

Boston Part A EMA HIV Health Services

**Consumer Committee  
2008-2009 Year-End Report**

June 2009



Planning Council Support  
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*The Consumer Committee of the Boston EMA HIV Health Services Planning Council  
presents its 2008-2009 Year-End Report*

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## **Committee Charge**

The Consumer Committee is one of the Planning Council's standing committees. The Planning Council's bylaws state the charge to the committee at Section 6.4.6:

*"The Consumer Committee shall ensure that people living with HIV and/or AIDS are empowered, supported, and encouraged to work on the full range of activities that the Planning Council undertakes in the execution of its mandate, by:*

- A) Fostering and developing consumer leadership;*
  - B) Working with the Executive Committee to ensure that at least one Consumer is on each Planning Council committee;*
  - C) Informing the Planning Council on issues from a consumer perspective, as needed; and*
  - D) Ensuring that diverse consumer input and participation are included in all Planning Council and committee activities."*
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## **Committee Membership**

### **Members**

Marlon Wallen (Chair)  
Diane Hackett (Vice-Chair)  
Brian Butler  
Jim Campbell  
Julialene Johnson  
Andre Jones  
Madeline Pagan  
Brian Quigley  
Darren Sack  
Florence Saintiche  
Chevelle Sloan  
Sheryl Watkins

### **Support Staff**

Laura Kozek, PCS  
Sharon Asonganyi, PCS  
Apryl Pagliaro, PCS  
Andrew Shawhan, PCS  
John Kuehnle, BPHC

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## **Committee Meeting Activities**

- **Thursday, October 16, 2008 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
The meeting included an assessment of Planning Council consumer training needs. An Epidemiology training was conducted. The agenda for the October 16, 2008 Planning Council meeting was reviewed, including the meeting's presentations. A representative from John Snow Inc (JSI) attended the meeting to solicit feedback on planning for and developing a study tool for a consumer research study.

- **Thursday, November 13, 2008 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
 The main focus of the meeting was to provide additional feedback to JSI on the consumer research study. Marlon Wallen was elected Chair of the Consumer Committee and Madeline Pagan was elected Vice-Chair. The agenda for the November 13, 2008 Planning Council meeting was reviewed, including the meeting's presentations.
- **Thursday, December 11, 2008 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
 This meeting included a review of the zero funded impact service category elimination process. A HIV Vocabulary training was conducted. The agenda for the December 11, 2008 Planning Council meeting was reviewed, including the meeting's presentations.
- **Thursday, January 8, 2009 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
 This meeting included an introduction to the *2009-2012 Comprehensive Plan*. The agenda for the January 8, 2009 Planning Council meeting was reviewed, including the meeting's presentations. A training on the Resource and Allocations (R&A) process was also conducted, given by Donna Rivera, Chair of the R&A Committee.
- **Thursday, February 12, 2009 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
 The agenda for the February 12, 2009 Planning Council meeting was reviewed, including the meeting's presentations. Diane Hackett was elected at Vice-Chair of Consumer Committee, due to the previous Vice-Chair's resignation from the Council. Consumers participated in advanced epidemiology training. Time was dedicated for consumers to discuss community happenings, and share ideas and suggestions.
- **Thursday, March 12, 2009 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
 The agenda for the March 12, 2009 Planning Council meeting was reviewed, including the meeting's presentations. A training on the *2009 Needs Assessment* and Priority Setting processes were conducted. Time was dedicated for consumers to discuss community happenings, and share ideas and suggestions.
- **Thursday, April 23, 2009 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
 The agenda for the April 23, 2009 Planning Council meeting was reviewed, including the meeting's presentations. The committee started to draft the Year-End Report and prepare for an Open House geared towards prospective members.
- **Thursday, May 14, 2009 – Room 302, John Hancock Conference Center**  
 The majority of the meeting was spent preparing for the first Planning Council Prospective Open House. The Committee also reviewed the agenda for the May 14, 2009 Planning Council meeting, and continued work on the Year-End Report and presentation.
- **Thursday, June 11, 2009 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
 The agenda for the June 11, 2009 Planning Council meeting was reviewed, including an introduction to the funding scenarios. The Committee finalized the Year-End Report and presentation.
- **Thursday, June 25, 2009 – McKim Room, Boston Public Library**  
 The agenda for the June 25, 2009 Planning Council meeting was reviewed. The Committee practiced presenting the Year-End Report presentation.

## Work of the Committee

Consumer Committee is unique among the Planning Council committees in that it has no assigned membership, and its leadership is not selected by the Planning Council Chair. Instead, all Planning Council members living with HIV are welcome to attend Consumer Committee meetings. The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected by the Consumer Committee members at their first meeting. The Consumer Committee meets for ninety minutes before each Council meeting.

Consumer Committee has two main functions. First, Consumer Committee acts as a place for Planning Council members living with HIV to preview Planning Council presentations. Second, Consumer Committee provides people living with HIV a place to share their personal and community experience as it relates to Planning Council issues.

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## Consumer Trainings

Planning Council consumers were asked to assess their training needs through a survey at the beginning of the Planning Council term. The following trainings were provided throughout this Planning Council term:

- ***Epidemiology Part I***  
October 16, 2008  
Assist Planning Council members in understanding basic epidemiological concepts including data sources, uses, collection and basic epidemiological terms.
- ***HIV Vocabulary***  
December 11, 2008  
Give participants an overview of basic virology as it applies to HIV prevention and treatment. Information on frequently used HIV vocabulary also covered.
- ***Resource and Allocations Process***  
January 8, 2009  
Assist Planning Council members in understanding the role of the Resource and Allocations Committee and their work as part of the Planning Council Cycle.
- ***Epidemiology Part II***  
February 12, 2009  
Assist Planning Council members in understanding advanced epidemiological concepts, including interpreting and using data.
- ***Priority Setting***  
March 12, 2009  
Educate Planning Council members on the Priority Setting Exercise and discuss its role in the Planning Council process.
- ***Computer Skills Training***  
Ongoing  
Provide computer skills trainings to participants in the Consumer Laptop Program (CLP) upon request. Most participants were familiar with computers.

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## **Consumer Reimbursement Program**

Consumer members of the Planning Council are eligible for reimbursement for certain expenses associated with their participation in Council. These expenses include: childcare, parking, travel, and conferences.

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## **Consumer Laptop Program (CLP)**

CLP provided laptop computers, an AOL account, and technical assistance to consumer members of the Planning Council upon request. The CLP aims to provide an equal level of information access for all Planning Council members in addition to improving the line of communication between the Planning Council, PCS, and BPHC.

The CLP currently consists of eleven laptop computers, six of which were loaned to current Planning Council consumers for the 2008-2009 term. Five Planning Council consumers hold AOL accounts provided through CLP.

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## **Liaison with Policy Committee**

Each year, the Policy Committee appoints a consumer member to act as the Policy Committee liaison to the Consumer Committee. The role of the liaison is to provide timely updates on pressing policy developments to the Consumer Committee. Consumer Committee conversation and questions related to these policy issues are then taken back to Policy Committee for answers and to provide a consumer-centered compass to Policy Committee research. This year, Policy Committee member and consumer Diane Hackett fulfilled the role.

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## **Progress on Recommendations from 2007-2008 Consumer Committee**

1. Continue Consumer Laptop Program (CLP), giving priority to active members of the Consumer Committee – The purpose of the CLP is to ensure all Planning Council members have equal access to materials and learning opportunities. Laptops were distributed to six consumers who had limited computer and internet access. Additionally, the application was revamped this year to assess the need of all applicants, with priority going to consumers with no access to a computer or the internet. Also, five consumers were given access to AOL.
2. Laptops should be replaced or improved – All the computers were updated with the latest software, including Microsoft Office 2007. Two new computers were purchased by PCS staff and are available for consumer use.
3. Summary sheet of Council meetings for those members whose primary language is not English – This was not carried out during the 2008-2009 term, though an assessment of language skills will be explored at orientation for the 2009-2010 term.

4. Continue the training survey at the start of each term – The committee filled out the training survey at the beginning of the term. During Consumer meetings, the trainings were concentrated to allow discussion around pertinent Council activities and key concepts about epidemiology and HIV. Several trainings were held outside of the committee this year including formulating a needs assessment, and laptop training.

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### **Recommendations to the 2009-2010 Consumer Committee**

1. Continue the Consumer Laptop Program (CLP).
2. Clarify the committee expectations at the beginning of the term.
3. Continue the training survey at the start of each term.
4. Continue offering additional trainings, both during Consumer Committee and outside of the committee meeting time.
5. Offer a laptop training that focuses on how to navigate the internet, access data, and utilize websites.
6. Bookmark useful websites on consumer laptops.
7. Use a different internet provider, than the one currently being used (AOL).
8. Offer meeting facilitation training at the beginning of the Council term.
9. Continue providing shortened versions of Planning Council presentations during the Consumer Committee.
10. Set time apart in each Consumer Committee meeting for experience/resource sharing and readopting the “Consumer Spotlight”.

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### **Recommendations to the 2009-2010 Planning Council**

1. Set aside time in Planning Council meetings for open discussion.
2. Provide a list of frequently used acronyms and definitions of key terms.
3. Define all acronyms used in presentations.
4. Clarify the sources of all data presented to the Planning Council.
5. Promote the additional trainings by providing a brief description of what the upcoming trainings will entail at the Planning Council prior to the training.