

AIDS Project Quad Cities founded in 1986 has been providing care, prevention and outreach services to those infected and at risk of infection for HIV and STD's. Located on the border of western Illinois and eastern Iowa along the Mississippi river, APQC provides services to Rock Island County along with fourteen other Illinois and Iowa counties. AIDS Project Quad Cities is the only HIV focused community based organization within a 100 mile radius of our service area.

The immediate impact of this funding cut reaches far and wide in the APQC service area. The current and high risk client base, ranges from newborn babies that are at risk of sero converting without intervention and follow up, to the 65 year old woman that went to Cancun to recover from a divorce and contracted HIV. Since July of 2009, Rock Island County has had four women with HIV give birth. These babies need intense case management and their mothers a multitude of support. Yesterday, prior to traveling here, APQC case management transported an HIV positive female to the doctor with her four children. During this clinic visit we were informed that her youngest child has not been seen since he was 2 months old. The baby is now 7 months old, and his physicians are unsure of what his HIV status will be. With current funding cuts, the State of Illinois will be facing the reality of producing another generation of infants with HIV and other medical issues, and those children will be looking to the state to provide a lifelong commitment for care and medication. Some politicians may think that these children and older adults can seek services elsewhere but, those agencies like APQC can attest to the fact that these citizens of Illinois have nowhere else to turn. Community organizations are the last stop gap for these individuals and their families there is no one else to help. Where will they go when no help is available? Logical and rational thought leads us all to understand that when issues go undiagnosed such as HIV and are untreated they will have a higher cost. A cost that is higher to the person who is positive, their quality and length of life, time lost with family and friends and of course and enormous strain on the support systems such as Federal and State funding.

We as providers are charged with the job of providing the best possible service including minimizing costly hospitalizations and medical costs associated with latent stage diagnosis and care treatment services. If an individual is diagnosed early, there is every opportunity to increase wellness and reduce cost.

AIDS Project Quad Cities services impact all age ranges and races. We provide individual, group and community level interventions including counseling, testing and referral. Our question to you at the end of the day is, where should our community members go for help? We are their only resource, and our community will and will continue to be crippled due to this funding cut.