

# AIDS Foundation OF CHICAGO

## PREVENTION WITH POSITIVES FACTSHEET

### **About the Program**

AFC has taken a leadership role locally in establishing, funding, evaluating, and refining effective interventions to reduce the spread of HIV by working with HIV-positive people.

The goal of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago's (AFC) Prevention with Positives Initiative (PwP) is to reduce the spread of HIV infection by focusing prevention efforts on HIV-positive individuals who receive care services. PwP participants receive risk-reduction counseling and case management services, and learn skills to help them adopt safer behaviors to both help them stem the spread of HIV and prevent secondary infections. Examples of such skills include how to negotiate safer sex with partners and how to maintain an effective medical adherence regimen.

PwP, which began as a pilot program in 2000, is a collaborative effort among seven community-based partner organizations. Along with providing resources and support to those living with HIV/AIDS, PwP also ensures that participating agencies have the tools and training they need to maintain comprehensive and holistic client participation in the program.

Clients served through this initiative include newly infected individuals including women, adolescents, post-correctional populations, men who have sex with men, and out-of-treatment or active drug users. A majority of clients come from communities of color, as this population is disproportionately affected by the epidemic.

### **Why are these services important?**

For the last two decades, the majority of prevention programs have targeted risk-reduction messages to those who are HIV-negative, successfully reducing rates of infection from 140,000 per year to 40,000 nationally. To avert further infections, however, it is critical to actively involve HIV-positive individuals in prevention activities. By engaging HIV-positive individuals in the fight to control the spread of the disease, both primary and secondary infections can and are being prevented.

### **Description of activities by PwP-funded agencies**

The following are summaries of interventions that have been developed by each partner agency in consultation with AFC.

- The **Better Existence with HIV (BEHIV)** Prevention with Positives intervention, "Prevention for Life," program consists of HIV testing and counseling, case finding, and for those who test HIV-positive, peer-based support and counseling aimed towards linking and engaging the participants in care, strengthening adherence, and reducing HIV risk behaviors. All clients enrolled will enter a ten-week support group that includes such topics as:

maximizing care, adherence, safer sex behaviors, drug use and harm reduction, partner communication and behavioral risk reduction.

- Building on the strength of the **Chicago House and Social Services Agency (CHASSA)** case management program for assisted and independent residents, CHASSA's Prevention with Positives intervention consists of an integrated program of prevention case management focusing on the reduction of HIV risk behaviors. The first year of this project consists of three distinct phases: (1) staff training and development; (2) initial prevention education for clients; and (3) ongoing training and support for both staff and clients.
- The **Chicago Women's AIDS Project (CWAP)** Prevention with Positives intervention complements existing agency services through the addition of a weekly drop-in group and a structured peer-led mentoring group. These interventions take a wellness approach to secondary and primary prevention, namely to increase the participants' engagement in care, adherence to antiretroviral therapy when indicated, and the reduction of HIV risk behaviors.
- The Uptown Teen Health Center of **Children's Memorial Hospital's** HIV program provides comprehensive medical care and ancillary services to address the myriad needs of HIV infected adolescents. Children's Memorial's program consists of a multi-disciplinary team approach to care, intensive case management, and a support group--all of which are directed toward the goals of ongoing engagement in medical care and the reduction of HIV risk behaviors.

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- The **CORE Center's** program, the Prevention Education Peer (PEP) Program, is designed to promote primary and secondary prevention to newly diagnosed patients through a peer support/counseling program. The two-fold goal is to engage patients during the initial period of their HIV care to help patients decrease high risk behaviors and to maintain health through ongoing engagement in care and adherence counseling.

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- The **South Side Help Center's (SSHC)** program, known by the acronym P3, provides comprehensive prevention services and support to HIV positive African-American adults 18 years and older. The intervention consists of several components: prevention case management, a risk reduction group, HIV testing and counseling, partner counseling and referrals, and street and community outreach. Through this combined intervention, P3 is able to respond to the multiple needs of HIV infected individuals through direct service and referrals, while simultaneously offering psychosocial support, education, and skills to promote HIV risk reduction.
- **Test Positive Aware Network (TPAN)** is providing three distinct interventions within its newly established Treatment Education Advocacy Management (TEAM) program: namely, outreach, prevention case management, and training popular opinion leaders. TEAM is an integrated approach to secondary prevention and treatment education. This approach consists of providing extensive education, training, and support to HIV-

positive men who have sex with men (MSMs) who engage in high-risk behaviors as well as men who are newly diagnosed or newly aware of their HIV-positive status. TEAM specifically seeks to train men with HIV to be better advocates for their own health care needs, to improve their ability to negotiate the difficulties of acknowledging HIV and the risk of other STDs and to become role models and treatment/prevention educators to others living with HIV.

In addition, AFC has contracted with an evaluation researcher to work with the partner agencies and develop an evaluation plan to measure outcome effectiveness of the entire initiative.

### **History of program:**

The Prevention with Positives (PwP) program began in 2002 as an outgrowth of a pilot program funded by the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH).

In 2000, CDPH selected AFC to develop standard procedures for implementation of the three-year prevention pilot, which pairs HIV-positive clients seeking prevention support with harm reduction staff from four local community based agencies.

Both PwP and the CDPH pilot program target services to people of color and engage HIV-positive individuals in prevention education, but PwP recruits individuals from both medical *and* social services environments, whereas the pilot program only targets individuals in primary care settings.