



Connecticut HIV Planning Consortium 18 January 2023 Meeting Summary



Location:	Zoom virtual meeting		
Date:	18 January 2023	Recorder:	Mark Nickel
Start Time:	9:00 a.m.	End Time:	10:45 a.m.
Presiding Chairs:	Nilda Fernandez and Dante Gennaro		
Attendance:	See end pages for roster of CHPC members and public participants		

MEETING AT A GLANCE

- CHPC Co-Chairs shared changes to the CHPC and committee meeting schedules and structures, in response to feedback from CHPC members and public participants.
- The CHPC Members elected by unanimous vote Xavier Day to serve as a CHPC Community Co-Chair.
- CHPC participants used interactive polls to provide input about the design of future CHPC main meetings.
- CHPC Committee Chairs and/or Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) Resource Liaisons shared previews of each committee's draft Work Plan.
- Dr. Jaimie P. Meyer shared an opportunity for people from the CHPC community to participate on a Community Advisory Board for a study that will enroll 250 PrEP-eligible justice-involved women with opioid use disorder in a randomized clinical trial.

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CALL TO ORDER and MOMENT OF SILENCE

Ms. Nilda Fernandez called to order the Connecticut HIV Planning Consortium (CHPC) at 9:05 a.m. and introduced herself and Dante Gennaro, Jr. as the Co-Chairs who lead the meeting. Ms. Fernandez shared some common ground rules established by CHPC participants to create a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful meeting environment. She reviewed the meeting objectives and asked that participants hold a moment of silence to honor, recognize, and celebrate the lives of individuals affected by HIV, social injustices, natural disasters, and war.

Ms. Fernandez reviewed the CHPC mission and values and reminded the group of the goals in the statewide HIV Plan ("Plan"). Mr. Gennaro reviewed the CHPC committee structure and explained the different decision-making processes in the main CHPC (CHPC Members vote) and the CHPC Committees (participants use a consensus model). He stated this approach increased opportunity for all participants to share their perspectives, especially at the CHPC Committee level.

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING SUMMARY

The CHPC did not take any action to approve a prior meeting summary.



CHPC BUSINESS UPDATES

CHPC Co-Chairs shared information about activities or tasks that were ongoing since the last full CHPC meeting in 2022 as well as new information relevant to the CHPC for 2023.

2022 to 2026 Statewide HIV Plan

Mr. Gennaro reported that the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH) submitted the HIV Plan to federal funders on December 9, 2022. The two (2) Ryan White Part A Planning Councils submitted the Plan to their federal funders. Ms. Buchelli shared that a federal review panel would provide preliminary feedback within 90 days. Mr. Gennaro stated that the CT DPH was in the process of developing a short, accessible public version of the Plan. He would like the Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) to provide input on a draft to ensure it is visually appealing, relatable, and understandable. He mentioned that the full plan (100+ pages of technical language) was posted on the CHPC website (www.cthivplanning.org).

Introduction of New CHPC Members

Ms. Fernandez announced that the CHPC had extended an invitation of CHPC Membership to all applicants who had applied. She stated that the CHPC was close to its maximum capacity of 35 members. The remaining openings were being reserved for required partners such as representatives from the AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC) or state agencies such as the Connecticut Department of Corrections. The CHPC Membership roster reflected significant diversity across all areas important to the CHPC such as geographic representation, race/ethnicity, sexual identity, age, and lived experience, among others.

Ms. Fernandez read the names of all existing and all new CHPC Members. The table shows a roster of new CHPC Members.

New CHPC Members - 2023	
Santos Cancel	Angel Cotto
Jennifer Dragaca	Angel Ruiz
Evette Ellis	Joao "Jack" Neto
Ludger Pierre-Louis, Sr.	Mary Tanner
Norma Little	Rebecca O'Brien
Marie Raynor	Blaise Gilchrist
Jessica Figueroa	

She reported that each of the new CHPC Members had attended a new member orientation prior to the first meeting. Participants used the chat box to welcome new CHPC Members.

Input on 2023 Approach CHPC Meetings

Mr. Gennaro explained that the CHPC Executive Committee had reviewed and reflected upon feedback and suggestions from 2022 about how to improve the CHPC process. The Executive Committee decided to restructure the CHPC approach in several ways such as: 1) using the CHPC main meetings to share data that can then be discussed in more depth at committee meetings; 2)



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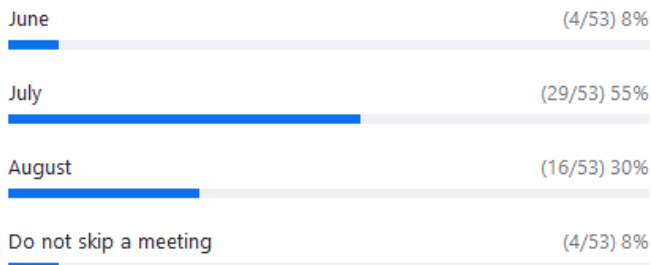
reserving main meeting time for small group discussions; 3) leaving more time between the CHPC main meeting and committee meetings; 4) holding at least one in-person meeting in 2023; 5) taking a break from CHPC meetings during a summer month; and 6) inviting CHPC partners to share more about their work at the main meetings and committee meetings.

Mr. Gennaro stated that some of these changes will be incorporated into the design of the meeting agenda. He asked participants to share input on two specific matters: summer month to take a break and preferences for presentation topics at main meetings. The tables below show the poll questions and the results.

Poll | 1 question | 53 of 60 (88%) participated

1. What summer month should the CHPC NOT meet? (Single Choice) *

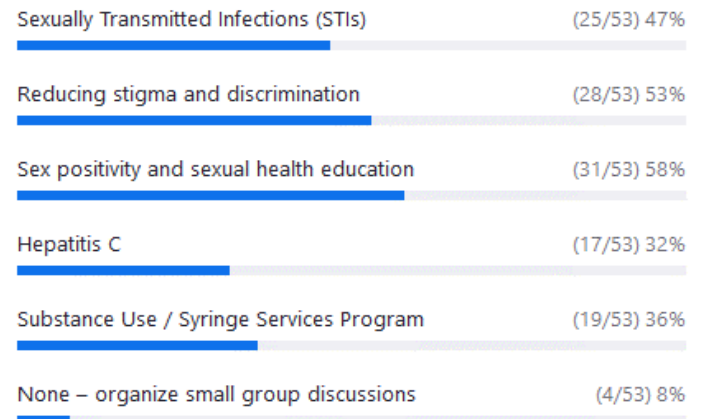
53/53 (100%) answered



Poll | 1 question | 53 of 60 (88%) participated

1. The CHPC has several presentation topics already scheduled for 2023 such as: updates from Ryan White Partners and CIRA, routine HIV testing; PrEP; the statewide Prevention Needs Assessment Survey results; and review of progress on CHPC indicators. What additional topics should the CHPC consider to fill openings in the schedule? (Multiple Choice) *

53/53 (100%) answered



Mr. Gennaro thanked participants for sharing their voice and assured individuals that the Executive Committee will use this input to inform the approach to CHPC meetings in 2023.

- Ms. Angelique Croasdale-Mills encouraged the CHPC leaders to invite representatives from all Ryan White partners to share their information. This includes Ryan White Part C and Part D, housing, and any other partners related to the Plan.

Committee Process

Ms. Fernandez stated that the Executive Committee acted upon feedback from the CHPC participants and decided to try out a new committee schedule for 2023. In general: the length of committee meetings will not exceed 75 minutes. Fifteen (15) minutes will be scheduled between meetings to encourage self-care. Committee meetings on CHPC Wednesday will occur in two rounds to expand opportunity for participation:



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Round 1: 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. meetings will include Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) and Quality and Performance Measures (QPM).

Round 2: 12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. meetings will include Needs Assessment Projects (NAP) and Ending the Syndemic (ETS).

The Positive Prevention Connecticut Committee will continue to meet on the 2nd Monday of the month at 10:00 a.m. unless otherwise noted.

The Executive Committee will monitor attendance and feedback related to this new schedule and determine in April whether to continue or to make additional adjustments.

Member Supports

Mr. Gennaro updated CHPC participants on the current approach to member supports including technology, transportation for in-person meetings, mentoring and coaching, and participation stipends. He explained that eligible CHPC Members defined as those who did not work or whose employer did not pay for participation at CHPC meetings could receive up to \$80 per month in stipends based on their attendance. Mr. Gennaro explained changes to the mentoring and coaching approach for new CHPC Members. He stated that the focus will be on connecting new CHPC members to the CHPC Co-Chairs and to the CHPC Committee Chairs in which they participate. Also, new CHPC Members will receive monthly (or more frequently as needed) check-ins with the CHPC project staff. Additionally mentoring supports will be provided on an as-needed basis. This may include group or 1:1 peer mentoring.

Membership and Awareness Committee (MAC) Opening for Chair

Mr. Gennaro announced that an opening exists for the chair of the MAC. CHPC project support staff will send out to all CHPC Members a short description of the position and a one (1) page application. Interested CHPC Members can complete the application and return it as soon as possible, preferably by mid-February. In the interim, Mr. Gennaro will lead the MAC.

CHPC COMMUNITY CO-CHAIR ELECTION

Mr. Gennaro reminded participants that an opening existed for a CHPC Community Co-Chair position. According to the CHPC By-Laws, CHPC Members must hold an election for an open CHPC Community Co-Chair position. One eligible CHPC Member, Xavier Day, applied for this leadership opening. Mr. Gennaro stated that Mr. Day would address the group and then CHPC Members (only) would use a virtual link to cast their votes.

Mr. Day shared that he was a person of color; identifies with pronouns he, him, and his; identifies as a same-gender-loving gay male from New London County. He shared facts about his leadership roles and experience including roles with the National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 2023 PRIDE Co-Chair for Southeastern Connecticut, and as a youth outreach and music director for a faith group. He stated that he was a case manager and expressed an interest to share his everyday walk with people served by the CHPC community. His intersecting identities make him relatable and personable. He is a gatekeeper that will keep the gate open and will work to engage



people and break down silos. Mr. Day stated that an eligibility criterion does not mean “no” and should not be perceived as a road block. Rather, it gives us a chance to find new and better solutions, to see how yesterday may not mean the same as today, and to allow individuals to be heard, to be seen, to be affirmed, and to be supported.

CHPC Members voted unanimously to elect Mr. Day for the CHPC Community Co-Chair position. Mr. Day will start his 2-year leadership term and his membership term will automatically be extended. Numerous individuals expressed appreciation for Mr. Day’s energy, attitude, and perspective and congratulated him on his new role.

COMMITTEE UPDATES: PREVIEW OF 2023 WORK PLANS

CHPC Committee Chairs and/or CT DPH Resource Liaisons to each committee explained the charge of their respective committee and described the primary areas of focus for committee work during 2023. The CHPC Committee Chairs and CT DPH Resource Liaisons to the committee developed draft 2023 Work Plans that will be reviewed during the committee meetings that occur later in the day. The 2023 Work Plans are part of a process to increase transparency, collaboration, and accountability. The table below summarizes the areas of focus for each committee.

Committee	Charge	2023 Areas of Focus
Executive	Provide leadership; coordinate CHPC activities; create productive and respectful meeting environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve community and partner engagement• Improve monitoring and accountability• Ensure high participant satisfaction
Ending the Syndemic (ETS)	Coordinate and support expansion of ending the HIV epidemic and syndemic strategies and activities across the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Routine HIV testing tool kit enhancements and new materials• Development of syndemic “brief” screen
Membership and Awareness (MAC)	Recruit and retain CHPC members; Facilitate information sharing and public awareness; Amplify community voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New format for Voice of the People event• Improvements to diversity chart and newsletter• New approaches for community/partner engagement
Needs Assessment Projects (NAP)	Conduct and/or support data collection and analysis that supports planning and/or other special projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop recommendations from HIV prevention survey• Coordinate 4 workforce development trainings• Establish an approach to better address housing needs• Begin work on identifying a stigma measure and indicator
Quality and Performance Measures (QPM)	Develop and monitor CHPC indicators Facilitate continuous quality improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality Management Summit• Improve monitoring and accountability processes• Quality Improvement projects



Committee	Charge	2023 Areas of Focus
Positive Prevention Connecticut (PPCT)	Create health communication campaigns and strategies for those populations at the highest risk of getting HIV in Connecticut	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Design and implement at least two (2) statewide campaigns on topics that are relevant to the Plan (e.g., routine HIV testing); Return of the Prevention Pack and TEST CT!

CHPC LESSONS LEARNED AND IMPROVEMENTS FOR 2023

Ms. Fernandez and Mr. Gennaro explained that the CHPC Executive Committee have put in motion several changes to address areas of improvement identified by the CHPC community during 2022.

- Strengthen monitoring and accountability processes. This will include each CHPC Committee developing a clear 2023 Work Plan, the QPM developing a more intentional monitoring process, and assistance from subject matter experts affiliated with Yale's Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS (CIRA) to strengthen approaches for evaluating key strategies.
- Strengthen collaboration with Ryan White Part A Planning Councils and other Partners. The Plan development process gave reason for various individuals and groups to increase engagement with the CHPC. The process can continue to improve through actions such as reserving CHPC main meeting time for partners to share their work and its connection to the Plan; increasing the participation of CHPC Members on other groups (and vice-versa); communicating CHPC 2023 Work Plans to encourage collaboration and coordination; and requesting presenters at the CHPC main meetings to show data at statewide levels, Ryan White Part A service area level, by counties, or other geographic areas relevant to the Plan.
- Expand opportunities for CHPC Members to engage and network. Informal networking has diminished in a virtual environment. The CHPC will hold at least one (1) in-person meeting in 2023; explore holding CHPC social networking activities; adjust the approach to mentoring and coaching new CHPC members; and will introduce or highlight a subset of CHPC members at each meeting.
- Expand opportunities for community engagement and public participation. The CHPC has changed its meeting structure; lengthened the CHPC main meeting; reduced administrative responsibilities of the MAC to increase their time on community engagement; will coordinate more closely with similar groups like the Ryan White Part A Planning Councils and efforts to engage persons with lived experience; and will plan to host or attend more community-based events such as occurred during the Plan development process.
- Host CHPC signature events. The CHPC will host the statewide Quality Management Summit in October. This effort will be led by QPM. The CHPC will host a Voice of the People event that includes several new design features such as being community-based (v. at a CHPC meeting) and includes a meal, health education, and access to resources in addition to opportunities for persons with lived experience to share their experiences. This effort will be led by MAC and supported by a community-based organization in the identified host community.



Ms. Fernandez stated that other improvements will be implemented throughout the year. She stated that the CHPC leaders are listening closely to the feedback and making improvements. She encouraged everyone to put comments in the chat box and share suggestions on the CHPC feedback survey at the end of the meeting.

Many participants shared comments in the chat box. The main themes of the comments included:

- Gratitude for listening to participant feedback and making improvements. Participants felt heard.
- Excitement that the committee meeting schedule has been changed and participants can attend more than one CHPC Committee meeting.
- The improvements and changes seem very responsive and positive.

The CHPC Co-Chairs thanked everyone for their comments.

OTHER BUSINESS

Personnel Changes at the Connecticut Department of Public Health (CT DPH)

Mr. Gennaro shared that Marianne Buchelli has assumed the role of Program Manager at CT DPH to oversee and support integration of the Prevention and Ryan White Part B programs. The CT DPH continues to hire for many open positions across several programs and to promote individuals along career pathways.

- Many participants used the chat box to offer congratulatory comments and support for Ms. Buchelli.

Project ATHENA

Dr. Jaimie P. Meyer explained that an urgent need exists to reach justice-involved women for lifesaving, evidence-based HIV prevention (PrEP) and medications for opioid use disorder, using innovative healthcare delivery models that overcome existing social and structural barriers to engagement. She has received grant funding from the National Institute of Health and National Institute on Drug Abuse to conduct a study that will enroll 250 PrEP-eligible justice-involved women with opioid use disorder in a randomized clinical trial. The study appears to align with many priorities identified in the statewide HIV Plan.

- The study will be organized into two groups. Those who: a) receive a PrEP decision aid + eHealth delivery of integrated PrEP/medications for opioid use disorder (the "Athena strategy") vs. b) receive the decision aid only.
- Participants can receive \$50 for completing each assessment + a \$25 bonus for completing all 3 follow-up assessments on time (total of \$225 over 6 months of participation). Participants who complete the qualitative in-depth interview or focus group will receive \$50 remuneration in the form of a Visa gift card or cash as compensation for the study visit.
- Participants will be recruited from settings that serve justice-involved women with opioid use disorder. The study will also accept self-, peer-, and provider- referrals. Referred clients will be



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assessed for the following eligibility criteria: 1) cis-women; 2) ages 18-49 (because they experience the highest HIV risk); 3) have access to a working mobile or landline phone; 4) justice-involved (on probation, parole, intensive pretrial or community supervision, or within 60 days after release from prison/jail); 5) are confirmed HIV-negative by point-of-care testing; 6) PrEP-eligible; and 7) have opioid use disorder (regardless of baseline treatment status).

- The study will organize a Community Advisory Board (CAB).

Dr. Meyer invited individuals from the CHPC community to participate by identifying individuals interested in serving on the CAB and when the study begins enrollment (March 2023) to assist in promoting the opportunity to potential study participants. Contact Carolina Price at (203) 499-8075 or by e-mail at Carolina.price@yale.edu. The CHPC will send out additional information through the CHPC list serv.

A brief discussion ensued about this opportunity. Key points included:

- QUESTION: Will the project also screen for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). ANSWER: Yes.
- QUESTION: The study will recruit participants from two states. Will the CAB include participants from both states? ANSWER: No. Each state will have its own CAB. However, the CABs may hold a joint meeting from time to time.
- QUESTION: How will this study address the gap and lag time of PrEP prescriptions for women who are good candidates? ANSWER: The study creates an opportunity for eligible participants to access PrEP. The results will strengthen the base of evidence to address barriers to services for priority populations.
- QUESTION: Can we share this information with other people who might be interested in serving on the CAB? ANSWER: Absolutely, yes.
- QUESTION: Do participants have to be currently justice involved, opioid users? ANSWER: Justice-involved means on probation, parole, intensive pretrial or community supervision, or within 60 days after release from prison/jail. Opioid use disorder includes those who may be receiving treatment.
- Ms. Buchelli stated that the CT DPH will connect its relevant programs to this opportunity.

Future Agenda Items and General Announcements

Ms. Fernandez asked meeting participants to use the chat box and share any future CHPC meeting agenda items or general information announcements.

TEST CT Campaign Videos

Mr. Gennaro used the remaining meeting time to preview several videos developed by the Positive Prevention Connecticut (PPCT) Committee for the TEST CT! public awareness campaign. Four videos were previewed: Kengli, Atiba, Amber, and Julia.

- Mr. Gennaro stated that these videos were not yet finalized and ready for sharing.



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- Mr. Gennaro clarified that these are not paid actors. These are individuals who wanted to give back to their community and make a difference. The younger generations comfort level with appearing in videos might also explain why the lead actors are younger people. Participants used the chat box to suggest adding some videos with older individuals.
- Participants discussed the extent to which these videos offer sufficient diversity and do not perpetuate any stereotypes or bias of specific population groups. For example, when thinking of people at risk for HIV, PrEP ads typically assume and show gay, men who have sex with men, and men of color even though data show increases in HIV diagnoses among heterosexual females. This led Mr. Gennaro to show four videos with four different main characters.
- One participant used the chat box to offer a suggestion that language be adjusted to “let me help you” as compared to “you should”
- One participant suggested that the information and videos be offered in Creole and other language that might appeal to the growing Haitian population.
- Mr. Angel Cotto shared that he would provide additional feedback directly to the Positive Prevention Connecticut (PPCT) group or to Mr. Gennaro.

Mr. Gennaro thanked everyone for the excellent suggestions and for supporting the routine HIV testing campaign in Connecticut.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Fernandez offered a final reminder of the new CHPC Committee meeting schedule and access information. She encouraged all participants to complete a 1-minute survey to share feedback on how to improve virtual CHPC meetings. Ms. Fernandez thanked everyone for a great start to the 2023 CHPC meetings, and adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.



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CHPC ATTENDANCE RECORDS (1 = present; 0 = absent - attend less than 75% of meeting)

First Name	Last Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Victor	Acevedo	1									
Thomas	Butcher	1									
Santos	Cancel	1									
Gigi	Chaux	1									
Angel	Cotto	1									
Xavier	Day	1									
Martina	De La Cruz	0									
Jennifer	Dragaca	1									
Natalie	DuMont	1									
Evette	Ellis	1									
Blaise	Gilchrist	1									
Stephen	Feathers	1									
Nilda	Fernandez	1									
Carl	Ferris	1									
Jessica	Figueroa	1									
Dante	Gennaro	1									
Cynthia	Hall	0									
Charles	Hardy	0									
Tawana	Hart	1									
Marcelin	Joseph	1									
Reggie	Knox	1									
Norma	Little	1									
Mitchell	Namias	1									
Peta-Gaye	Nembhard	1									
Joao "Jack"	Neto	0									
Rebecca	O'Brien	0									
Ludger	Pierre-Louis, Sr.	1									
Marie	Raynor	1									
Angel	Ruiz	1									
Anthony	Santella	1									
Roberta	Stewart	0									
Mary	Tanner	1									
Attendance		26									
Total Count Membership Roster		32									
PERCENTAGE		81%									

Public Participants who signed into the meeting:

Jaimie Meyer, Ava Nepaul, Barbara Ligon, Carlos Rodriguez, Carolina Price, Christina Del Vecchio, Clunie Figaro Jean-Baptiste, Angelique Croasdale-Mills, Daniel Davidson, Daniel Hulton, Dustin Pawlow, Danielle Warren-Dias, Edwin Leon, Erika Mott, Gina D'Angelo, Doug Janssen, Jen Vargas, Jenny Cubano, Jackie Robertson, Josey Trochez, Keith Taylor, Lisa Weeks, Luis Magana, Maria Lorenzo, Luis Diaz, Marianne Buchelli, Melinda Vazquez-Yopp, Meghan Tastensen, Mieykeya McClendon, Mukhtar Mohamed, Nitza Agosto, Shavon (last name missing), Michael Judd, Nathan Parrilla, Ramon Rodriguez-Santana, Roselyn Wimbish, Ruth Garcia, Sarah Hendon, Sean Lindsey, Susan Major, Tatiana Melendez, Lizbeth Vasquez, Venesha Heron, Dave Bechtel, David Reyes, Ken Plourd, Mark Nickel, Selma Gooding, Shayona Montemurro