



the circle

Summer 2011, N° 30

leading lines advocacy outreach community

SURVIVING AND THRIVING!

by Petra Berrios

Hello LTI colleagues and graduates, and other friends who read and subscribe to our quarterly newsletter, "The Circle." I feel greatly honored to have been given the privilege of being named the second Director of the LTI program since it began in 1997. While I am not new to the program, I am new to the Director role. I had the pleasure of being the LTI's Deputy Director for over 8 years, working closely with the former Director John Hatchett, who is now Vice-President of Peer Programs at Cicatelli Associates. KUDOS to John!

Wow! How time flies when you are having fun. It was way back in 1997 when I took my very first LTI training. It was the "Core" training, which consisted of 6 1/2 days over a two-week period that paved the path toward where I am today. The LTI gave me the foundation that I so desperately needed back then and still sometimes need today. I want to thank those who've shared my journey, celebrating one training after another, and building up our PLWHA community in New York State.

Even with funding cuts, the LTI has managed to stay focused on its goals, and plans to continue managing the challenges that lie ahead. The LTI team has grown over the past two years and we are stronger now than ever. Together we are working diligently to deliver our training to New Yorkers living

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Important Developments in Medicaid Managed Care for People Living with HIV

By Carol DeLaMarter, Section Director

AIDS Institute, Office of Medicaid Policy and Programs

If you live outside of NYC, there are important developments in Medicaid Managed Care for People Living with HIV.

Starting on October 1, 2011, HIV+ Medicaid recipients who have been exempt from enrolling in a Medicaid Managed Care Plan because of HIV status will lose that exemption. In the past, being HIV+ offered an automatic exemption from being in a managed care plan, but in October that exemption expires. Most recipients will be required to select a plan or, if they do not, they will be enrolled into one automatically. In a managed care plan, the level of benefits is the same as in regular Medicaid.

This does not apply to you if you also have Medicare, if you are in the Medicaid Spend-down program or if you are enrolled in the Long Term Home Health Care Program

This change is part of NYS Department of Health's Medicaid Redesign plan to enroll most people on Medicaid into some form of managed care by 2014. Currently in NYS there are more than 2.9 million Medicaid beneficiaries enrolled in managed care.

In 2010, the AIDS Institute provided Medicaid Managed Care education to New York City HIV programs and providers to assist with the mandatory enrollment process there, which began last September. During a 7 month period over 17,000 HIV+ beneficiaries in NYC were asked to choose a plan.

Beginning October 1, 2011 eligible Medicaid beneficiaries will be asked to choose a Medicaid health plan if they live in a mandatory county. (Only 12 of New York State's 62 counties are not mandatory counties; a link to the list of mandatory

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IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS IN MEDICAID MANAGED CARE

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and voluntary counties is provided below.) Consumers who live in counties that use an enrollment broker for plan enrollment will receive information packets from New York Medicaid CHOICE; otherwise the information will come from their County Department of Social Services.

Consumers are encouraged to make an informed choice by asking their health care providers what Medicaid health plans they are in and then choosing a plan, when asked, based on provider information. After receiving a notice you will have only 30 days to decide on a plan or you will be assigned to one. If you fail to take action your care may be disrupted. By taking action you avoid any disruption.

To help you decide which plan works for you, the AIDS Institute has created a **“Consumer Checklist, Asking the Right Questions about Medicaid Managed Care Options.”** You can find a link to the checklist below. Additionally, there are links to important DOH websites that tell you what plans are in your county and whether you live in a mandatory county. There is also a link to a webcast for HIV providers conducted by the AIDS Institute and Division of Managed Care about this important change.

- Mandatory counties impacted http://www.health.state.ny.us/health_care/managed_care/mmc_counties/
- Enrollment broker counties http://www.health.state.ny.us/health_care/managed_care/mmc_counties/maximus_with_ssi.htm
- Consumer Checklist, Asking the Right Questions about Medicaid Managed Care Options http://www.health.state.ny.us/health_care/managed_care/living_with_hiv/docs/consumer_checklist.pdf
- Medicaid Plans by county http://www.health.state.ny.us/health_care/managed_care/pdf/cnty_dir.pdf
- For Providers: link to webcast about the managed care plans http://www.health.state.ny.us/health_care/managed_care/living_with_hiv/webcast_june11.htm ●

FOR ALL NYS HIV MEDICAID MANAGED CARE ENROLLEES

DOH is making several changes to Medicaid benefits that will impact all Managed Care enrollees in NYS. These changes include two benefits important to PLWHA that had been accessed using Medicaid fee-for-service.

Effective August 1, 2011, the Personal Care/Home Attendant benefit became part of health plan benefit. All Managed Care members receiving this service were notified by DOH and the plan. *“Your care and your worker won’t change until such time that your health plan reviews your plan of care, but any request for changes must be approved by your plan. When it is time to reauthorize your plan of care, any extension of your care will need to be approved by your health plan. You will be contacted by your health plan to update your plan of care. If you have questions please contact your plan by calling member service number on your health plan card.”*

Effective October 1, 2011 pharmacy benefits will be provided by the health plan. Each plan will have its own list of drugs in a DOH approved formulary and will contract with a network of pharmacies to provide these benefits. All Managed Care members were notified by DOH in August of the change and their rights. Plan members will be notified by their plan of specific arrangements for transition, health plan drug list and pharmacy network prior to September 1.

The DOH notice to Managed Care beneficiaries included this information important to PLWHA.

- *Health plans each have their own list of drugs. If a drug is not on your health plan’s list, you and your pharmacist may need to talk to your doctor about changing to a drug on your health plan’s list or your doctor can ask the plan to let you continue taking the same drug.*
- *If you are taking a drug that is not on your plan’s list and you are unable to contact your doctor and change to a covered drug, your health plan will allow a one time only fill of your medication.*
- *You must use a pharmacy that takes your health plan. If your pharmacy does not take your health plan, you may need to get new prescriptions from your doctor to bring to a plan pharmacy.* ●

MEET TWO OF THE NEW LTI CAB MEMBERS!

Mildred Zeno

Mildred joins the LTI Consumer Advisory Board full of rich community experience. Mildred has done peer education, outreach and has chaired Betances Health Center’s Patient Advisory Group since 2010. Mildred brings to the LTI CAB a kind and gentle presence with keen observations. Mildred’s hobbies include reading, swimming and walking.

Felicia Carroll

Felicia started training with LTI in 2003 and has continued to support LTI ever since. Felicia has worked at SMART University where she helped organize the Women’s Workshops and facilitated the VOICES book club. Currently, Felicia works at Housing Works where she helps to organize advocacy meetings, and is a liaison to the Women’s Health Center. Felicia is also a member of the NYC HIV Planning Council. Felicia joins the LTI Consumer Advisory Board as a NYC representative, and is looking forward to further utilizing her expertise for her community.

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with HIV/AIDS (NYLWHA) statewide on becoming their own healthcare advocates. So be on the lookout for LTI flyers with information about the LTI's Self-Management training (Self-Management: Becoming Your Own Health Care Advocate, or "SMT" for short) coming up in your region.

We are also very excited about the SMT for Young Adults, developed for ages 18-24, which is being delivered twice this year, once in Albany for the upstate regions and once in NYC for folks from the five boroughs. Look for our calendar for the upcoming trainings in this edition of the newsletter, and on our web site: www.cicatelli.org/LTI. Additionally, be sure to "like" LTI on FaceBook and "follow" PWA_LTI on Twitter. Look for the links on page four.

Thank you for your support and good wishes as we embark on a new year! ●

WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU!

We want to be able to send you the most up-to-date information about LTI programs and related HIV/AIDS events. Please call us if your contact information has recently changed, and remember to let us know if you move or change your phone number in the future!

866/PWA-LEAD
(866/792-5323) x231;
GLong@cicatelli.org



COMMUNITY NETWORKS

PLWHA and service providers are continuing to work together to fill the gaps left by last winter's loss of the HIV Care Network system. Below we provide a list of these regional groups with their contact information. The list may evolve and change, but is current as of August 15, 2011.

Brooklyn:

NYC HHC Kings County Hospital Center
 451 Clarkson Ave.
 Brooklyn, NY 11203
 Phone: 718/245-3131

Bronx:

Bronx Borough AIDS Advocacy Network
 Socrates Caba
 347-805-5180
bbaan2011@gmail.com
 Please e-mail for meeting times and locations!

Manhattan:

Jose Martin Orduña
 Union Settlement Association/
 Manhattan HIV Care Network
 158 East 115th Street, Suite # 218
 New York, NY 10029
 212/828-6141

Queens:

Nathaly Rubio-Torio
 718-593-4528

Staten Island:

Care Network Volunteers Group
 Community Health Action of Staten Island
 56 Bay St., 6th Floor
 Staten Island, NY 10301
 718/808-1300
 Staten Island HIV Advocacy Network
www.chasiny.org

Central New York:

John Wikiera
 Central New York Health Systems Agency
 5700 Commons Park Dr.
 East Syracuse, NY 13057
 Tel: 315/472-8099
 Fax: 315/472-8033
www.cnyhsa.org

Finger Lakes/Rochester:

Sharonette Foster
 Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS
 1150 University Ave.
 Rochester NY 14607
 585/224-3102
www.knowingisbetter.org

Hudson Valley:

Robert Maher
 Hudson Valley HIV Community Network
 209 Route 9W
 Congers, NY 10920
 845/268-8023
Rmaher@touch-ny.org

Long Island:

Kathryn Kilkeny
 United Way of Long Island
 819 Grand Blvd.
 Deer Park, NY 11729
 631/940.3716
www.unitedwayli.org

Northeastern New York:

A new coalition is currently being put together by providers and consumers in this region. For more information please contact:

Joseph F. Kerwin
 Albany Medical Center
 AIDS Program Administrator
 47 New Scotland Ave.
 Albany NY12208
 518/262-4399
KerwinJ@mail.amc.edu

Western New York:

Christina Trachtenberg
 Administrative Assistant
 The AIDS Network of Western New York
 Lafayette Presbyterian Church
 875 Elmwood Ave.
 Buffalo NY 14222
 716/882-7840 (phone)
 716/882-2139 (fax)



LTI's Rusti Miller-Hill getting the word out about LTI during an outreach event in Coney Island, Brooklyn

STAYING CONNECTED THROUGH SASDC

by John Wikiera

The SASDC advisory group is a committee that few even knew existed until the closing of the NYS Ryan White HIV Care Networks last winter. SASDC stands for the Statewide AIDS Service Delivery Consortium, and the group advises the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute and the New York State AIDS Advisory Council. SASDC provides input into HIV/AIDS policies and program development, and community perspectives on ways to address the special needs of specific HIV-infected and affected populations.

Some of us who've been around for a few years probably have heard of or even worked with SASDC. Most folks know that the AIDS Advisory Council (AAC) advises the Commissioner of Health and the AIDS Institute, offering policy guidance and advice and helping to develop annual programmatic and fiscal priorities. But how many also knew that SASDC was an advisory group to the AAC? It's not a big deal if you didn't know, but now, because the Care Networks are no longer funded, you NEED to know. Because of the financial crisis, the AIDS Institute determined that it had to defund the Care Networks in order to continue funding HIV/AIDS medical care, medication assistance and social support services – a very tough deci-

sion to say the least, but a very wise one, given the alternative. For some of us, the Care Networks provided the community connection we needed for many reasons, and now SASDC is filling that role.

For anyone starting out in their journey of life with HIV, it is very important to be connected. SASDC is evolving to provide that connection from the local area on up to the state level. The AIDS Institute recognized there was still a need for disseminating information to and from the community, and it came up with a plan. One consumer and one provider were selected from each region; these members are required to attend meetings at AIDS Institute, conduct meetings within their regions, and pass along information to consumers, providers, etc. It's not an easy job to reinvent the way things like this are handled, but it needs to be done. SASDC, with our help, can become something amazing in time. All LTI grads should consider attending the SASDC regional meetings when they're held in your areas. We know how to advocate, and it's time to do it again! We owe it to ourselves and to those that are just starting out on their HIV journey. If you don't know who your SASDC representatives are, you can find the membership listing online at <http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/aids/workgroups/sasdc/index.htm>. If you don't have internet access, call the LTI at 212/594.7741 (NYC) or 866/792.5323 (outside NYC) and request a copy.

Self-Management Trainings will be offered on these dates in the following regions:

Northeastern NY:

August 11 – 13, 2011

Long Island:

August 25 – 27, 2011

Hudson Valley:

September 29 – October 1, 2011

Finger Lakes (Rochester):

September 15 – 17, 2011

Western NY:

October 20 – 22, 2011

Central NY (Syracuse):

November 3 – 5, 2011

New York City:

January 12 – 14, 2012

Young Adult – Albany (All regions outside of NYC):

November 11 – 13, 2011

Young Adult – New York City (Residents of NYC):

January 14 – 16, 2012 (tentative)

Additionally, you can see when LTI will be in your region on our website at www.cicatelli.org/LTI. For more information or to learn how to register, please contact LTI at 212-594-7741 or 1-866-792-5323.



Can't get enough of LTI?

Check us out on the internet!



See upcoming LTI events, training dates, training descriptions, and important information!

On the world wide web: www.cicatelli.org/LTI

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/PWALTI

On Twitter: www.twitter.com/PWA_LTI

