well in her future endeavors. We welcome Darren Johnson as her replacement. Darren is bilingual in Spanish and bicultural. He has previous experience working in the Health Department in San Juan, Puerto Rico, focusing on recovering addicts. A budget revision reflecting this change is coming; enclosed please find Darren's resume and appointment letter.

Cora Black continues her position as Program Assistant and has attended in-service trainings on "STDs and HIV," "The Connection between HIV and Domestic Violence," and "Understanding Cultural Differences."

Description of Problems and Challenges

The staff turnover described in the Personnel Status section provided some challenges to overcome; thankfully the position wasn't vacant for too long. We are now working to get Darren fully trained in the intervention as well as oriented to the contract. Also, due to renovations at Club Nirvana, we missed two weeks of Mobile Encounter sessions on Fridays. Now that renovations are complete, we will complete a full schedule.

Description of Emerging Needs

We need to increase secondary prevention services and go beyond HIV/AIDS 101 training. The rate of HIV and HCV infection among clients is increasing at the STD clinic and among active drug users. As most of these clients have sex partners, we need to integrate the HIV testing services with information for partners. We have

considered devoting some of the group education sessions to the topic of partner notification. We are also trying to devise ways to help clients recently tested to understand their options with regard to access for services.

As mentioned, we have seen a steady increase in the number of Latinx clients using the Drop-In center over the first six months. In the next year we will find ways to meet the needs of these new constituents.

Progress on Plan of Corrective Action

We received a citation from the BPHC during a recent site visit for a lack of backup documentation submitted along with our fiscal invoices. We submitted a *Plan of Corrective Action*, which was subsequently approved.

During a recent internal audit of our invoices submitted to BPHC, we found that 100% of all invoices submitted were accompanied by original, printed, dated receipts where appropriate. All purchases relating to conferences or group education sessions were accompanied by sign-in sheets for those events. No invoices have been held up or returned to us by BPHC due to a lack of backup documentation since our receipt of this citation. We will continue to report on this issue in the next progress report.

Counseling/Testing/Screening

During the six months, our agency as a whole provided the following:

	HIV	Hep B	Hep C	Chlamydia	Gonorrhea	Syphilis
Total # of tests/screenings	200	100	105	150	70	15
Total # of positive results	1	0	1	4	1	0
% Positive	1%	0%	1%	3%	1%	0%

Miscellaneous

The Center and many of the prevention staff were featured on the local cable TV program called "Around the City." The TV program highlighted the services for youth and young adults.