



# OUR FIGHT FOR


*justice AND equity*

**TO END HIV & AIDS**

**36<sup>th</sup> National Conference  
on Social Work & HIV/AIDS  
May 22-25, 2024**

Hilton Orlando Buena Vista Palace  
Disney Springs  
1900 E. Buena Vista Drive Lake  
Buena Vista, FL 32830



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PASWH   
Professional Association of Social Workers in HIV & AIDS



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# DID YOU KNOW

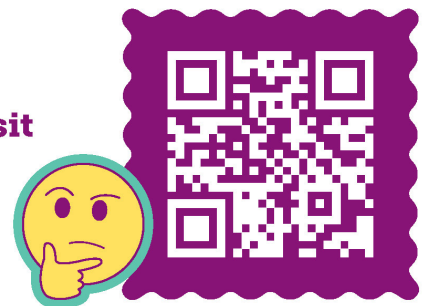
PrEP can be about 99% effective  
in preventing HIV?\*



PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) is a prescription medicine that's taken as part of a routine *before* you're exposed to HIV to help reduce your chances of getting it. Remember that PrEP doesn't protect against other STIs, so be sure to use condoms and other healthy sex practices.

Your healthcare provider can help you determine whether PrEP is the best option for your situation.

Scan the code to learn  
more about PrEP or visit  
[Healthysexuals.com](https://www.healthysexuals.com)



\*When taken as prescribed.



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HEALTHYSEXUAL®

welcome

## A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hello,

Welcome to the 36th National Conference on Social Work and HIV/AIDS. The theme for this year is "Our Fight for Justice and Equity to End HIV and AIDS." The theme is directly related to why we chose Florida for this year's conference location – where the surgeon general is opposed to gender-affirming care and counseling for transgender and non-binary minors, where the State fails to put women's health first, where they attack LGBTQ+ rights, and they fail to support the eradication of diseases like COVID and Measles. Such positions are the opposite of justice and equity, two things at the very core of social work practice. We're here in solidarity with our friends, neighbors, and colleagues to ensure all communities see an end to HIV & AIDS.

We're here to raise awareness, challenge injustice, and make a resounding call for equity. Florida is one of the most egregious states when it comes to fairness and equity for people living with and at risk of HIV, but they are certainly not the only example. There is no better place to demonstrate why our work is a 'Fight' for justice and equity, given the decisions taken by Florida's leaders, but similar decisions are being discussed and made in many of the states in which we represent. Working and learning together, we can fight the policies and systems perpetuating inequitable health outcomes. During the conference, we will directly learn and support statewide advocacy efforts by PASHWA's policy partners, the AIDS Institute of Florida and Equality Florida. Through a curated Florida conference track, we will hear promising local practices and strategies from such agencies as Bros in Convo, Pineapple Healthcare, Positive People Network, and Divas in Dialogue. We will gain tools, strategies, and practices to eradicate similar practices in our communities or, better yet, stop them from happening altogether.

We're here with a vision of change for our community and our nation, a call to action to see an end to the systemic barriers that only serve to advance HIV & AIDS, not end it. The lessons learned, the relationships forged, and the shared vision created will be illuminating for each state and community we work in. Such policies and systems touch us all.

This conference would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors Gilead Sciences, ViiV, AIDS United, John Snow, Inc, Theratechnologies, PALSS, Health Merch, Best Practices, HIV Vaccine Trials Network, Preferra Insurance, Pineapple Healthcare, Until There's A Cure, and Provide Inc,. To our local Community Organizations Equality Florida, AIDS Institute, Bro's In Convo, Positive People Network, Miracle of Love, and Divas in Dialogue.

A very special thank you to our Program Committee, including- Alicia Downes, Amy Jacobs, Andrea Dakin, Aundrea Lacey, DeKeitra Griffin, Dominique Fisher, Erin Nortrup, Heather Hauck, Michael Lohri, Patrick Padgen, Stevan Vargas, and Susan Tusher.

Thank you all for joining us in this work. Social Work is the END to HIV and AIDS!



**RUSSELL "RUSTY" BENNETT, LMSW, Ph.D**

Executive Director & Conference Chair

Professional Association of Social Workers in HIV & AIDS



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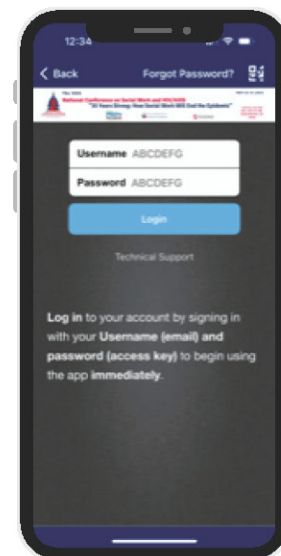
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# conference agenda

## MAY 22-25, 2024

All session start times will take place in the Eastern Time Zone

### Wednesday, May 22, 2024 8:00am - 12:00pm- Pre-Registration Required

#### Medical Case Management (Day 1, Introduction) 3.5 CE

Location: Meyer 2

Presenters: Melinda Marasch; Ryan Ayala

Session Summary: Medical Case Management (MCM) Certificate Program curriculum was developed to meet the HRSA guidance: Medical case management services must be provided by trained professionals, including both medically credentialed and other health care staff (HRSA Policy Notice 10-02; April 8, 2010). It is based on best practices and research on MCM, as well as input from AIDS Service Organizations, Ryan White Grantees, Boston College Graduate School of Social Work, and others. The MCM Certificate Program consists of nine required online trainings and two full-day, in-person workshops, approximately 22 hours of training. The goal of the MCM Certificate Program is to provide learners with a strong knowledge base and clinical skill set to succeed with the diverse set of client needs inherent to the work of an MCM and other direct care workers. Aspire provides the online training and manages them through a learning management system, which allows user progress reports.

### Pre-Conference Add-on \$150 per person; Pre-Registration Required

### Wednesday, May 22, 2024 8:00am - 12:00pm | 3.5 CE

#### Case Management Training for Allied Professional: Evidence-Based Storytelling: Analysis, Interpretation & Dissemination of Qualitative Research

Location: Sabal E

Presenters: Amy Smoyer, MSW, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Southern Connecticut State University; Nadine Ruff, LMSW, MSW, Intensive Case Manager, APNH

Session Summary: The goal of this session is to advance and support social workers and allied professionals to be leaders in the field of HIV/AIDS by preparing them to integrate qualitative research into their agency programs and practices. While the need for evidence-based practice has been strongly endorsed by AIDS service organizations, findings from qualitative social science research are underutilized. Based on analysis of participants' narratives, qualitative research aligns with social work's values and skills. However, because qualitative findings are often derived from small samples with little to no numerical analysis, social workers may be hesitant to incorporate this work into their practice. This half-day session will include interactive discussion and experiential activities. As social workers, we all learned about research when earning our degrees. This module will refresh and refine participants' existing knowledge.

#### HIV 101/Trauma Informed Care: Building a Foundation for Effective Social Work Practice and Trauma-Informed Care Best Practices

Location: Pindo B

Presenters: DeKeitra Griffin, LCSW, PhD Student, Louisiana State University; Daphne Reynolds, LCDC-I, Counselor, Texas Treatment Services

Session Summary: The session is designed to equip social workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to support individuals impacted by HIV effectively. This course will introduce HIV and trauma-informed care best practices, providing an in-depth understanding of the disease, its impact on individuals and communities, and the role of social workers in HIV care. The training session will have engaging and interactive elements including Case Studies Role-Playing, Small Group Discussions, Q&A Sessions, Multimedia Presentations, Group Activities/ Simulations, and Resource Sharing and Networking.

By combining interactive elements, expert insights, and practical applications, our HIV 101 training session will ensure that social workers are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence to provide trauma-informed comprehensive and compassionate care to individuals affected by HIV.

#### Self-care is more than taking a bath or meditation, it's an ethical obligation. Come learn how and why!

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: Amy Jacobs, LMSW, Senior Clinical Social Worker, Michigan Medicine HIV/AIDS Treatment Program; Sydney Renner, LISW-S, Outpatient Mental Health Therapist, University of Toledo Medical Center Care Clinic

Session Summary: This workshop will explore the necessity of self-care and healthy boundaries within HIV Social Work. Topics around burnout, compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma will be defined and discussed. Next, HIV-specific social work and how it may uniquely impact providers' need for self-care will be covered. Case studies and attendee's experiences will be explored in relation to burnout and self-care, followed by a discussion of the ethical necessity for providers to obtain self-care and maintain their own healthy boundaries and stable mental-health. Ways HIV social workers can obtain personal self-care, enact professional and institutional changes to support burnout prevention and address provider burnout, and ways to work towards supporting providers politically and socially will all be addressed. Finally, the workshop facilitators will provide space for attendees to brainstorm solutions, suggestions, tools and strategies to avoid burnout and treat compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma, and provide and gain support from facilitators and other participants. Lecture, group discussions and small group/dyad exercises will be utilized throughout the workshop.

#### The CEO Social Worker: Empowering Change through Leadership Development for Social Workers in HIV/AIDS

Location: Pindo A

Presenters: Patrick Padgen, DSW, LMSW, MPH, Director, NYC Health Department; Amanda Phi, MPH, Deputy Director, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Session Summary: In the ever-changing landscape of HIV/AIDS, effective leadership from social workers is pivotal for re-shaping organizations, creating sustainable programs, and fostering positive change. Unfortunately, many social workers are never taught leadership skills or empowered to utilize them. Successful executive leaders require a large scope of knowledge and skills, which must be practiced, developed, and honed across the professional career.

This session is designed to provide an interactive space for conversation around leadership development focused on the unique experience faced by social workers in HIV/AIDS. Through an interactive presentation and collaborative discussion, participants will be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate challenges in leadership development while learning skills to drive meaningful growth. The session will also explore adaptive leadership strategies specifically tailored to the challenges faced by social workers in HIV/AIDS. Participants will learn to navigate uncertainty, address emerging issues, and lead teams effectively in times of crisis. Additionally, the session will cover cultivating resilience and self-care in leadership, in order to acknowledge the emotional toll of working in this field. The session will reinforce the importance of self-awareness and self-care in organizational and team leadership. The session will help participants develop practical skills for building partnerships, mobilizing communities, and advocating for policies that positively impact the lives of those affected by HIV/AIDS. Finally, the session will also include time for participants to develop a leadership development plan that challenges them to build personal, technical, and organizational skills to be utilized in their work. Participants will leave this session with a plan to begin their own personal growth as well as ways to empower other social workers to lead with resilience and compassion in ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

### Opening Plenary Session Wednesday, May 22, 2024 1:30pm - 3:30pm | 1 CE

#### Working Together to Help End the HIV Epidemic: How Social Workers Can Support Equitable PrEP Uptake

Location: Ballroom

Presenters: Heather Smith, LMSW Senior HIV Community Liaison, Gilead Sciences; Orlando Harris, PhD, RN, FNP, MPH, FAAN

Associate Professor, Community Health Systems University of California, San Francisco; Sha'Terra Johnson-Fairley, LMSW, Adjunct Instructor Stephen F. Austin State University; Victor Avila, Director of Community Relations, Spectrum Medical

Session Summary: The presenters will highlight the need for more equitable access to PrEP, explore practical approaches to increasing PrEP uptake among individuals, as appropriate, in priority populations, and provide thought leadership on the role of social workers in helping to end the HIV epidemic.

## Medical Case Management (Day 1, Block 1) | 1.25 CE

Location: Meyer 2 Wednesday, May 22, 2024 3:45pm - 5:00pm

### Pre-Registration required.

The goal of the MCM Certificate Program is to provide learners with a strong knowledge base and clinical skill set to succeed with the diverse set of client needs inherent to the work of an MCM and other direct care workers. Aspire provides the online training and manages them through a learning management system, which allows user progress reports. Please see below for detailed descriptions of online and in-person trainings.

## Breakout Session One 1.25 CE Wednesday, May 22, 2024 3:45pm - 5:00pm

### Putting PrEP into Practice: Initiating PrEP Discussions

Location: Ballroom

Speakers: Heather Smith, LMSW; Bolo Nieto, MA with Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Session Summary: Keep the conversation going after our mainstage plenary with an interactive workshop on optimizing pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) discussions! This workshop will review the fundamentals of PrEP, provide an overview of the national landscape, and engage attendees in a collaborative discussion on how to implement effective PrEP discussions as Social Workers. Participants will also explore how to establish and normalize routine PrEP initiation conversations and set goals for advancing PrEP uptake within their organizations.

### Evaluation of a system-wide HIV Resource Coordination Hub: What's working, what's not, and strategies for implementation

Location: Pindo A

Presenters: Andrea Dakin, Ph.D., MA, Senior Director, Shared Program Services, AIDS Foundation Chicago; Devan Derricotte, MSW, Research and Evaluation Specialist, AIDS Foundation Chicago

Session Summary: Launched in February 2020, the HIV Resource Coordination Hub (the HUB) is a collaboration between AIDS Foundation Chicago (AFC) and Center on Halsted to provide up-to-date information and referral services in LGBTQ+ healthcare for those living with or vulnerable to HIV in the Chicagoland area. The Hub takes a status-neutral approach to service provision, thus addressing both Treat and Prevent pillars of the CDC's Ending the Epidemic framework. The HUB's intent is to provide a 'one-stop-shop' for individuals to obtain the support, information, and resources they need to access HIV and/or PrEP healthcare, case management, housing, social services, and emergency financial assistance. System navigation strategies such as this have been demonstrated effective at helping individuals navigate fragmented healthcare and service systems. In 2023, AFC completed a mixed methods outcome and process evaluation of the HUB. Utilizing client assessment and referral data, analysis was conducted regarding client demographics, services provided, and overall impact. The first part of the presentation will describe the HUB and review achievements. The second portion will describe the project's implementation strategies, as well as community facilitators and barriers to project implementation and adaptations that were made along the way. The final part of the session will be group discussions focused on implementation of a similar hub in other communities.

### Gentlemen Respecting & Interacting In Truth (G.R.I.T.) Healthy Black Masculinity

Location: Pindo B

Presenter: Corey Ingram, LMSW, IOR and PhD candidate, University of Georgia

Session Summary: This workshop is highly relevant for individuals living with HIV as it addresses the unique challenges they face due to the intersection of HIV status and race. It empowers them to navigate and combat stereotypes, discrimination, and health disparities, fostering a sense of agency and resilience. By promoting healthy Black masculinity and inclusivity, it provides a supportive environment for HIV-positive individuals to engage in discussions, gain insights, and advocate for their rights and well-being.

### HOPWA Program Updates: Regulations, Notices, Policies, and More

Location: Sabal G

Presenters: Jennifer Mullen, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Rita Harcrow, Director of HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing

Session Summary: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) program is the Federal government's only program dedicated to the provision of housing and housing-related support for people with HIV and their families. October 2022 marked the 30th anniversary of the HOPWA program. HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing has launched an overarching strategy, 'Reset, Renew, Recharge', designed to move the HOPWA program forward in advancing program design and core values that will positively impact the lives, health, and housing stability of people with HIV. In this session, Office of HIV/AIDS Housing staff will discuss recent shifts in HOPWA program regulations, policies, and guidance. Presenters will provide updates on a range of HOPWA program topics including HOPWA regulations at 24 CFR 574, rent standards, physical inspections, Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) provisions, promoting equity for people with HIV, and more. This session is intended for participants already familiar with the HOPWA program and will provide ample time for participant questions.

### Let's get SOLHA Certified! Foundations of the Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW, President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

Session Summary: PASWAH is offering a special Social Work Certification for working with older persons living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA). This session will count for the first session in which you can receive certification credit. We will discuss the need for the specialized competencies to meet the needs of your older clients across the HIV/AIDS Care Continuum. An overview of the certification process will be provided, as well as highlights of the content areas of the curriculum. Special attention will be given to the social justice lens and equity approaches that inform the SOLHA Certification.

### Professional Burnout: Exploring Compassion Fatigue, Secondary Traumatic stress, and Vicarious Trauma

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: Holly Rutoskey, LMSW, Clinical Therapist, AIDS Alabama; Eric Abney, LMSW, Clinical Therapist, AIDS Alabama

Session Summary: Burnout is a job-stress related syndrome with dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced feelings of accomplishment. Burnout affects a person's overall wellbeing, as well as how a provider is able to show up for the people they serve. Professional burnout is an increasingly common experience for social service providers working with people living with HIV. This course will highlight common challenges and experiences for social workers providing HIV care across a variety of settings. Through this lens, this session will provide a space to discuss the impacts of these experiences on providers, clients, and organizations, to identify practical and helpful ways of talking about and responding to signs of burnout, as well as to promote prevention and self-care. This course will provide an opportunity for reflection and engagement among colleagues to explore a range of shared experiences related to burnout.

### Supporting the Sexual Health of Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence

Location: Sabal F

Presenters: Ashley Slye, IPV + HIV Subject Matter Expert, Positively Safe Deputy Director, National Network to End Domestic Violence; Robin Pereira, MPH Candidate, Positively Safe Specialist, National Network to End Domestic Violence

Session Summary: Experiences of intimate partner violence (IPV) can lead to adverse health outcomes, including acquiring HIV. Research shows that there is a correlation between IPV and HIV. In the United States, it was found that 55% of women living with HIV have experienced IPV; studies also show that women experiencing IPV have a four times greater chance of acquiring STIs, including HIV, as compared to non-abused women. Additionally, one study found that both cisgender and transgender women experiencing domestic violence (DV) are four times more likely to experience antiretroviral failure as compared to women not experiencing DV. For someone experiencing IPV, they may experience reproductive coercion as part of the abuse they endure and, therefore, may not have control over their sexual health, which can lead to acquiring STIs. Additionally, they may be faced with a unique set of barriers when attempting to access sexual healthcare, and providers in the field may not feel confident in how to address or alleviate those barriers. We see a great need for healthcare professionals to gain knowledge on the impact IPV may have on someone's sexual health in order to holistically serve those coming through their doors to access services. It is critical that providers not only gain knowledge on and skills related to the intersection but also work to create partnerships with IPV organizations to strengthen their programming and provide a wide range of services to program participants. During this presentation, attendees will gain knowledge on the dynamics of IPV and how it intersects with HIV, identify different ways to incorporate information and support on intimate partner violence into current programming, understand the importance of PrEP for victims and increasing access through partnerships, and outline initial steps for creating partnerships with IPV organizations in their communities.



## **They are the experts: Engaging older adults with HIV in curriculum development and case manager training**

Location: Sabal E

Presenters: Nora Bouacha, MPP, Director, Research and Evaluation, AIDS Foundation Chicago; Nick Starkey, BS, Manager of Special Projects, AIDS Foundation Chicago

Session Summary: As the Ryan White Lead Agent for Northeastern Illinois, AIDS Foundation Chicago (AFC) is responsible for facilitating both required and optional training for Ryan White-funded case managers. Through conversations with clients, case managers, and other stakeholders, AFC has identified content gaps in training plans related to older adults living with HIV. In 2023, AFC received funding to design and administer a training curriculum specific to topics relevant to this population. To ensure that Ryan White case managers are prepared to meet the unique needs of older adults, AFC leveraged stakeholder input to develop and evaluate a multi-tiered training course. This presentation will outline the methods used by AFC to design and evaluate a training curriculum, detail the findings from this evaluation, and discuss how an iterative and inclusive approach to incorporating stakeholder feedback can strengthen a professional development program for case managers. Attendees will have a chance to review excerpts of the training curriculum and discuss methods used by AFC, as well as consider how their agencies can or currently utilize stakeholder feedback to improve training curricula.

**Welcome Reception Wednesday, May 22, 2024 5:15pm - 7:00pm - Location: Grand Lawn**

**Continental Breakfast Thursday, May 23, 2024 7:00am - 8:00am - Location: Sabal Foyer**

**Thursday Morning Plenary Session 1 CE Thursday, May 23, 2024 8:00am - 9:45am**

### **Building Bridges to Advance Social Change and Health Equity"**

Panelists: Jasmine McKenzie – CEO & Founder, The McKenzie Project Inc., Carmen H. Julious, LISW-CP&AP – CEO, Board Treasurer

Moderator: Gena Grant – VICE PRESIDENT /DIRECTOR OF YOUTH SERVICES, Positive People Network, Inc.

Session Summary: Creating positive change can seem like an uphill battle with opposing sides, yet is there another way? During this session, local community-based providers will discuss "bridge building" strategies and recommendations for advancing strategies to end the epidemic in actively hostile or at least "unfriendly" political and social environments. Getting through the rhetoric, finding the allies, and honing the message. [Action: One pager, advocacy strategies to promote change in your community. PASWHA policy statement on Ending HIV and AIDS]

**Thursday, May 23, 2024 10:00am – 4:45pm**

### **Medical Case Management (Day 2)**

Lead Presenter: Melinda Marasch, MSW – Owner/Consultant, Aspire Training & Consulting

Co-Presenter: Ryan Ayala, MSW – Owner, Ryan Ayala LLC

Day Two will focus on: Medical Self Management: This section provides information to enhance the direct care workers understanding and ability to address health literacy and adherence. Discussion and approaches will connect all to best practices with MI skills learned on Day 1. At the end of the section, learners will be able to: (1) Have strategies to increase medication adherence, (2) Better understand how to enhance health literacy, and (3) Utilize MI techniques to discuss adherence with clients.

**Thursday, May 23, 2024 10:00am - 11:15am Breakout Session Two | 1.25 CE**

### **Fostering Empowerment: Skills, Advocacy, and Innovative Support for People Living with HIV**

Room: Sabal G

Co-Presenters: Valencia Landry – Team Member, Texas Black Women's Health Initiative, Bridget Washington, BSW – Senior Services Coordinator, AIDS Outreach Center (AOC)

Session Summary: This training session delves into the invaluable insights gained from lived experience expertise and transformative support offered by innovative program models for individuals living with HIV. This knowledge equips practitioners to engage with individuals and deliver services in a manner that is well-informed and inherently inclusive. The training will identify the essential skills needed to engage meaningfully with individuals who have lived experience. Attendees will explore the characteristics of an empowered HIV advocate, deepening their understanding of advocacy dynamics. This session will also provide insights into the necessary supports that contribute to empowering individuals to thrive while living with HIV. It will showcase an effective and innovative program model explicitly designed for People Living with HIV (PLWH). Attendees will hear about how this model empowers individuals by establishing a comprehensive support network and contributing to the overall well-being and capacity of PLWH to thrive in various aspects of their lives. The session will be highly interactive, incorporating engaging elements to ensure active participation. It will feature dynamic dialogue to encourage open discussion and exchange of ideas among participants. A PowerPoint presentation will complement the verbal discussions, providing visual aids to enhance understanding. Additionally, the session will incorporate illustrations to represent key concepts and ideas visually. This combination creates a dynamic and participatory learning environment, fostering a deeper understanding and engagement among the participants.

### **Bridging HIV Care Gaps through Telehealth: An Evidence-Informed Intervention to Support Engagement in Care**

Location: Pindo B

Presenters: Masill Miranda, MSW, Program Manager, AIDS United; Lance Burwell, MS, LIMHP, PC, Licensed Independent Mental Health Practitioner, University of Nebraska Medical Center; Clover C. Campbell, MA PsyD, Linkage & Counseling -Program Manager, Georgia Harm Reduction Coalition

Session Summary: Social workers need access to more innovative tools and interventions that support people with HIV in achieving viral suppression and engaging in care. In this workshop, participants will learn about Telehealth and Text to Improve Engagement in Care (i2TEC), an evidence-informed intervention designed to address the intersection of mental health, substance use, and HIV. i2TEC consists of 12 video-based counseling sessions, delivered by a social worker or other mental health professional, who uses motivational interviewing and problem-solving methods to support clients with HIV in addressing mental health, substance use, and other barriers to care engagement. Because i2TEC is delivered remotely, it reduces the barriers of HIV stigma and unequal access to transportation. i2TEC provides two-way text messaging to support visit attendance, goal-setting, and rapport. i2TEC is being implemented by six Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program-funded sites through the Using Innovative Intervention Strategies to Improve Health Outcomes among People with HIV (2iS) initiative funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration Special Projects of National Significance. For this workshop, two 2iS sites serving rural and urban populations experiencing poverty and other high needs will describe their first-hand experiences with i2TEC, including facilitators and barriers to planning, implementing, and delivering the intervention.

### **From Stigma to Solution: Empowering Social Workers in the Fight Against HIV Criminalization**

Location: Pindo A

Presenters: DeKeitra Griffin, LCSW, PhD Student, Louisiana State University; Daphne Reynolds, LDCD-I, Counselor, Texas Treatment Services

Session Summary: In this engaging and interactive workshop, social workers working in the HIV field will delve into the complex issue of HIV criminalization. Through a combination of informative presentations, thought-provoking discussions, and interactive activities, participants will gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by individuals living with HIV in the context of criminalization. The session will begin with a powerful personal narrative shared by a gay black man living with HIV, who will provide firsthand insights into the lived experience of individuals affected by HIV criminalization. This narrative will set the stage for the exploration of the workshop's key themes. To foster a deeper understanding of the legal aspects of HIV criminalization, the workshop will incorporate interactive activities. Throughout the workshop, participants will also have access to up-to-date research, resources, and tools to address HIV criminalization in their daily practice. They will learn about successful advocacy and policy reform efforts, empowering them to become agents of change within their organizations and communities. To ensure an inclusive and collaborative environment, the workshop will encourage networking and peer learning. Attendees will have the opportunity to connect with their colleagues, share best practices, and discuss innovative approaches to supporting individuals affected by HIV criminalization. By the end of the workshop, social workers will leave with a heightened awareness of the complexities surrounding HIV criminalization and a toolkit of practical strategies to mitigate its impact on their clients. They will be equipped to challenge discrimination, advocate for policy reforms, and provide more effective support to individuals living with HIV.

### **HIV Vaccine Research: Our past and our journey forward**

Location: Sabal F

Presenters: Daniel D. Driffin, DrPH, MPH, Project Manager, External Relations, HIV Vaccine Trials Network; Louis B. Shackelford, MPH, External Relations, HIV Vaccine Trials Network

Session Summary: The HIV Vaccine Trials Network is the world's largest publicly funded international collaboration focused on the evaluation of vaccines to prevent HIV/AIDS. Our sites conduct all phases of clinical trials, from evaluating early-phase vaccines for safety and immune response to testing vaccine efficacy. This session is designed to learn the history of HIV vaccine development and the potential of our future efforts using broadly neutralizing antibodies for those most marginalized communities across our globe.

## **Fostering Empowerment: Skills, Advocacy, and Innovative Support for People Living with HIV**

Location: Sabal G

Presenters: Valencia Landry – Team Member, Texas Black Women's Health Initiative; Bridget Washington, BSW – Senior Services Coordinator, AIDS Outreach Center (AOC)

Session Summary: This training session delves into the invaluable insights gained from lived experience expertise and transformative support offered by innovative program models for individuals living with HIV. This knowledge equips practitioners to engage with individuals and deliver services in a manner that is well-informed and inherently inclusive. The training will identify the essential skills needed to engage meaningfully with individuals who have lived experience. Attendees will explore the characteristics of an empowered HIV advocate, deepening their understanding of advocacy dynamics. This session will also provide insights into the necessary supports that contribute to empowering individuals to thrive while living with HIV.

## **Let's get SOLHA Certified! Foundations of the Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW, President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

Session Summary: PASWHA is offering a special Social Work Certification for working with older persons living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA). This session will count for the first session in which you can receive certification credit. We will discuss the need for the specialized competencies to meet the needs of your older clients across the HIV/AIDS Care Continuum. An overview of the certification process will be provided, as well as highlights of the content areas of the curriculum. Special attention will be given to the social justice lens and equity approaches that inform the SOLHA Certification.

## **Putting the 'Unity' in Community Health: A Health Department/Health Center Collaboration to Increase Viral Suppression**

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: Robert Bangert, LICSW, Senior Manager of Care Navigation, Whitman-Walker Health; Ashley Coleman, LICSW, Supervisory Public Health Analyst, DC Health

Session Summary: Public health surveillance data demonstrates that some populations are more likely than others to be impacted by HIV, experience greater challenges engaging in care, and maintain a detectable HIV viral load. As social workers, we can apply our person in environment framework to understand the social drivers of health that impact their ability to engage in care and achieve viral suppression. Viral suppression is a key component of the national strategy to end the HIV epidemic, so focusing resources on populations with the greatest social barriers to care, and therefore highest viral loads, is essential to ending the epidemic. This session will explore the innovative partnership between DC Health and Whitman-Walker Health to address disparities in viral suppression among priority populations in Washington, DC. DC Health embedded four Community Health Workers (CHW) and two Clinical Care Coordinators (CCC) at community-based provider sites to engage and retain individuals living with HIV in medical care and social support services. DC Health used both qualitative and quantitative data to identify the most at-risk populations and to design a program that meets each of their unique needs. Whitman-Walker Health was DC Health's earliest partner in this collaboration, and together the program managers from both organizations piloted the integration of a Community Health Worker employed by DC Health into the Whitman-Walker Health care team, focusing on a specific priority population with a lower rate of viral suppression compared to the overall population of people living with HIV in the District of Columbia. This session will explore the development of this partnership and program, including the role of social work leadership in its design, and the successes, challenges, and lessons learned that would help other organizations engage in similar initiatives.

**Thursday, May 23, 2024 11:30am - 12:45pm Breakout Session Three | 1.25 CE**

## **Fighting Stigma Across the HIV Care Continuum**

Location: Pindo B

Presenter: Bolo Nieto, MA with Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Session Summary: Let's have an honest conversation about stigma surrounding patients living with HIV and patients who can benefit from PrEP! We have so many tools to end the epidemic, yet the stigma that surrounds conversations around sexual health continue to create barriers. This workshop helps us understand aspects of medical mistrust and stigma that a patient may have experienced before coming to seek care and why providing a non-judgmental safe space for sexual health discussions is critical.

## **HIV Risk Among Justice-Involved Women who Use Drugs: Lessons from COVID**

Location: Pindo A

Presenter: Amy Smoyer, MSW, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Southern Connecticut State University

Session Summary: During COVID, changes in criminal-legal policies resulted in a temporary decrease in the incarceration of women who use drugs. Join this interactive session to discuss the impact of criminal-legal systems on HIV risk and hear stories from justice-involved women in Connecticut about their lives during COVID. When the prison doors were closed, where did women go? Did relieve from surveillance, arrest, and incarceration improve women's outcomes or send them into a downward spiral? What community-based services were available to women who use drugs when they were not ensnared in the justice system? How did the COVID experience impact their HIV risk, including drug use, sexual behavior, mental health, and housing insecurity? This session will discuss the status of harm reduction services for women who use drugs. Beginning with examples from the SHAWN research study, the conversation will expand to include expertise and experience from session participants. Harm reduction opportunities in both correctional and community settings will be discussed, including examples from outside the United States. The challenges presented by stress and burnout among harm reduction and HIV prevention staff will be included in this discussion.

## **How Pharmacists and Social Workers are Improving Access to HIV Preventative Services via TelePrEP and Telehealth**

Location: Sabal E

Presenters: Henry Delu, Jr., PharmD, Clinical Manager and Pharmacy Manager, Avita Pharmacy

Session Summary: When pharmacists and HIV social workers collaboratively leverage telePrEP/telehealth in the fight to end HIV, they can meet patients where they are and deliver compassionate, inclusive, and individualized care. This session will explore how this innovative practice is being successfully delivered in California as a result of California Senate Bill SB159, which empowers pharmacists to prescribe PREP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) and PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) to patients directly, then work closely with HIV social workers to ensure vulnerable patients receive comprehensive care for other chronic health concerns they disproportionately face due to social determinants of health. In this interactive workshop, Henry Delu Jr., PharmD, AAHIVP, will explain how he partners with social workers as an onsite pharmacist at a South Los Angeles community health center. Together, they combine the power of telehealth and in-person engagement to educate underserved individuals about PrEP, then offer individualized care to maximize adherence and unlock the full potential of health. Attendees will leave the presentation with eye-opening insights on best practices in the collaboration between pharmacists and HIV social workers, successful methods of identifying at-risk patients and providing care using telePrEP, updates on emerging medications and clinical practices in the world of HIV prevention and sexual wellness, and how this collaboration is impacting the HIV/STI goals set for the Healthy People 2030 initiative by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## **Let's get SOLHA Certified! 101 Health Impact for Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Dr. Lisa Cox, Professor of Social Work and Gerontology, Stockton University

Session Summary: Today, more than half of people living with HIV in the United States are aged 50 or older, and a growing number of people are living and aging with HIV into their 70s and beyond. The burdens of HIV, aging, and related health comorbidities, combined with the social and structural challenges that people aging with HIV face, necessitate not only a focus on HIV-related outcomes, but also a comprehensive response aimed at treating comorbidities and improving long-term health and quality of life. This 101 session will focus on the health needs and social work practices intended to meet the needs of older people living with HIV.

## **Pager Power Play: Revolutionizing Linkage to Care, Expanding Service Access, and Leveraging Community Partnerships**

Location: Sabal G

Presenters: Jenn Sims, MSW, LCSW, HIV Case Management System Administrator, City of Kansas City, Mo. Health Department; Kaley Garza, MSW, Manager of HIV Case Management, KC CARE Health Center; Caitlin Lisk, Ph.D., LCSW, Manager, Ryan White Program, University of Kansas Health System

Session Summary: This session highlights strategic initiatives undertaken by the Kansas City-TGA to enhance HIV care delivery and create rapid, low-barrier access to care. KC-TGA's comprehensive Linkage to Care model stands as a cornerstone, integrating a 24/7 pager system, co-location at the metro's health department, and ability to connect with Same Day Start providers. This multifaceted model increases access points and fosters a robust network for individuals with HIV to seamlessly enter care. In addition to creating a 'no wrong door' approach to client services, the KC-TGA strategically positions Hospital Liaisons within the largest area hospitals. Liaisons facilitate linkage referrals, arrange follow-up appointments and medication assistance, and communicate with other network staff, ensuring continuity of care following hospital discharge. Other access points are established through specialty case management positions and partnerships with local jails & prisons, hospitals, and peer support programs. Responding to HRSA's PCN 21-02 to reduce client burden in accessing services, the system re-vamped eligibility requirements and developed a rapid enrollment process to facilitate immediate access to core medical services. The overall impact has been substantial, with increased linkage to care and viral load suppression rates, and a noteworthy increase in client retention in Ryan White services. Presenters will engage participants using meeting facilitation tools such as Mentimeter or Poll Everywhere to facilitate brainstorming and group discussions. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with presentations and other



participants about where service gaps exist in their jurisdiction and identify new entities where partnerships may be beneficial in increasing access to their services. This presentation encapsulates a transformative model, showcasing innovative strategies for access, efficiency, and sustained improvements in health outcomes for people with HIV.

## Stigma Deconstructed Through Mass Media

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: LaMar Yarborough, Executive Director, H.Y.P.E. to Empower, Inc.; Delaney Harris, Program Coordinator, H.Y.P.E. to Empower, Inc.; Pedro Cruz, Program Coordinator, H.Y.P.E. to Empower, Inc.

Session Summary: Stigmas and stereotypes surrounding HIV and AIDS have been a perplexing issue for many years, not only for those affected but also their families. As of 2021, the Georgia median score of HIV Stigma is 28.5. The HIV stigma scale is a 10-item scale ranging from 0 (no stigma) to 100 (high stigma). These issues have created barriers to accessing prevention, care, and treatment services. Utilizing digital platforms to promote HIV education and awareness campaigns is a beneficial way to mitigate the impact of stigma on the health of individuals living with HIV and their families. The EMULATE program is designed to provide support and resources to communities impacted by HIV. Figures is designed to fill a gap in HIV preventative support services that women of color across the gender spectrum living with HIV and AIDS experience as it pertains to advocating for improved health and wellness for themselves and others. Social media and social marketing campaigns, such as EMULATE and Figures, have been created to tackle the issue of HIV. These campaigns use various media channels to spread information to a vast population and not only educate people about HIV but also raise awareness about HIV/AIDS, improve health literacy, promote overall wellness, and provide job readiness skills. With this platform, H.Y.P.E. to Empower plans to educate and bring awareness to the impact HIV/AIDS stigma has on those affected. To enhance vulnerability, personal experiences of those in attendance will be brought to life through a sexual health bingo activity. Videos from the EMULATE program will then enhance a conversation through a 'think pair share' activity. The overall goal is to provide a comprehensive understanding of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV to the audience through digital marketing techniques. The presentation also seeks to eradicate the negative attitudes and beliefs surrounding STIs and HIV, which lead to stigma and discrimination against those affected. Additionally, the presentation aims to provide tools for a framework centered on an equity approach to HIV/STI prevention and care services, regardless of socioeconomic status or identity.

## The HOPWA Program: Spotlight on Competitive Funding

Location: Sabal F

Presenters: Rita Harcrow, Director of HUD's Office of HIV/AIDS Housing; Jennifer Mullen, MPH (she/her/hers) Community Planning and Development Specialist, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of HIV/AIDS Housing (OHH), Columbia University

Session Summary: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) program is the only federal program that targets resources to address the housing needs of low-income people with HIV and their families. While formula funding makes up the majority of distributed HOPWA funds, there are also competitive funding opportunities available to States, units of local government, and nonprofit organizations. This session will provide an overview of how HOPWA competitive funding is made available and awarded, as well as how HOPWA projects with competitive funding are successfully implemented. Examples of current innovative HOPWA projects awarded with competitive funding will be shared.

## Lunch Break On Your Own Daily 12:45pm - 2:00pm

### Thursday, May 23, 2024 2:15pm - 3:30pm Breakout Session Four | 1.25 CE

## Visceral Fat and the VAMOS study

Room: Sabal E

Lead Presenter: Jim Osburn – Community Medical Liaison, Theratechnologies

Session Summary: This session will take a look at weight gain and metabolic implications affecting people living with HIV.

## Black Women's Social Work Task Force Listening Session

Location: Pindo A

Presenters: Sha'Terra Johnson, LMSW, Texas Black Women's Health Initiative/The Resource Group, Lonetta Wilson, LBSW, Ending the HIV Epidemic Coordinator, Tarrant County Public Health, Malela Rozier, MSW, MA, BS, HIV Program Coordinator

Summary: This session will be focused on identifying resources that highlight new insights and emerging strategies to enhance the work and reach of existing support services and programs for the prevention and care needs of Black women. This session will engage participants to generate ideas exploring existing tools and how to improve them to better include the needs of Black women living with HIV/AIDS.

## Being sex positive... in a gay world

Location: Sabal G

Presenter: Gabriel Silva, LCSW, Assistant Director of Client Services, Positive Impact Health Centers

Session Summary: Being 'sex positive' can have different connotations, so we will emphasize the importance of sex positivity by promoting healthy sexual behaviors, using the correct terms, eliminating shame and judgement, and being cognizant of factors influencing decision-making. In this presentation, we will specifically focus on the sexual practices involving individuals who identify as male (of all sexual orientations). Besides pleasure, we will explore additional circumstances leading individuals to seek out sexual practices. We will specifically delve deeper into 3 main areas: trauma and its correlation to sex, substance-induced sexual practices, and sex work – and how these factors contribute to sex. Using the systems theory, we will analyze the 'big picture' and how these factors are interconnected. People living with HIV can feel stigmatized, isolated or ashamed when it comes to sex, so it is crucial for social workers to be 'sex positive' and empower clients to be 'sex positive' themselves. As social workers in the field of HIV/AIDS, it is necessary to have these meaningful and empowering conversations around sex with our clients. This leads to better rapport, less stigma, more comfort about sexuality, and trust. In addition, we will also explore cultural differences and generational beliefs, and how these influence sexual practices. Case examples will also be shared and utilized for participants to practice their knowledge and skills around sex. By taking into consideration the factors driving sexual practices, social workers can be more empathetic and aware of their clients' decision making and avoid shaming/labeling.

## Determinants of Risk-Taking Behaviors Associated with the HIV-Positive among African-American Women.

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: Emory Perkins, DSW, MSW, LCSW, ACSW, LMFT, Associate Professor, Bowie State University; Lynette Jones, Student, Bowie State University; Tyra Davis, Student, Bowie State University

Session Summary: This workshop is designed to address psychosocial indicators that impact individuals, groups, communities and families who are living with HIV/AIDS, namely African-American women. Participants will be provided with the most recent facts and statistics on this pandemic. Different theoretical underpinnings will be introduced in order to examine public health, social policy, and service delivery modalities. Participants will have an opportunity to discuss and explore their own beliefs, values, and challenges to the issue of PWAs (Persons living with HIV/AIDS). Participants will have an opportunity to address the legal, social, ethical, spiritual, cultural, and public health issues and the psychosocial indicators that impact this target population. Participants will discuss and design culturally sensitive intervention/prevention programs aimed at African Americans and other populations who are at increased risk of becoming infected with HIV/AIDS. Additionally, Participants will discuss innovations and service delivery methodologies needed to inform research, practice, and policy.

## Let's get SOLHA Certified! 101 Mental Health Impact for Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Alan Rice, Population Health Specialist, VNS Health

Session Summary: As the population of people living with HIV continues to age, it is essential to recognize and address the unique mental health needs they face. This session delves into the complexities of mental health issues related to aging with HIV, emphasizing the impact of depression and social isolation. Social workers, healthcare providers, and researchers will explore evidence-based strategies to enhance support systems, reduce stigma, and promote holistic well-being for this vulnerable population.

### **A Must: Caring for Ourselves in the World of HIV and COVID-19**

Location: Sabal F

Presenter: Alan Rice, LCSW, Population Health Specialist, VNSHealth at Select Health

**Session Summary:** There have been two constants since the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The first is the lead role social work has played caring for the many patients, families and staff that have been infected and affected by this epidemic. The second is the built-in support system social workers have to help achieve the first. From the first Social Work AIDS Network developed in San Francisco and NYC to the ongoing support group that is provided by this conference for many years this group continues to serve this purpose. Come join your colleagues for a session on 'Caring for Ourselves,' this very popular workshop that has been held every conference since the 2000 conference in San Diego. It is facilitated by a 'veteran' social worker who has been in the AIDS field since 1983 and will share his own story. Come share strategies for coping and burnout and tips of how we can all care for ourselves more effectively in order to continue to care for all others that continue to need our help. This will be held in a group circle and there is no formal presentation just some questions that should illicit "feelings" from the group. This workshop is intended for all those working in the HIV field, and no one should feel left out due to the content level selection. If you are connected in any way to a HIV this workshop is for you, especially in this day of doing more with less that includes less empathy from leadership and more focus on "doing the job." This workshop is even more important as COVID-19 has added additional stressors to all of us. Although the content level indicates Beginner, this workshop is for everyone who works in the HIV field.

### **A Walk in Her Shoes...from diagnosis to undetectable...and everything in between.**

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: Jennifer Moll, MSW, LSW, Manager, St. Luke's HOPE; Melissa Kiskaddon, MPH, Manager of Sexual Health and HIV/STD Prevention, St. Lukes University Hospital

**Session Summary:** The session will begin with a walk in her shoe's scenario. The activity will allow participants to make choices for the individual that will lead them down various paths. The path will follow a newly pregnant nineteen-year-old female who just was diagnosed with HIV, the struggles she will face and decisions she will have to make. The choices will include adversity and triumph. The ending can be different depending on the path the participant chooses. The facilitators will process the emotions that the activity might emit and encourage participants to use the client's lens to make the decisions. After the activity, the facilitators will discuss best practices used at HOPE at St. Luke's University Hospital. These best practices include linkage, case management and clinical practices. Utilizing the National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics, the facilitators will address implicit biases, barriers to care, stigma and fear. Further, the session will provide details on how HOPE at St. Luke's University Hospital addresses the barriers to care and share success stories. The success stories will include real life scenarios and data from HOPE at St. Luke's University Hospital, including but not limited to viral suppression, linkage to care, housing obstacles, and aging with HIV. The facilitators will compare HOPE at St. Luke's data to national data.

### **I'm a social worker, not a scientist: Breaking down implementation science for social workers in HIV/AIDS**

Location: Pindo B

Presenters: Patrick Padgen, DSW, LMSW MPH, Director, NYC Health Department; Amanda Phi, MPH, Deputy Director, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

**Session Summary:** Implementation science explores how well-researched theoretical approaches and interventions are put into practice and why they can succeed or fail, depending on the strategies and methodologies of implementation. In order to improve the efficacy and impact of HIV/AIDS programs and interventions, this session seeks to immerse social workers in the fundamentals of implementation science. The session will discuss the principles, theories, and frameworks of implementation science and how this can address the challenges and social problems within their scope of practice – the field of HIV. The session will then apply the principles, theories, and frameworks to real world programs, projects, organizations, and policies through the designing, planning, implementation, and evaluation of these programs. Participants together will explore internal and external barriers and facilitators to implementation and strategies for overcoming these barriers and how to leverage facilitators for better implementation and maintenance of these programs and policies.

### **Language Matters, What You Say Matters (Florida Session)**

Location: Sabal E

Presenters: Gena Grant, SME, Vice President, Positive People Network, Inc.; Alecia Tramel-McIntyre, Founder/CEO, Positive People Network, Inc.

**Session Summary:** The PPN Language Matters Workshop is designed to address the critical role language plays in the quality of life for individuals living with HIV and AIDS. By exploring the impact of words, the workshop aims to assist participants in understanding how language choices can either support or harm those affected by these conditions. The focus is on reducing stigma associated with HIV and AIDS, promoting awareness, and emphasizing the importance of medication adherence to maintain viral suppression. The workshop highlights the powerful message of "U=U" (Undetectable=Untransmittable) as a key component of prevention. Through interactive sessions, participants learn how precise and compassionate language can contribute to a supportive environment, fostering well-being and empowerment for individuals navigating the challenges of living with HIV and AIDS.

### **Lemme Tell Ya: Dear Rosa and My Voice Our Stories are Ending the Epidemic**

Location: Pindo A

Presenter: Michael Hager, MPH, MA, Founder & CEO, Ready, Aim, Innovate

**Session Summary:** The introduction of 'big data' available through health record systems is intended to provide insight into disparities and equity, but lends itself to microaggressions and additional discrimination if population-based contexts are not provided to shed light on why varying levels of success are seen across populations. The degree to which traumas and other factors weigh on individuals and communities is mostly invisible. In this interactive session, we'll share how NJ DOH and its collaborators created the Dear Rosa Project and My Voice Our Stories and how they function in a trauma-informed manner. To elicit more unbiased data? To avoid biases in interpreting rich quantitative data and making inferences, deeply nuanced contexts around what is happening within communities is needed. Rooted in Community-Based Participatory Research and related frameworks, DRP/MVOS leverages molecular surveillance and other data to help the state guide us on what location, population, and topic to inspect with storytelling. The process begins with an open-format Dear Rosa interview, where individuals explore their empowerment, resilience, healing nature, and other positive mitigators to challenging experiences they've encountered. The interview transcripts guide the storytellers to identify what they want to share on stage. Storytelling workshop frames loosely approach sensitive topics by focusing on issues like safety, celebration, comfort-seeking, peer interactions, etc. At the conclusion of workshops, storytellers are invited to share their stories together in a regional StorySlam. The interview, workshop participation, and sharing stories on stage are each incentivized granting storytellers control over their stories and a building sense of value. Deep qualitative data generated through MVOS is shared with planning councils, the statewide HIV planning group, and the Governor's Advisory Council to encourage evidence-based co-design at the system level. The data are also shared with local businesses and other segments of civil society to generate novel partnerships, including new funding streams with fewer restrictions. Our presentation will feature group discussions over the power of storytelling and storytelling methodologies. We will share our results from recent interview and storytelling cohorts across NJ to demonstrate the power of storytelling data to drive change that ends the epidemic.

### **Let's get SOLHA Certified! 101 Relational and Person in Environment Influences for Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW, President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

**Session Summary:** As the population of older adults living with HIV and AIDS grows, social workers play a pivotal role in addressing their multifaceted needs. This session examines the interplay between relational dynamics, the person-in-environment framework, and the psychosocial well-being of this vulnerable population. We will spotlight social networks, support structures, and the pervasive stigma that shapes their experiences.

### **Medicare Basics for People Aging with HIV: Eligibility, Enrollment, and Best Practices for Maintaining Health Coverage**

Location: Sabal G

Presenter: Christine Luong, MPH, Consultant, JSI

**Session Summary:** As people with HIV live longer and healthier lives, more are becoming eligible for Medicare at age 65. More than one-quarter of people with HIV get their health coverage through Medicare, and maintaining health coverage throughout the lifespan is critical to HIV viral suppression, retention in care, and healthy aging. The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) is the safety net for people with HIV, and can support enrollment into health coverage, including Medicare, for eligible clients. The Access, Care, and Engagement Technical Assistance (ACE TA) Center provides technical assistance to social workers, case managers, benefit specialists, and navigators who provide services to people with HIV to help them enroll and stay enrolled in health coverage, including Medicare. This session will provide an overview of the basics of Medicare eligibility and coverage, including the different Medicare Parts (A, B, and D), the difference between Original Medicare and Medicare Advantage, sources of financial help for Medicare costs, enrollment pathways, and how the RWHAP supports Medicare-eligible people with HIV. Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in interactive polling, share their experience working with Medicare-eligible clients, and discuss common challenges and enrollment strategies with peers. Presenters will share helpful ACE TA Center tools and resources, such as job aids for case managers and client-facing fact sheets, to support Medicare enrollment efforts for people with HIV. Social workers and allied professionals who work directly with Medicare-eligible RWHAP clients with HIV are especially encouraged to attend.



**Friday, May 24, 2024 6:00am – 7:00am**

**Kripalu Yoga Class with**

*Presenter: Beverley Black Hammond, LMSW – Medical Case Manager, Merrimack Valley Assistance Program*

*Session Summary: Calm your mind, stretch your body, enliven your spirit as you Breathe, Relax, Feel, Watch and Allow your practice to flow. Practice will include pranayama-conscious breathing, asanas-yoga postures, shavasana-relaxation. Join Beverley Black Hammond, Kripalu Yoga Teacher and Licensed Clinical Social Worker as she shares her passion for yoga and yoga's health promoting benefits. In addition to teaching yoga, Beverley is a Medical Case Manager for Merrimack Valley Assistance Program, an AIDS Service Organization with offices in Concord, Manchester and Laconia, New Hampshire.*

**Friday, May 24, 2024 8:00am - 9:45am Friday Morning Plenary | 1 CE**

**HIV Criminalization | Social justice and public health**

*Panelists: Christina Adeleke, Esq. – Senior Policy Manager, for Community Mobilization and Health Equity, AIDS UNITED, Carlos G. Smith – Senior Policy Advisor, Equality Florida, Donna Sabatino, RN, ACRN – Director of State Policy & Advocacy (Florida), The AIDS Institute (TAI), Robert Suttle, M.S. – Robert Suttle Consulting*

*Moderator: Randall H Russell, MSW, ACSW, R2 Consults, LLC*

*Summary: The framed discussion among the panelists will define HIV criminalization examining the national, state, and 'on the ground' actions that are needed and that are underway. HIV advocacy requires the use of advocacy tools and legal approaches that can transform systems. Sometimes it requires loud voices, and sometimes it requires targeted, individual influence. What are the reporting laws in your state? What if someone is infected – do they have a legal action to take against their partner? The expert panel will stimulate your curiosity and provide practical steps that can be taken. The individual rights are under attack; especially as it relates to individual rights over one's own body. You will receive practical action steps at the session.*

**Friday, May 24, 2024 10:00am – 12:30pm**

**Medical Case Management (Day 3)**

*Lead Presenter: Melinda Marasch, MSW – Owner/Consultant, Aspire Training & Consulting*

*Co-Presenter: Ryan Ayala, MSW – Owner, Ryan Ayala LLC*

*Summary: Day Three we focus on Self-Care: One often overlooked skill necessary in the helping field is the ability to stay healthy and effective in an extremely stressful job where vicarious/secondary trauma, burnout, and compassion fatigue are real threats. This section will give the learner strategies to enhance health and overall performance. At the end of the section, learners can: (1) Identify the impact of stress, trauma, vicarious trauma, burn out or compassion fatigue on the helper and (2) Plan to implement self-care strategies to enhance personal and/or professional well-being.*

**Friday, May 24, 2024 10:00am - 11:15am Breakout Session Six | 1.25 CE**

**A How-To Guide for Social Workers Interested in Rapid StART**

*Location: Sabal G*

*Presenters: Katrina Balovlenkov, MSW, LCSW, Adjunct Faculty, Columbia University; Michael Hager, MPH, CEO, Ready. Aim. Innovate; Shital Mahendra Patel, MD, MSc, Director, Baylor College of Medicine Houston - AETC*

*Session Summary: In this interactive session, lead developers for the Texas Rapid StART Institute will provide a panel discussion about the initiative and a social worker's central role in ending the HIV epidemic through rapid linkage to care and treatment. While Rapid StART for HIV treatment has been a national standard of care since 2020 as reflected in changes in guidance, published evidence-based findings, as well as free training content since 2012, uptake of this innovation has been low nationally, partly due to rigid silos of funding mechanisms related to payers, treatment pathways, and wrap around services to address social determinants of health. In Texas, Rapid StART is defined as rapid linkage, rapid re-entry, and rapid PrEP prescription. The expanded definition makes the role of social workers vital to our mission in Texas. In 2020, the Texas AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC) collaborative created the Texas Rapid StART Institute using an implementation science framework aimed at 1.) increasing uptake of Rapid StART, 2.) positively impacting linkage to care rates across the state regardless of payer, and 3.) concretizing relationships between various individuals and organizations involved in Rapid StART. We use training needs assessment data, live feedback, post evaluation data, Texas data, and cases from health professionals around the state to drive development of content. We focus on three learner types – clinicians, administrators, and support service providers to ensure all relevant program staff understand their roles. We use a college course style system to organize content by level from introductory to expert. Come hear how we do what we do and how social workers are a key audience for the Rapid StART institute!*

**A social work-driven behavioral intervention to reduce cardiovascular disease risk in persons with HIV (SWOBI-CVD)**

*Location: Pindo B*

*Presenters: Keith McAdam, LCSW, LCAS, Clinical Social Worker, Duke University Medical Center; Lance Okeke, MD, MPH, Associate Professor of Medicine, Duke University Health System*

*Session Summary: As the first generations of the HIV population age, the care community needs to have an understanding of the ever evolving landscape of medicine, research and novel challenges within the context of a new frontier of HIV. In this session we will discuss how social workers were brought in to develop, implement and adapt a medical psychoeducation program to holistically address heart health in the diverse HIV+ population. Coming off the initial pilot run we will discuss initial data, ideas for adaptation across sites and development based on data analysis, patient input and multi-disciplinary teamwork. Participants will be invited to bring insights and share ideas for bringing the spirit of social work into a wellness education intervention in differing healthcare settings.*

**Harm Reduction: Lessons Learned From a Town-Hall (Florida Session)**

*Location: Sabal F*

*Presenters: Andres Acosta; Gabriella Rodriguez*

*Session Summary: Understanding that Meth, and Chemsex is a reality of the LGBTQ+ community our team at Qlatinx hosted a unique harm reduction town hall to gather feedback from the community, convene different organizations that provide resources, and educate the public on harm reduction. This workshop will start with a presentation about the basic harm reduction principles and chemsex culture. Then, we will present the harm reduction strategies for people who practice chemsex we learned from people with lived experience and provide a handout for participants outlining those strategies. Finally, the workshop will close with a discussion on the findings of the harm reduction community feedback survey distributed after the town hall.*

**Highlights from HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program to Improve HIV Care and Treatment Outcomes for People with HIV**

*Location: Pindo A*

*Presenters: Nicole Chavis, MPH, Health Scientist, HRSA; Erin Nortrup, LCSW, Deputy Director, HRSA*

*Session Summary: The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) provides a comprehensive system of HIV primary medical care, essential support services, and medications for low-income people with HIV. The program funds grants to states, cities, counties, and local community-based organizations to provide care and treatment services to people with HIV to improve health outcomes and reduce HIV transmission. The RWHAP served nearly 567,000 people in 2022, more than half of the people with diagnosed HIV in the U.S. The presentation will highlight the status and progress of the care and treatment for people with HIV served by the RWHAP and emphasize the important role of case management and psychosocial support in reducing HIV-related health disparities and improving HIV-related health outcomes. Speakers will provide a brief overview of RWHAP data from the 2022 Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Services Report (RSR), including the numbers and demographics of clients receiving services, their HIV outcomes, and disparities among priority populations. Most of the session will focus on RWHAP initiatives addressing social determinants of health and priority populations that are particularly relevant to social workers, including housing and aging. The session will also include an overview of HRSA HIV/AIDS Bureau's (HAB's) new Quality of Life Framework and a summary of CDC/HRSA Community Listening Sessions. Presenters will also share helpful RWHAP resources that can be used by social workers serving clients with HIV including the RWHAP Compass Dashboard and the Best Practices Compilation. The session will conclude with an interactive question and answer period.*

## Implementing Healthy Divas: Gender-Affirming, Status-Neutral, Peer-Led Health Empowerment for Women of Trans Experience

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: Breonna McCree, Executive Director, The Transgender District; Beth Bourdeau, PhD, Research Specialist, University of California San Francisco; Michael Benjamin, Program Coordinator, Cal-PEP; Charron Boughton, Peer Counselor, Cal-PEP; Jae Sevelius, PhD, Professor of Medical Psychology, Columbia University; Greg Rebchook, PhD, Professor, University of California San Francisco; Matthew Beld, MPH, Research Data Analyst, University of California San Francisco; Samantha Dilworth, MS, Senior Statistician, University of California San Francisco; Janelle Luster, Peer Counselor, Cal-PEP

Session Summary: This workshop will focus on the history, background, training, and technical assistance services provided through the Healthy Divas Learning Center, a comprehensive implementation toolkit for community-based organizations and clinics who want to provide additional supportive services for their clients who are women of trans experience. Healthy Divas (HD) is a gender-affirming, HIV-status neutral, health empowerment intervention for transgender and gender-diverse women of color, that aims to decrease risk of HIV acquisition and/or transmission through gender affirmation. HD is also designed to increase access to healthcare, including transition-related care, and HIV prevention and treatment. HD is a peer-led program, composed of 6 one-on-one sessions with a peer counselor and one group workshop held with other HD participants, peer counselors, and medical providers who specialize in gender affirming medical care and/or HIV care. Specifically, the workshop will help participants determine if Healthy Divas is right for their client population and a good fit for their organization. The presenters will describe the research from which HD was developed. This workshop will also provide a comprehensive understanding and overview of available training, technical assistance, and replication materials, and will provide ample time to discuss issues related to the implementation of HD. The workshop will be based on participatory learning methods and will include extensive dialogue, discussion, and multi-media presentations. Participants will have the opportunity to interact with the program developers and researchers as well as with current HD implementers. Participants will also have the opportunity to request training, obtain project materials, and learn how to access technical assistance and online resources.

## Lawyers and Social Workers Unite!

Location: Sabal E

Presenters: Makela Hayford, JD, Staff Attorney, Nueva Luz Urban Resource Center; Maya Simek, Esq., MSW, LISW-S, Legal Director, Nueva Luz Urban Resource Center; Brandon Morgan, JD, Housing Liaison, Nueva Luz Urban Resource Center

Session Summary: The legal team at Nueva Luz Urban Resource Center is driven by a strong passion for social justice and client advocacy. We collaborate enthusiastically with social workers every single day, forging transformative synergies and providing a custom-built support network for people living with HIV/AIDS. Our intensive session aims to equip participants with the knowledge, tools, and practical strategies to foster effective collaboration between legal and social work professionals, specifically tailored for the challenges faced by individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Join us as we delve into the dynamic intersection of advocacy, where lawyers and social workers collaborate to break barriers and serve our clients! Recognizing the invaluable contributions of social workers, too often overlooked in traditional legal spaces, we champion their pivotal role in creating holistic, client-centered solutions. Brace yourself for a legal experience that transcends the conventional – we are agents of change, committed to reshaping the landscape of justice.

## Let's get SOLHA Certified! 101 Social Justice and Equity Issues for Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW, President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

Session Summary: As social workers, we stand at the crossroads of advocacy, compassion, and systemic change. In this session, we examine the imperative of social justice and equity for older adults navigating the complexities of HIV and AIDS. We recognize that aging intersects with multiple identities—gender, race, class, and sexual orientation—and that these intersections profoundly influence well-being. Our goal is to empower practitioners with tools to dismantle barriers, foster resilience, and promote dignity.

**Friday, May 24, 2024 11:30am - 12:45pm Breakout Session Seven | 1.25 CE**

## Healthysexual

Location: Pindo B

Presenters: Kieta Mutepfa, MSW with Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Session Summary: When we talk about overall health, we must continue to include and talk about sexual health! This workshop provides an overview of protective measures to promote sexual health including PrEP, PEP, HIV, and STI 101. Not only is education on these topics ever evolving and important to stay up to date with, but within this session we will also be discussing ways to normalize and implement sexual health discussion as Social Workers.

## 'Covering All the Bases': Increasing Access to Care and Improving Health Outcomes through Peer Program Expansion

Location: Pindo A

Presenters: LaTrischa Miles, BBA/CHW, Manager of Treatment Adherence, Kansas City CARE Health Center; Lucia Porras, CHW, Peer Educator II, Kansas City CARE Health Center

Session Summary: Ending the epidemic demands an all-hands-on-deck approach to increase engagement and improve health outcomes. KC CARE Health Center's peer educators partner with case managers and providers from our medical, behavioral health, and dental teams using an interdisciplinary approach to address barriers to care for priority subpopulations (i.e. youth, patients lost to care, persons with substance use disorders (SUD), and people aging with HIV). In this workshop, facilitators demonstrate a model that integrates peers into care teams. The youth peer and youth case manager collaborate to engage young black MSMs and other 18 to 24-year-olds. The retention peer and retention case manager partner by identifying higher-risk patients four to six months out of care by conducting visits to shelters, homeless camps, and hospitals. As substance use is a major barrier, a recovery peer works with a substance use counselor weekly to reengage patients lost to care experiencing SUD. Groups provide social support to address the next public health crisis, 'loneliness' (HHS). These novel approaches to service delivery give clients the best of both worlds: case management to get enrolled in care and a peer with lived experience who knows patients' challenges first-hand. Peers advocate for walk-in clinics for clients who have challenges keeping appointments. Peers offer quarterly and monthly groups, an annual two-day community training, and face-to-face meetings in and out of the clinic setting. Peers utilize an evidenced-based training curriculum co-authored by KC CARE, a toolkit for training HIV-positive peers to engage persons with HIV/AIDS in care.

## Food is medicine for people living with HIV: Lessons learned from the NOURISH-OK Community Based Participatory Research

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: Marianna Wetherill, PhD, MPH, RDN/LD, Associate Professor, University of Oklahoma Hudson College of Public Health; Casey Bakhsh, MSW, LCSW, Chief Programs Officer, Tulsa CARES; Lacey Caywood, MPH, CPH, Research Coordinator, University of Oklahoma Hudson College of Public Health

Session Summary: Since the HIV epidemic began in the 1980s, nutrition has been recognized as a cornerstone of care for people living with HIV (PLWH). Four decades later, nutrition remains an important component of healthy living for PLWH with potential benefits including healthy aging, cognitive health, and diabetes prevention. However, in Oklahoma and throughout the US, food insecurity disproportionately impacts PLWH and has been tied to higher risk for depression, poor physical health, and mortality. The Nutrition to Optimize, Understand, and Restore Insulin Sensitivity for HIV in Oklahoma (NOURISH-OK) study is a 5-year NIH funded, community based participatory research (CBPR) project examining risk factors for food insecurity, priority nutrition needs, and associations between these two factors and mental and physical health outcomes among PLWH. Conducted in partnership between Tulsa CARES, Oklahoma's largest and most comprehensive provider for prevention and care programs for individuals affected by HIV/AIDS for over 30 years and the University of Oklahoma, NOURISH-OK is the first of its kind to understand the unique needs of PLWH in the Midwest. This presentation will provide an overview of the study's methods, key findings, and implications for data-driven and community-relevant social work practice. Join us to find out how to apply CBPR best practices, identify upstream determinants and downstream impacts of food insecurity among PLWH through the NOURISH-OK framework, and how to identify points for intervention within your program to have meaningful impact on your clients.

## My Rent is Too High, Now What? Innovative Housing Approaches for Supporting Clients with Increased Housing Challenges

Location: Sabal E

Presenters: Emily Grese, MSW, LCSW, Housing Team Lead, Step Up, Inc.; Rachel Biddle, BS, Community Navigator, Step Up, Inc.

Session Summary: Indianapolis, much like the rest of the nation, has been in the midst of a housing crisis. With high eviction rates, increases in cost of living, and the loss of affordable housing units, many are being forced into unsafe and unstable housing situations. Yet, research has demonstrated the direct impact of housing on both prevention and treatment for HIV. Given the impact of housing on ending the HIV epidemic and the impact of the changing rental market in Indianapolis, Step-Up, Inc. has used this opportunity to further develop programming to provide housing assistance for those vulnerable to, and to those living with, HIV in Central Indiana. This presentation will discuss the innovative approaches that Step-Up, Inc. has taken to move towards a status-neutral approach for housing, while recognizing the limitations in funding. Participants will be challenged to consider resources, partnerships, and additional stakeholders available within their own communities to determine opportunities to expand housing services. Additionally, this presentation will highlight a collaborative client-directed approach within housing case management for the development and implementation of supportive goals as a method for increasing positive housing outcomes.



**The Bros in Convo Initiative is a Black Queer-led grassroots organization building community; educating, and empowering gay and queer individuals of color living in Central Florida.**

### **Flower Boi Blooms**

A Trans-led endeavor dedicated to empowering BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) individuals aged 18 and above.

### **YALP:**

### **Youth/Young Adults Living Positively**

Gatherings providing safe spaces for emotional and mental well-being for individuals of color aged 18-35 living with HIV.

## **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR SERVICES:**

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- Complimentary Hepatitis C Testing (with affordable treatment options)
- Access to Doxy-PEP, nPEP, and PrEP services
- Access to the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program
- Access to affordable STI treatment options

**Empower yourself with support and resources.  
Join us for a healthier community.**

## **INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT OUR WORK? CONNECT WITH US!**

The Bros in Convo Initiative (TBICI) offers a variety of training and workshops to businesses, community members, and organizations. Inquire today about having us facilitate a workshop or training at [education@brosinconvo.org](mailto:education@brosinconvo.org).

**OFFICE HOURS:**  
**MON-FRI 9:30AM - 8:00PM**  
The Stafford House  
711 Seminole Avenue  
Orlando, FL 32804

**MAILING ADDRESS:**  
Miracle of Love, Inc.  
ATTN: The Bros In Convo Initiative  
1301 W. Colonial Drive  
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# More PASWHA 50

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# NEW CERTIFICATE

## SOCIAL WORK WITH OLDER PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV & AIDS (SOLHA)

### Professional Association of Social Workers in HIV/AIDS (PASWHA) is now accepting applications for SOLHA Certification

The SOLHA credential recognizes Social Workers who have:

- Met national standards of knowledge, skills, and experience in the field of Social Work Practice with Older Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (OPLWHA)
- Obtained nine continuing education courses of specialization in health, mental health, person-in-environment, and health equity for OPLWHA
- Agreed to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics, the NASW Standards and Indicators for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice, and NASW Standards for Continuing Professional Education.

The SOLHA courses qualify for continuing education credits (CEs) as accredited by the American Board of Social Work Education.

### SOLHA Certification is a national mark of excellence in Social Work Practice

- Professional recognition
- Collaboration with certified SOLHA Social Workers throughout the country
- Recognized specialized competencies among peers
- Acknowledged as leaders in care and services for OPLWHA.

### How long will it take to complete SOLHA certification?

SOLHA certification can be completed within 12 months by attending the National Social Work Conference on HIV/AIDS and attending PASWHA's Spring and Fall Learning Labs via webinar.

Participants in SOLHA will complete 9 continuing education courses (CEs):

1. 101 Foundations of SOLHA
2. 101 SOLHA Health
3. 101 SOLHA Mental Health
4. 101 SOLHA Person In Environment (PIE)
5. 101 SOLHA Health Equity
6. 102 SOLHA Health or 201 Advanced Health
7. 102 SOLHA Mental Health or 201 Advanced Mental Health
8. 102 SOLHA Person in Environment (PIE) or 201 Advanced PIE
9. 102 SOLHA Health Equity or 201 Advanced PIE

### How much does SOLHA Certification cost?

Individual PASWHA members	\$350
Individual non-PASWHA members	\$450
PASWHA Organizational Leaders (budgets <\$1 million)	35% off
PASWHA Community Champions (budgets > \$1 million)	25% off



Scan to register for  
SOLHA Certification!





PASWHA is offering a special Social Work Certification for working with older persons living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA). This session will count for the first session in which you can receive certification credit. We will discuss the need for the specialized competencies to meet the needs of your older clients across the HIV/AIDS Care Continuum. An overview of the certification process will be provided, as well as highlights of the content areas of the curriculum. Special attention will be given to the social justice lens and equity approaches that inform the SOLHA Certification.

## **Wednesday, May 22, 2024 3:45 PM – 5:00 PM**

### **Let's get SOLHA Certified! Foundations of the Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Room: Meyer 1

Lead Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW – President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

## **Thursday, May 23, 2024 10:00 AM – 11:15 AM**

### **Let's get SOLHA Certified! Foundations of the Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Room: Meyer 1

Lead Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW – President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

## **Thursday, May 23, 2024 11:30 AM – 12:45 PM**

### **Let's get SOLHA Certified! 101 Health Impact for Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Room: Meyer 1

Lead Presenter: Lisa E. Cox, MSW, PhD – Professor, Stockton University / School of Social & Behavioral Sciences

*Session Summary:* Today, more than half of people living with HIV in the United States are aged 50 or older, and a growing number of people are living and aging with HIV into their 70s and beyond. The burdens of HIV, aging, and related health comorbidities, combined with the social and structural challenges that people aging with HIV face, necessitate not only a focus on HIV-related outcomes, but also a comprehensive response aimed at treating comorbidities and improving long-term health and quality of life. These 101 sessions will focus on the health needs and social work practices intended to meet the needs of older people living with HIV.

## **Thursday, May 23, 2024 2:15 PM – 3:30 PM**

### **Let's get SOLHA Certified! 101 Mental Health Impact for Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Room: Meyer 1

Lead Presenter: Alan Rice, MSW – Population Health Specialist, VNS Health Health Plans

*Session Summary:* As the population of people living with HIV continues to age, it is essential to recognize and address the unique mental health needs they face. This session delves into the complexities of mental health issues related to aging with HIV, emphasizing the impact of depression and social isolation. Social workers, healthcare providers, and researchers will explore evidence-based strategies to enhance support systems, reduce stigma, and promote holistic well-being for this vulnerable population.

## **Thursday, May 23, 2024 3:45 PM – 5:00 PM**

### **Let's get SOLHA Certified! 101 Relational and Person in Environment Influences for Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Room: Meyer 1

Lead Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW – President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

*Session Summary:* As the population of older adults living with HIV and AIDS grows, social workers play a pivotal role in addressing their multifaceted needs. This session examines the interplay between relational dynamics, the person-in-environment framework, and the psychosocial well-being of this vulnerable population. We will spotlight social networks, support structures, and the pervasive stigma that shapes their experiences.

## **Friday, May 24, 2024 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM**

### **Let's get SOLHA Certified! Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Social work with Older people Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)**

Room: Meyer 1

Lead Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW – President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

*Session Summary:* Are you feeling left out because everyone is talking about artificial intelligence, but YOU? This session will start by offering you a broad introduction about artificial intelligence, including: AI applications in social work with older people living with HIV/AIDS (OPLWHA) will be discussed and evaluated, including personalized interventions and multimodal AI for comprehensive care. The session will conclude by discussing challenges and ethical considerations using AI for SOLHA, including privacy, bias, and transparency.

## **Friday, May 24, 2024 3:45 PM – 4:45 PM**

### **What's SOLHA all about? All you want know about the Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA) but were afraid to ask Listening Session**

Room: Meyer 1

Lead Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW – President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

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## **Not the Boomer stuff again!! 'Cards for Humanity' HIV & Aging edition to practice Motivational Interviewing**

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Terri Fox, MSW, Owner/Executive Director, Fox Caring Consultants

Session Summary: Improvements in antiretroviral therapies, coupled with social work's moderating impact on stigma in healthcare means people are living much longer with HIV. Yet, despite 43 years of learning about how HIV is transmitted and nearly as many years focused on preventing transmission, 16% of new diagnoses are in people over the age of 50. Surveillance data shows that 34% of people who were diagnosed in 2021 over the age of 55 were diagnosed in late stages (with AIDS). Aging issues with sight, mobility, hearing loss, arthritis, depression & dementia are common conditions for everyone, regardless of HIV status. Taken together, older people with HIV have compounded health risks related to aging, HIV and any other comorbid conditions that may be present. Often, their HIV is stable- they have the highest viral load suppression rates of any other age group- but their other conditions can complicate and delay regular monitoring due to involvement with other treatments. HIV also impacts cognition in some clients. This age group is often very willing to agree to come and see us and accept assistance, but getting there requires a higher level of service, even when we have access to one-stop shopping, transportation, and other supports. The use of motivational interviewing has been highly effective in working with people with HIV. Working with the aging population requires both knowledge of available resources and motivational interviewing techniques to maintain positive clinical outcomes. Capitalizing on the history of gaming to enhance performance and the natural desire to enjoy aspects of work life, a game was developed to address these issues. The game, unofficially referred to as 'Cards FOR Humanity' is intended to help social workers anticipate and think through responses in a safe and fun atmosphere, providing situations that often arise through the natural course of providing services. 'Cards for Humanity' HIV & Aging edition describes common age related barriers that impact clients' confidence & self assurance, allowing social workers to think through appropriate responses.

## **The Intersections of Intimate Partner Violence, HIV, Trans and Queer Identities, and Substance Use**

Location: Sabal G

Presenters: Stavroula Xinos, BSW, Data Analyst & MSW Intern, The Open Door, Inc.; Crystal Patterson, MS, Executive Director, The Open Door, Inc.; Shawlane Heffern, AS, Program Director, The Open Door, Inc.; Derrick McClain, AA, Housing Program Manager, The Open Door, Inc.; Yvette Williams, Service Coordination Specialist, The Open Door, Inc.

Session Summary: People with HIV and transgender and queer identities experience intimate partner violence (IPV) at more than double the average rate in the United States and have distinctive experiences of IPV due to their unique positionality. Survivors of IPV are also more likely to use drugs and alcohol. Yet IPV intervention and harm reduction are not a common focus in HIV care and treatment, and factors of diversity and intersectionality are seldom taken into consideration in dominant IPV scholarship, policy, interventions, and organizations. Because of the alarmingly high rate of IPV among those with HIV, all HIV agencies and practitioners are bound to interact with survivors of IPV - survivors who have intersecting identities as trans and queer individuals, as substance users, or both - which is why it's so important for IPV, intersectionality, and harm reduction to be centered in our discussions about HIV care and treatment. This presentation aims to educate participants on the inequities, distinctive experiences, and unique barriers faced by HIV-positive, queer, and trans survivors of IPV. However, rather than simply acknowledging these disparities, we will explore solutions to the issues at hand. Liberatory frameworks that address power hierarchies, such as harm reduction, intersectionality, and queer theoretical methodology, are critical in the pursuit of equity for diverse survivors. Through the use of intersectional analysis, participant exercises in self-reflexivity, recommendations for social justice-oriented research, and group discussion on how programs, organizations, and agencies can implement equity, justice, and inclusion for diverse survivors, it is our intention to facilitate an interactive learning experience for our session participants, so that they may leave our workshop with the tools to begin building a better future for HIV-positive survivors, queer and trans survivors, survivors with substance use, and survivors who may possess any combination of these identities.

## **Understanding Health Goal Achievement for Black MSM: A Framework for Developing Mental Health Interventions**

Location: Sabal F

Presenters: Anthony Johnson, PHD, MPH, Researcher, Forbes Consulting, LLC; Alfred Forbes, MBA, CEO, Forbes Consulting, LLC

Session Summary: While HIV continues to be a major health concern among Black MSM communities across the United States, future research that seeks to understand the interplay among strengths, motivators, and barriers for health goal achievement among Black MSM is warranted. This study addressed this gap in knowledge by exploring and documenting the dynamic process of health goal achievement among a cohort of Black MSM in Chicago. To explicate the process of health goal achievement among Black MSM, this presentation will include clear, concise and easy to understand. In addition to this, this interactive presentation will be supplemented by strong visual aids such as graphs, charts and models that will help the audience to engage with the presenter as well as other attendees. The presentation will be used as a platform for HIV researchers and practitioners to discuss and explore how the study findings may be translated into an effective mental health intervention that can support and uplift Black MSM populations who are at-risk or living with HIV.

## **Lunch On Your Own Daily 12:45pm-2:00pm**

### **Friday, May 24, 2024 2:00pm - 3:15pm Breakout Session Eight | 1.25 CE**

## **Putting Adherence First: A Key Factor in Reducing HIV Transmission and ART Resistance**

Location: Ballroom

Presenters: Rachel Rogers, PharmD and Melissa Jones, DNP, APRN-BC with Gilead Sciences, Inc.

Session Summary: Medication adherence is difficult to predict and can be influenced by multiple demographic and socio-economic factors related to treatment, the healthcare system, the care team, and the client. Adherence and persistence to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medications are imperative to prevent HIV transmission and can be a challenge for clients. For those people with HIV, adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) varies across the United States but is uniformly poor (<80%). Suboptimal adherence to ART may lead to the risk of increased viral load, virus transmission, and the development of drug resistance, potentially limiting future treatment options. A forgiving treatment with a high genetic barrier to resistance supports the efficacy and durability of ART. Social workers play a pivotal role in helping clients overcome the challenges of remaining on a PrEP or HIV treatment plan. Evaluation of clients' needs and potential barriers, selection of an appropriate prevention or treatment regimen, along with a personalized plan for staying engaged in care will be discussed to best support the dynamic lives of your clients and their communities.

## **Bridging Gaps: Addressing HIV and Black Mental Health Disparities**

Location: Sabal G

Presenter: Corey Ingram, LMSW, IOR and PhD candidate, University of Georgia

Session Summary: This presentation addresses the intersection of HIV and Mental Health care, especially within the black community. This presentation discusses the impact both may have on a client's adherence to medication and overall care. This presentation identifies structural barriers and organizational practices that may impact clients' mental health and comprehensive continuum of care. The presentation seeks to suggest strategies and techniques that can be used within the organizational approaches to address mental health while simultaneously showing how doing so can contribute to dismantling harmful systems of oppression that affect clients of color, specifically black clients. This presentation offers a baseline of information concerning HIV and Black mental health, including various personal identifiers outside the cis-gender spectrum. The presentation aims to provide strategies for even nonmental health professionals to challenge mental health stigma and integrate mental health-informed practices into their broader professional spaces, programs, and service delivery models. Being able to understand Black clients' unique perspectives related to HIV and mental health can reaffirm the richness, productivity, and vigor of their lives, as well as place emphasis on how organizational structures can respond to oppressive and discriminatory systems and call for sensitivity to the experiences of all oppressed and underserved groups. The main goal is to empower participants with the knowledge and tools necessary to provide equitable care for Black individuals facing the dual challenges of HIV and mental health issues.

## **Clinical Practice and Possibilities: HIV and Spirituality Across the Lifespan**

Location: Sabal E

Presenters: Lisa Cox, PhD, LCSW, MSW, Professor of Social Work and Gerontology, Stockton University

Session Summary: Spirituality is an inner, experiential region of human life on physical, emotional, and cognitive levels. Spirituality helps PLWH achieve balance and improve well-being by enhancing resiliency and adaptability (Restall, Ukoli, Mehta, Hydesmith, & Payne, 2023). People who are spiritual have an intense aliveness and a deeper sense of understanding that can be linked to a mysterious principle connecting the aspects of the universe. Understanding religion and spirituality is important to social work practice because client's spiritual beliefs and practices can help them cope effectively, find comfort from a higher power, and derive strength and fortitude from prayer and meditation (Lassiter & Parsons, 2016; Lyon et al., 2020; Miller, 2020). Spiritual people are more optimistic and hopeful; and they experience higher levels of self-esteem, less emotional distress and lower cortisol levels resulting in lower stress levels and longer survival. Mindfulness and meditation can help PLWH achieve overall wellness. Attendees will engage in active learning activities, learn how to use a Spiritual Assessment, and discuss case studies involving the effects of stigma, ageism, and trauma. Participants will identify Theories of Aging to help guide their assessments and interventions, so they can help their diverse client population cope with HIV/AIDS and life's challenges resiliently.

## Computer, friend! RAPID EHE brings AI to Social Work and HIV Care

Location: Pindo C

Presenter: Michael Hager, MPH, MA, Founder & CEO, Ready, Aim, Innovate

Session Summary: 'Rapid Antiretroviral and Prevention Initiation Demonstration (RAPiD) Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE)' (RAPiD EHE) emphasizes the pivotal role that social workers play in ameliorating HIV in the US. RAPiD EHE has six components that include 1) Rapid StART for immediate initiation of antiretroviral therapy (ART) after testing positive for HIV, 2) Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) for individuals after possible HIV exposure, 3) Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV from sex or injection drug use, 4) Assess and address social determinants of health (SDOH) the deter access and outcomes, 5) Community engagement to increase HIV testing and awareness of contemporary HIV risks, prevention, and treatment, and 6) Quality improvement and measurement activities. From linkage to care, patient navigation, HIV screening and reduction and ameliorating social determinants of health (SDOH) and connecting clients to needed resources, social workers are needed to wrap around clinical activities focused on rapid prescription of antiretrovirals. Although Rapid StART has been a US standard of care since 2020 and is based on decades old evidence, uptake has been low partially due to protracted challenges with workforce capacity and to deliver on Rapid StART, PEP, and PrEP, as well as funding. Challenges related to payers for staff, medications, and wrap around services threaten sustainability in many settings. RAPiD EHE was designed to leverage social workers, supported by local community health workers (CHW), to alleviate these challenges. First, RAPiD EHE builds bridges between RWHAP funded systems of care and sources for incoming Rapid StART referrals using a range of capacity building aimed at public health system leaders, new HIV case referral sources, and HIV care sites (regardless of RWHAP funding). Second, RAPiD EHE supports the adaptation of existing reporting systems to become an electronic health exchange appropriate to support linkage to care activities. Finally, RAPiD EHE includes an artificial intelligence component that acts as an FTE multiplier for social workers, which massively expands capacity and ability to bill third parties to generate program income.

## Cultivating Strengths: Navigating Identities and Promoting Health among Latinx Youth in Chicago

Location: Pindo A

Presenters: Patricia Aguado, PhD, LCSW, Associate Professor, Northeastern Illinois University; Monica Puente, CADC, MSW, Project Director, LOUD

Session Summary: This presentation focuses on mental health support for Latinx immigrant youth in Chicago, with a particular emphasis on fostering resilience and overall well-being. Delving into a detailed case study involving a diverse group of youth encompassing cis-men, cis-women, and transgender individuals, we will describe strategies designed to enrich mental health outcomes. We will address the nuanced challenges encountered by Latinx youth who are navigating dual identities as both immigrants and Americans. Our primary objective is to examine the contributions of a culturally affirming mental health support group aimed towards the holistic well-being of Latinx immigrant youth. Within the safe space created in this group, participants were encouraged to engage in an open exploration and dialogue, addressing critical issues such as sex, sexuality, identity, and the complexities of cultural adaptation. By grounding these discussions with a dedicated focus on HIV awareness and prevention, our initiative strives to create a comprehensive approach that addresses both the mental health needs and the broader health concerns of the Latinx immigrant youth community. The presentation serves as a poignant reminder of the need for accessible mental health services for Latinx immigrant youth within the dynamic landscape of Chicago. Forged through a collaborative effort with a local community-based partnership, this initiative stands as a testament to the resilience of the Latinx immigrant community. It not only highlights invaluable lessons learned but also offers practical insights tailored for social workers actively involved in mental health interventions, focusing specifically on the multifaceted challenges present in the Latinx immigrant community and their implications for HIV prevention efforts. As we share this narrative, we aim to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the intersectionality between cultural identity, mental health, sexual health, and the unique experiences of Latinx immigrant youth in Chicago.

## Improving HIV Care Outcomes: Trauma and its Effects on our Hispanic/Latino Community

Location: Sabal F

Presenter: Gabriel Silva, LCSW, Assistant Director of Client Services, Positive Impact Health Centers

Session Summary: Trauma is a long-term response that mostly stems from a distressing event or situation. Effects of trauma can vary among individuals and can also differ among racial/ethnic groups. In this presentation, we will explore and define trauma and the trauma cycle by focusing on its implications on mental health and wellbeing within the Latino/Hispanic community. Particular focus on generational trauma will also be defined and discussed. In addition, the symptoms of trauma will also be explained to allow participants to determine if certain patient behaviors are congruent to trauma. Research has shown that poor mental health and untreated/unmanaged trauma affect healthcare outcomes. Unfortunately, this community faces unique challenges, such as discrimination, legal status, poverty, health literacy, etc., we will identify how these influence access, status and success rates. Untreated trauma responses can lead to risky behaviors, isolation, and distrust in healthcare providers - in the scope of HIV, these can lead to high viral loads, missed appointments, and atypical ways to access care. We will analyze the effects of trauma and its correlation with HIV care outcomes within the Latino/Hispanic community. HIV care providers need to be cognizant on the effects of trauma among this community, particularly in terms of communication and service delivery. With the aim of improving HIV care outcomes, culturally-sensitive strategies and interventions will be presented and discussed. Patient cases will be used throughout the presentation to support findings.

## Let's get SOLHA Certified! Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA)

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW, President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

Session Summary: Are you feeling left out because everyone is talking about artificial intelligence, but YOU? This session will start by offering you a broad introduction about artificial intelligence, including: AI applications in social work with older people living with HIV/AIDS (OPLWHA) will be discussed and evaluated, including personalized interventions and multimodal AI for comprehensive care. The session will conclude by discussing challenges and ethical considerations using AI for SOLHA, including privacy, bias, and transparency. PASWHA is offering a special Social Work Certification for working with older persons living with HIV/AIDS. This session will count for the first session in which you can receive certification credit. We will discuss the need for the specialized competencies to meet the needs of older clients across the HIV/AIDS Care Continuum. An overview of the certification process will be provided, as well as highlights of the content areas of the curriculum. Special attention will be given to the social justice lens and equity approaches that inform the certification.

## Religion, Spirituality, Stigma, Sexuality, HIV And Health: An Intersectional Approach

Location: Pindo B

Presenter: Tommie Watkins, Jr.; Ph.D., L.M.S.W., M.Div, General Manager, The Watkins Group, LLC

Session Summary: Using a didactic group process, this workshop will discuss the current research articulating the correlation between religiosity, spirituality, and health outcomes among individuals at risk of HIV infection, particularly Trans and Black MSM identified persons. A discussion of intersectionality-how the intersection of race, class, gender, and socio-economic status conflates to predict health status will be presented. This workshop will also discuss sex, sexuality, spirituality, shame, HIV status, and homophobia/heterosexism and examine how our internalization of these 'isms' has adversely affected communities of color in addressing social and health, as well as present antidotes to the barriers addressed in the session including a skills buildings component of the practice of taking both a spiritual and sexual health assessment.

## Friday, May 24, 2024 3:15pm - 3:45pm Poster Presentations | 0 CE

### Addressing HIV and Aging through Quality Improvement Using a Conference Model

Location: Foyer

Lead Presenter: Febuary D'Auria, MSW – Project Director, New York State Department of Health-AIDS Institute

Summary: The number of older adults living with HIV is growing with the advancement of antiretroviral therapies, helping to people with HIV living longer, healthier lives. Due to effective HIV treatment, there is an increasing number of older people who are living with HIV. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2018, over half of the people in the United States diagnosed with HIV were aged 50 and older.

### Assessing implementation strategies for the uptake of a behavioral health screener for individuals living with HIV

Lead Presenter: Devan Derricotte, MSW – Research and Evaluation Assistant, AIDS Foundation Chicago

Co-Presenter: Andrea Dakin, MSW, PhD – Senior Director, Shared Program Services, AIDS Foundation Chicago

Summary: People living with HIV (PLWH) report inconsistent behavioral health (BH) screening and systemic barriers to accessing BH treatments (Flores, 2016). Unaddressed BH needs impede HIV-care engagement and viral load suppression (Lesserman, 2018). We formed an academic-community-based organization (CBO) partnership to conduct a stepped-wedge hybrid type II trial of a behavioral health screener (BHS) and referral to a web-based positive emotion skills intervention for clients screening positive for depression symptoms in 16 Ryan White clinics in Chicago (Stump, 2022). This design was selected to evaluate and adapt implementation strategies based on program data and deliver feedback before launching the BHS and referral in subsequent clinics.

## Exploring total and unmet needs among Black women with HIV in rural Louisiana

Lead Presenter: Shawna McNally, MSPH – Principal Investigator, Volunteers of America, Southeast Louisiana

Co-Presenter: Aimee Starnes, BS, MSCMHC (candidate) – Program Director, Volunteers of America Southeast Louisiana

Session Summary: The abstract being submitted is for a poster presentation. A 15-minute power point presentation has been included for consideration as well. The HRSA-funded Black Women First Initiative is a multi-site study aimed at evaluating bundled interventions serving Black women with HIV. Volunteers of America, Southeast Louisiana (VOASELA) is one of the twelve sites included in this study. This presentation utilizes data from the VOASELA site to examine the impact of the program on unmet and total needs utilizing participant interview data collected at baseline and 12-months follow-up as well as staff feedback to identify barriers to obtaining needs. An analysis of primary needs, total and unmet needs, and changes from baseline to follow-up are summarized.

## Feasibility, acceptability of a behavioral economics intervention to optimize retention in HIV Care in Latinos with HIV

Lead Presenter: Karen Wint, MPA, CPM, CCHW, BCABA – Ryan White Part A Project Manager, Center for Multicultural Wellness and Prevention

Co-Presenters: Miguel Reina Ortiz, PhD, MD, MPH – Associate Professor, Boise State University, Alida Gertz, MD, MPH, MS – DrPH student, University of South Florida, Nielle Saint-Cyr, MPHc – MPH Student, University of South Florida, Miguel Vasquez – Case Manager, Center for Multicultural Wellness and Prevention, Marie-Jose Francois, MD, MPH – CEO, Center for Multicultural Wellness and Prevention, Henian Chen, PhD – Professor, University of South Florida, Dinorah Martinez Tyson, PhD, MPH – Associate Professor, University of South Florida, Stephanie Marhefka-Day, PhD – Senior Associate Dean of Research, University of South Florida, Vinita Sharma, PhD, MPH, CHES, CPH – Assistant Professor, Boise State University, Phillip Phan, PhD – Alonzo and Virginia Decker Professor, Johns Hopkins University and Medicine, Harsha Thirumurthy, PhD – Director, Health Economics Data Analyst Pool, University of Pennsylvania

Background: The 2030 Fast-Track HIV Targets remain elusive, especially among at-risk population groups. Racial and ethnic minorities are at higher risk of being undiagnosed, untreated, or not achieving viral suppression. Retention in HIV Care is essential for ending the HIV epidemic. To improve RICH among Latinos Living with HIV (LLHIV) in Central Florida, we evaluated the feasibility and acceptability of an intervention based on behavioral economics principles.

## High prevalence of substance use is associated with adverse childhood experiences among people living with HIV in Oklaho

Lead Presenter: Lacey Caywood, MPH – NOURISH-OK Study Coordinator, University of Oklahoma

Co-Presenters: Casey Baksh, LCSW – Chief Programs Officer, Tulsa CARES, Marianna Wetherill, PhD, MPH, RDN/LD – Associate Professor, University of Oklahoma Hudson College of Public Health

Session Summary: Childhood adversity and trauma disproportionately affect people living with HIV (PLWH). In the general population, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are associated with substance use, and other health risk behaviors such as high-risk alcohol use and tobacco use. This poster describes self-reported substance use and its associations with ACEs by sex from the NOURISH-OK Aim 1 study participants (n=405).

Methods: This cross sectional, community-based study used items from the NIDA-Modified ASSIST survey to classify participant's lifetime and 3-month use of cannabis, stimulants, and depressants, and questions from the NHIS and AUDIT-C to classify smoking status and high-risk alcohol consumption, respectively. We then examined differences in median ACE scores based on substance use status by sex.

## HIV Criminalization and Health Outcomes: An Analytical Insight Across Eight U.S. States

Lead Presenter: Dongwook Kim, MA PMP – Research Assistant, University of Minnesota

Session Summary: The study investigates the correlation between HIV criminalization and health outcomes across eight U.S. states: Louisiana, Missouri, Nevada, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Virginia, and Kentucky. An HIV criminalization index was formulated by dividing the number of arrests by the population of people living with HIV per 100,000. This revealed a potential link between higher levels of HIV criminalization and poorer health outcomes, especially in terms of linkage to HIV care, according to data from the Williams Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law.

## New Infant Feeding Options While Living with HIV- Bringing More Equity To All

Lead Presenter: Amy M. Waller, BSW – Family Case Manager, KC CARE Health Center

Co-Presenter: Sarah Addison, MSW – Family Case Manager II, KC CARE Health Center

Session Summary: Individuals who are pregnant and living with HIV have always been encouraged to not breastfeed due to the risk of perinatal transmission of HIV. However, as of January 2023, the CDC has released new guidelines stating that it should be an individual's right to choose. Please join us to learn about a new, exciting approach that allows individuals to safely breastfeed and promotes self-determination!

## State and Local Health Departments - Fight Together to End the Epidemic

Lead Presenter: Febuary D'Auria, MSW – Project Director, New York State Department of Health-AIDS Institute

Co-Presenter: Anita Zhu, BA – Program Assistant, New York State Department of Health-AIDS Institute

Session Summary: The New York State Department of Health-AIDS Institute (NYSDOH AI) Ryan White Part A Quality Management Program (RWPA QMP) and the HIV Care and Treatment Program in the Bureau of Hepatitis, HIV, and STIs in the New York City Department of Health and Mental Health work collaboratively to ensure that subrecipients of federal Ryan White Part A (RWPA) funding have resources and opportunities to build skills to effectively manage the quality of programs serving New Yorkers with HIV. As part of the New York Eligible Metropolitan Area (NY EMA), these supportive programs (subrecipients) ensure people with HIV (PWH) are engaged, retained in care, and attain viral load suppression while being connected to essential services they may need such as food and nutrition services, medical case management, and mental health services. The goal of this interagency collaboration is to improve the quality of Part A-funded core and supportive services in the NY EMA and assist subrecipients in meeting their program goals. The NYSDOH-AI's RWPA QMP provides a varied scope of activities to meet the goals of the collaboration. The RWPA QMP's primary focus is to provide capacity building in quality improvement (QI) both to subrecipients as well as consumers of RWPA services. This is accomplished by providing trainings, coaching, and sharing resources and best practices. RWPA-funded subrecipients also have the opportunity to showcase their QI efforts at semi-annual sharing sessions with their peers and RWPA consumers that are facilitated by the RWPA QMP.

## The RWHAP Best Practices Compilation: Accelerating Knowledge Transfer to Improve HIV Services

Lead Presenter: Juli Powers, MPH – Technical Assistance Lead, JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc.

Co-Presenter: Devon Brown, MSW, MPH – Consultant, JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc.

Session Summary: Despite improvements in HIV care and prevention, disparities still persist and HIV continues to disproportionately affect certain groups of people in the United States. At the local level, Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP)-funded providers are implementing strategies to improve care and services for their clients. The RWHAP Best Practices Compilation was developed to quickly and systematically identify, assess, and disseminate emerging and established approaches to support replication by others. The Compilation ([targethiv.org/bestpractices](http://targethiv.org/bestpractices)) is the only online knowledge sharing platform for HIV care and service providers to submit, share, and nominate approaches shown to improve care and services for people with HIV. Providers can use the Compilation to search for approaches that may work for their organization, share what works in their agency to improve the lives of their clients, and nominate topics and/or innovative programs to help the Compilation grow.

**Friday, May 24, 2024 3:45pm - 4:45pm Breakout Session Nine | 1 CE**

## Florida Listening Session (Florida Session)

Location: Sabal E

Moderator: Randall H Russell, MSW, ACSW, R2 Consults, LLC

Session Summary: We come to conferences to learn and replenish – this session will offer some of both. Being heard can be very replenishing; learning is a continuous process, and listening plays a crucial role. It's an essential skill that requires both art and practice to master. As part of our Florida sessions track, we'll actively listen to our audience and gather insights. We'll then convert these insights into actionable steps that people can apply in Florida and anywhere else. National and state-level organizations will utilize this listening session to represent the voices of Florida and people from around the country in the room.



## Clinical Supervision in HIV/AIDS Care: Supporting Social Workers by Connecting Theory to Practical Application

Location: Sabal G

Presenters: Javier Segovia, LCSW-S, PhD Candidate, Our Lady of the Lake University; Eden Hernandez Robles, PhD, LMSW, Assistant Professor, Our Lady of the Lake University; Leslie Salazar-Hinojosa, LMSW, PhD Candidate, Our Lady of the Lake University; Gregory Gibbons, LCSW, PhD Candidate, Our Lady of the Lake University

Session Summary: This proposal aims to address the challenges faced by social workers entering the field of HIV/AIDS care, particularly in terms of theoretical frameworks, cultural sensitivity, and remote supervision. Theoretical understanding and evidence-informed practices are crucial for providing comprehensive care to individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Clinical supervisors play a vital role in preparing social workers to translate theoretical knowledge into independent practice. By following clinical supervision guidelines, social workers can enhance their competence and growth as clinicians. However, remote supervision adds an extra layer of complexity, necessitating guidelines that reflect this new landscape and offer solutions to navigate the challenges it presents. Culturally responsive and client-centered care is a critical aspect of HIV/AIDS care, and it should be a focal point during clinical supervision. Supervisors must demonstrate sensitivity to cultural differences, power dynamics, and intersectionality, ensuring that social workers provide inclusive and equitable care. Creating safe and inclusive spaces within the context of HIV/AIDS care is essential for the development of skills and knowledge. Drawing upon trauma-informed practice principles, clinical supervisors can foster an environment that promotes resilience, self-care, and mitigates the risk of vicarious trauma among social work practitioners. Overcoming the challenges associated with remote supervision requires practical strategies. Clear communication channels, video conferencing platforms, and leveraging technology can enhance the quality of supervision. Integrating these components into the supervision process will enable social workers to provide specialized clinical management and address the profound psychological impacts experienced by patients living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

## Navigating the Intersection of AI, Compassion, and Equity in HIV Care and Services: A Social Work Perspective

Location: Sabal F

Presenter: Carmen Julious, LISW-CP&AP, CEO, PALSS, Inc.

Session Summary: This workshop will explore the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data on Social Work practice for Persons Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA). Through a lens of social justice and equity, we will examine how AI and data analytics can enhance client care, inform policy decisions, and address systemic disparities. Attendees will gain insight on leveraging these technologies ethically, safeguarding confidentiality, and promoting inclusivity in service provision. Together, we will navigate the evolving landscape of social work in the digital age, fostering empowerment and resilience within the HIV community and ensuring a lens of human compassion.

## The many meanings of 'food is medicine': Opportunities to support whole-person wellbeing for people living with HIV

Location: Pindo B

Presenters: Casey Bakhsh, MSW, LCSW, Chief Programs Officer, Tulsa CARES; Marianna Wetherill, PhD, MPH, RDN/LD, Associate Professor, University of Oklahoma Hudson College of Public Health; Lacey Caywood, MPH, CPH, Research Coordinator, University of Oklahoma Hudson College of Public Health

Session Summary: Food insecurity remains a highly-prevalent problem among people living with HIV (PLWH). As a complex household-level issue, food insecurity can stem from multiple causes, such as limited finances, physical, or cognitive factors. This session will introduce a vignette of two partners living with HIV who despite living in the same household, view their food security differently. During this session, we will explore how complex factors, such as early life adversity and other forms of trauma, substance use, and health status may affect personal appraisal of nutrition security, willingness to engage in food assistance programs, and implications for food assistance programs serving this population. This vignette will be informed by a composite of participants from Aims 1 and 2 of the NOURISH-OK study, a community-based participatory research project investigating the root causes of food insecurity and risk factors for insulin resistance among people living with HIV in Oklahoma.

## Through the Lens: A magnified look at the intersection of HIV and Housing

Location: Pindo A

Presenter: Charles Bowman, BSW, Housing Coordinator, UPMC Reach Program

Session Summary: Housing continues to be one of the most common issues PLWH face, preventing them from adhering to HIV medical care and living full and healthy lives. Housing instability has shown to decrease the ability to care for oneself and reduce the ability to practice and maintain safety precaution measures with other individuals. At the REACCH Program, the housing first model serves as our program's base, and influences all of our client interactions. We prioritize helping people with permanent housing, without preconditions. Our program has seen that there is not just a disparity within the HIV sector, but also broken down further into the racial and ethnic inequalities that are often influenced by factors like class, race, gender, and sexuality that change intervention needs. We will take an in depth look and break down those incongruences and obstacles PLWH face navigating the housing crisis and some intervention strategies to combat these.

## Transformative Healthcare: Reshaping the Narrative on Sex Work and HIV Care through a Human Rights Lens

Location: Pindo C

Presenters: Kevin Chadwin Davis, Bachelor's in Public Health, Chair, Dallas HIV Task Force; Bree Rowe, Vice Chair, Southeastern Michigan HIV/AIDS Council

Session Summary: In this 60-minute presentation, we challenge entrenched perspectives on the intersection of sex work and HIV care within the framework of the Ryan White Program. Embracing a human rights lens, we unveil systemic inequalities that render sex workers vulnerable to HIV and hinder their access to comprehensive healthcare. Drawing on empirical evidence and firsthand accounts, our session reshapes the narrative surrounding sex work, fostering a critical dialogue. We delve into the nuanced experiences of sex workers within the healthcare system, emphasizing the urgent need for policies prioritizing their inherent dignity and human rights. We present data and narratives highlighting the importance of moving beyond a biomedical model to address social, economic, and structural determinants influencing sex workers' health. Our interactive session invites participants to discuss creating an enabling environment, reducing discrimination, and fostering collaboration. Join us on a transformative journey toward redefining care for sex workers through a human rights lens, advocating for the well-being and rights of a marginalized community. Let's build a pathway toward healthcare delivery that respects every individual, irrespective of their engagement in sex work.

## What's SOLHA all about? All you want know about the Certification for Social work with Older persons Living with HIV/AIDS (SOLHA) but were afraid to ask Listening Session

Location: Meyer 1

Presenter: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW, President, Founder, AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

Session Summary: PASWHA is offering a special Social Work Certification for working with older persons living with HIV/AIDS. This session will provide an overview of the Social Work Certification on Aging and HIV. Special attention will be given to the social justice lens and equity approaches that inform the certification. This session will provide an open space for social workers interested in the certification process to ask questions and discuss ways to promote the certification to friends and colleagues.

**Morning Coffee Pick Me Up 8:00am - 8:30am - Location: Sabal Foyer**

**Saturday, May 25, 2024 8:30am - 9:30am Breakout Session Ten | 1 CE**

## ARV's: Can't afford them, can't live without them

Location: Sabal F

Presenter: Dana Kobrin, LMSW, Social Work Case Manager II, Chase Brexton Health Care

Session Summary: ARV medication has always been incredibly expensive, and its cost has been a documented barrier to HIV treatment. The CDC's Medical Monitoring project found "During 2016–2017, 14% of persons with HIV infection used a prescription drug cost-saving strategy for any prescribed medication and 7% of patients had cost saving–related nonadherence" (Beer et al, 2019). This study reported nonadherence was due to unmet needs from Ryan White ADAP programs, not having Medicaid coverage, and having private insurance [don't cover ARV's]. This problem only worsened during the Covid-19 pandemic when a study listed in a literature review for HIV healthcare in the U.S found that HIV patients who had pandemic-related disruptions to their employment, ability to pay rent, and ability to use public transportation had a 41% reduction in their odds of ART adherence (Meyer et al., 2023; Bogart et al., 2021). Finally today, in the state of Maryland managed care organizations (MCO's) elect to carve out certain drugs or classes, and one of the drug classes they carved out was ARV's, as well as in CA, DC, and MI (Dawson & Dolan, 2020). This session will be a conversation surrounding barriers to care including insurance coverage, ADAP coverage, medication refills, and lack of stable income. A vignette will be presented with a mock patient who needs assistance with refilling their ARV's with many barriers in the way, and discussions will be presented about how to connect patients to health insurance, patient assistance programs, copay assistance, and linkage to medical providers. Differences between states, ADAP programs, and Medicare and Medicaid coverage will be discussed. Participants will leave with a better sense of how to link patients to care, find resources to cover ARV costs, and how to enroll patients in insurance programs.

## **Better Housing and Health Outcomes Through Rapid Rehousing, Systems Mapping, and Internal Organizational Assessment**

Location: Pindo B

Presenters: Massah Massaquoi, MPH, Senior Program Manager, Corporation for Supportive Housing; Dave Whisnant, JD, Co-Director, Collaborative Solutions

Session Summary: Through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) Special Projects of National Significance initiative (entitled Supporting Replication of Housing Interventions in the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) (SURE Housing) initiative), the SURE Housing initiative aims to promote the replication of effective housing interventions in the RWHAP to decrease health and housing disparities and improve health outcomes along the HIV care continuum. The presenters for this session serve as technical assistance providers for the ten funded sites that are implementing rapid rehousing for three priority populations of people with HIV. The audience will learn about the critical intersection of HIV and housing, recognizing the barriers faced by key populations, including LGBTQ+ individuals, youth (18-24), and those with legal system involvement, as addressed by the SURE Housing initiative. During this session, the audience will also learn about the SURE Housing Needs Assessment and how it provided a snapshot of implementation sites' design and delivery of an evidence-based intervention, rapid rehousing. Contextual factors such as knowledge and application of the Housing First approach, Harm Reduction principles, and access to local and national funding opportunities were assessed to better understand and map which resources and partnerships would be key to the early adoption of the intervention. This knowledge was then utilized to create a custom technical assistance plan for each implementation site. During this session, social workers will understand how they may apply a similar approach to gain a better understanding of the connections and resources within their own agency, as well as the broader set of resources and skills needed to ensure housing placement and stability to assist with positive health outcomes. Lastly, this workshop will include a discussion of how the SURE Housing Initiative aims to drive the replication of successful housing interventions among RWHAP providers. The workshop will also include a brief interactive component to understand participant experience with interest in providing housing services.

## **Bridging research and practice: A forum to foster communication among HIV social workers and reduce stigma in language**

Location: Pindo A

Presenters: Robin Lennon-Dearing, PhD, MSW, Professor, University of Memphis; Vickie Lynn, PhD, MSW, MPH, Assistant Professor of Instruction, University of South Florida

Session Summary: This 60-minute session will be led by the new Co-Editors of the Journal of HIV/AIDS and Social Services on two topical areas of interest for people working in the HIV field and community—the use of non-stigmatizing language and using and contributing to academic publishing. The Journal of HIV/AIDS and Social Services was launched in 2002 to present the progress that social workers and professionals from related disciplines were making in the social services field of HIV. A unique aspect of the Journal is that it acknowledges the need to bridge research and practice and to report, from those working in the field as practitioners, researchers, policy makers, advocates, and people with lived experience, on a variety of information to provide effective social, educational, and clinical services. Language norms have changed and been revised over time, but some 'old' language still remains in use. This can contribute to stigma, misunderstandings, and create a barrier in professional relationships. This session will utilize Poll Everywhere, an audience interaction program, to poll attendees regarding the two issues of interest. Discussion questions will emanate from the opinions and experiences of session attendees.

## **Creating Meaningful Change: Empowering PLWH to Shut Down the Shame and End the HIV Epidemic**

Location: Pindo C

Presenter: Lonna Wilson, LBSW, Ending the HIV Epidemic Coordinator, Tarrant County Public Health

Session Summary: This presentation explores the transformative potential of collaborative learning approaches and emphasizes the pivotal role of engaging PLWH in these processes. Involving PLWH in the decision-making process through a Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) enhances the access, relevance, and effectiveness of services, improves health outcomes and engagement/reengagement in care. Participating in the CAB empowers PLWH to Shut Down the Shame of HIV Stigma. Tarrant County HIV Administrative Agency (TC AA) will dissect practical strategies to strengthen a RW program through inclusive participation, innovative out-of-home and social media strategies, and relatable content. Input from the CAB of PLWH titled HIT HIV (Health Improvement Team) plays a crucial role in shaping service provision in multiple ways. Feedback helps tailor healthcare services to better align with the real-life challenges faced by PLWH and improve overall patient satisfaction. Participation aids in the development of more inclusive and culturally humble care, addressing specific issues related to HIV stigma and discrimination. This session will dive into three specific evidence-based initiatives that were derived from HIT. One is an online client self-assessment tool; another is digital shorts promoted on YouTube and other social platforms meant to help educate and empower PLWH, care coordination staff, and the community; and finally, a social media and out-of-home stigma campaign titled Shut Down the Shame that allows PLWH to tell their stigma stories. TC AA will share the pivotal role of stigma campaigns as a population-based approach to enhance health outcomes and create a lasting impact in communities.

## **Elderly Undocumented: Uncovering the Struggles of HIV in Silence**

Location: Sabal E

Presenters: Ana Maria Gutierrez, Bilingual Case Manager, Aids Services of Dallas; Pricila Cisneros, BSW, Property Manager, Aids Services of Dallas; Pricila Cisneros, BSW, Property Manager, Aids Services of Dallas

Session Summary: Presenters will present in Spanish while providing informative information regarding population along with an interactive activity.

## **Empowerment Through Experience: The Role of Coaches with Lived Experience**

Location: Meyer 1

Presenters: Adam Thompson, Consultant, Center for Quality Improvement and Innovation; Dawn Trotter, Consultant, Center for Quality Improvement and Innovation; Fedie McKenzie, Program Manager for SPNS Aging with HIV, Center for Quality Improvement and Innovation; Jewel Ikhide, Program Assistant for SPNS Aging with HIV, Center for Quality Improvement and Innovation

Keywords: Aging, HIV, Coaching, Peer Support

## **Social Worker's Mental Health Needs: The importance of prioritizing your own mental health in the fight for justice**

Location: Sabal G

Presenter: Johnita Tucker, LICSW-S, Director of Programs, AIDS Alabama South

Session Summary: According to the National Institute for Mental Health, mental health is defined as an essential aspect of overall health and well-being. Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Mental health can affect the ways individuals think, feel, and act as well as their ability to handle stress, engage with others, and make appropriate choices. The updated NASW Code of Ethics requires social workers to incorporate self-care in their professional role(s). The code specifically states, 'Professional self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. Professional demands, challenging workplace climates, and exposure to trauma warrant social workers maintain personal and professional health, safety, and integrity. Social work organizations, agencies, and educational institutions are encouraged to promote organizational policies, practices, and materials to support social workers' self-care (NASW, 2021). This proposal has been designed to explore mental health to improve the usage of positive self-care strategies for social work professions. The purpose of this session is to inform and improve the mental health of social workers through an active and engaging discussion focused on prioritizing one's mental health. This workshop will use interactive case vignettes to illustrate practice dilemmas that thwart social workers' ability to engage in healthy self-care practices. During this session, attendees will discuss mental health self-care terminology, barriers and challenges in prioritizing one's mental health, and real-world recommendations and strategies. Workshop attendees will also work collaboratively to develop a list of potential strategies and activities to support positive mental health support. This proposal aligns with the conference theme, 'Our Fight for Justice and Equity to End HIV and AIDS' by creating space for social workers to discuss the everyday challenges social workers face as public service workers. These dilemmas can weigh on a social worker's mental health and contribute to burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion fatigue. Given the increased demand for behavioral health service providers and the projected needs that will outpace existing workforce shortages, social work professional self-care is more essential than ever before.

## **Saturday, May 25, 2024 10:00am - 12:00pm Brunch Plenary Session**

### **"Transformative Collaborations for Health Equity"**

Panelists: Jennifer Jerger, BS – Indiana Site Director, Matthew 25 AIDS Services, Inc., Lissette Marrero, BA – Director of Operations, Voces Latinas NY, Bimbla Felix

Moderator: Kerry Littlewood, PhD, MSW, President, Founder of AAJ Research & Evaluation, Inc.

Session Summary: Time to admit it! There are siloed systems, inaccessible programs, and lack of coordination across different sectors impacting those who are aging with HIV. All create complex systems of care which ultimately affect positive health outcomes of persons living with HIV and AIDS. Through an evidence-based approach, the Social Change and Innovation Leaders (SOCIAL) will discuss the lessons learned and barriers to creating cross-system, multi-sector partnerships to promote equitable health outcomes for persons aging with HIV and AIDS.

# 36TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL WORK AND HIV/AIDS

MAY 22-25, 2024  
ORLANDO, FL



## PASWHA IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH LOCAL CHANGE AGENTS LEADING THE HIV/AIDS EFFORTS IN FLORIDA



### THE AIDS INSTITUTE <https://www.theaidsinstitute.org/>

The AIDS Institute (TAI): TAI began as a grassroots volunteer community mobilization and advocacy effort in Florida in 1985. In 1992, this advocacy network became incorporated as a Florida 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Its mission is to promote action for social change through public policy, research, advocacy, and education. Over the years, TAI has expanded its vision and scope to include a federal policy office in Washington, DC, Florida policy and research offices, capacity building and technical assistance, women's programs, public health analysis, education and training, HIV/AIDS community planning, HIV/AIDS research, communications, Center for Patient Advocacy Leaders, and the Center for Convening and Planning.



### EQUALITY FLORIDA <https://www.eqfl.org>

Equality Florida is Florida's statewide civil rights organization dedicated to securing full equality for Florida's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community. In 1997, Governor Jeb Bush took office, and Florida's state government made a hard turn to the right. For over 25 years, Equality Florida has worked hard to make our state a welcoming and inclusive place to live, work, and visit. We've led the passage of policies at the local and state levels to respect and protect our community in schools, in the workplace, in healthcare, and in caring for our loved ones. This experience has made Equality Florida uniquely suited to create real and lasting change for LGBTQ Floridians. Through lobbying, grassroots organizing, education, and coalition building, we are changing Florida so that no one suffers harassment or discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.



### POSITIVE PEOPLE NETWORK <https://positivepeoplenetworkinc.org/>

PPN works to empower, strengthen, and uplift the PLWHA's communities by increasing access and awareness around HIV/AIDS education, building skills to increase communication, building relationships, and establishing collaborations with organizations working with PLWHA, our families, and allies.



### PINEAPPLE HEALTHCARE <https://www.pineapplehealthcare.com/>

Pineapple Healthcare in Orlando, Florida, is a primary care practice specializing in LGBTQ health and wellness. Erick Suarez, APRN, and the team provide a number of primary care services that address the unique health needs of the LGBTQ community.



### BROS IN CONVO <https://brosinconvo.org/>

The Bros in Convo Initiative (TBICI) is a Black Queer lead community-based organization in Orlando, FL providing gay and queer individuals of color in Central Florida with capacity building, community resources, emotion and mind wellness, health education, life skills building, linkage to HIV/STI prevention and treatment services, and peer support.



### MIRACLE OF LOVE <https://miracleofloveinc.org/>

Miracle of Love, Inc. (MOL) is an organization founded by Mr. Stafford in 1991 for the distinct purpose of providing accessible HIV/AIDS prevention programming and supportive assistance to service the multicultural needs of communities in Central Florida, namely Orange, Seminole, Lake, and Osceola counties.

### DIVAS IN DIALOGUE <https://miracleofloveinc.org/>

Divas in Dialogue is a sisterhood of trans women of color empowering, building, and strengthening each other. Ensuring that we all have a seat at the table.

DIVAS  
IN  
DIALOGUE



## Thursday, May 23, 2024, 3:45pm - 5:00pm

### Language Matters, What You Say Matters

Location: Sabel E

Presenters: Gena Grant, Alecia Tramel-McIntyre, Positive People Network

Session Summary: The PPN Language Matters Workshop is designed to address the critical role language plays in the quality of life for individuals living with HIV and AIDS. By exploring the impact of words, the workshop aims to assist participants in understanding how language choices can either support or harm those affected by these conditions. The focus is on reducing stigma associated with HIV and AIDS, promoting awareness, and emphasizing the importance of medication adherence to maintain viral suppression. The workshop highlights the powerful message of "U=U" (Undetectable=Untransmittable) as a key component of prevention. Through interactive sessions, participants learn how precise and compassionate language can contribute to a supportive environment, fostering well-being and empowerment for individuals navigating the challenges of living with HIV and AIDS.

## Opening Plenary Session Friday, May 24, 2024, 8:00am - 9:30am

### A Fight for Justice: Ending HIV Criminalization

Location: Sabal Ballroom A-D

Panelists: Christina Adeleke, Esq. (she/her/hers) – AIDS UNITED, Carlos G. Smith (he/him/his) – Equality Florida, Donna Sabatino, RN. ACRN – The AIDS Institute (TAI), Robert Suttle, M.S. (he/him/his) – Robert Suttle Consulting, Randall Russell, MSW, ACSW, R2 Consultant, LLC

Session Summary: The framed discussion among the panelists will define HIV criminalization examining the national, state, and 'on the ground' actions that are needed and that are underway. HIV advocacy requires the use of advocacy tools and legal approaches that can transform systems. Sometimes it requires loud voices, and sometimes it requires targeted, individual influence. What are the reporting laws in your state? What if someone is infected – do they have a legal action to take against their partner? The expert panel will stimulate your curiosity and provide practical steps that can be taken. The individual rights are under attack; especially as it relates to individual rights over one's own body. You will receive practical action steps at the session.

## Friday, May 24, 2024, 10:00am - 11:15am

### Harm Reduction: Lessons Learned From a Town Hall

Location: Sabal F

Presenters: Andres Acosta, Pineapple Healthcare, Gabriella Rodriguez Pineapple Healthcare

Session Summary: Understanding that Meth, and Chemsex is a reality of the LGBTQ+ community our team at Qlatinx hosted a unique harm reduction town hall to gather feedback from the community, convene different organizations that provide resources, and educate the public on harm reduction. This workshop will start with a presentation about the basic harm reduction principles and chemsex culture. Then, we will present the harm reduction strategies for people who practice chemsex we learned from people with lived experience and provide a handout for participants outlining those strategies. Finally, the workshop will close with a discussion on the findings of the harm reduction community feedback survey distributed after the town hall.

## Friday, May 24, 2024, 3:45pm - 4:45pm

### Florida Listening Session

Location: Sabel E

Presenter: Randall Russell, MSW, ACSW, R2 Consultant, LLC

Session Summary: We come to conferences to learn and replenish – this session will offer some of both. Being heard can be very replenishing; learning is a continuous process, and listening plays a crucial role. It's an essential skill that requires both art and practice to master. As part of our Florida sessions track, we'll actively listen to our audience and gather insights. We'll then convert these insights into actionable steps that people can apply in Florida and anywhere else. National and state-level organizations will utilize this listening session to represent the voices of Florida and people from around the country in the room.

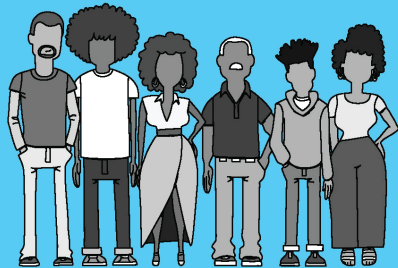
# Starting + Staying on HIV treatment



The best time to start treatment  
is **ASAP** after diagnosis

Model portrayal

## You can live well with HIV



By starting HIV treatment as soon as possible after diagnosis and staying on treatment as prescribed, you can help control your HIV viral load, which can help you live a longer and healthier life.

Today's HIV treatments can fit into your schedule, and some can even be started right away. So be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about what's right for you.

And remember, **you are not alone**. There are many people to help support you, alongside your healthcare provider.

Work together with your healthcare provider to find an HIV treatment option that is right for you and start your treatment journey today.



## STOP THE VIRUS.

Find treatment strategies and  
different kinds of support at  
[HelpStopTheVirus.com](https://www.HelpStopTheVirus.com)



Model portrayal



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