

**Capital Region ETE Steering Committee Meeting  
Zoom Call Jan 19, 2021**

**Attendees List:**

1. Amanda Ahrens – Benefits Counselor, Legal Aid Society of NENY
2. Ashley Smith, Peer Advocate, Albany Medical Center Department of HIV Medicine
3. Christine Wasik – Albany Medical Center
4. Claire Mone, NYSDOH, AIDS Institute, Office of Planning and Community Affairs
5. Diane DeGroat, Senior Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY
6. Ellen Donovan, Manager of Development & Communications, Albany Damien Center
7. Erika Walker – Hudson Headwaters Health Network
8. Geri Walsh, Employment Pathways, Albany Damien Center
9. John Hartigan, AIDS Institute, Bureau of Community Support Services
10. Kate Thorpe, AMC, SCCAYA
11. Keion Hennessey – WSW Program Coordinator, In Our Own Voices
12. Kyla Loucks – Albany Medical Center
13. Lauren Quinn Albany Med Specialized Care Center
14. Lisa Currin, AIDS Institute, Bureau of Community Support Services
15. Meghan Thompson, Retention Adherence Specialist, Ellis Medicine
16. Melissa Carbone – Hudson Headwaters Health Network
17. Morgan Williams – Alliance for Positive Health
18. Perry Junjulas – Executive Director & PWA, Albany Damien Center
19. Randy Viele – Alliance for Positive Health
20. Rocky OConnor, Unity House
21. Scott Daly – Peer Navigator, Ellis Medicine
22. Whitney Closson - Family Education Specialist, Mental Health Association of New York State, Inc. (MHANYS)

**Call to Order** – Kyla Loucks welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

**Legislative Update** – Governor’s budget is set to be released today, waiting to see if rental assistance is included. Zoom Meetings for AID Advisory Council with individual Legislators are happening. Advocacy has gotten attention of Governor’s office. We will have a loss of \$250,000,000 annually, it is unacceptable that they want to give \$100,000,000 to help the 1<sup>st</sup> year. Unless something changes there will be clinic closing. Please go to [savenysafteynet.com](http://savenysafteynet.com) to watch the video.

**Co-Chair Position Open** – Continuing to look for a new co-chair as Perry will be stepping down, however, he will still continue to support the committee. We are strongly encouraging people from diverse communities and persons with HIV to reach out, as we feel strongly that the co-chair positions should be representative of the people we are serving. Perry added that Kyla is amazing to work with.

A motion to accept the minutes of November 17, 2020 was made by Scott Daly and seconded by Erika Walker. Minutes accepted as submitted.

**Committee Updates**

**PREP Committee – Chris Wasik**

- Next meeting is Wednesday, February 24, 2021, will forward details.
- Donna is looking to put together a networking meeting, will move forward with virtual meeting so that we can keep people connected & moving forward.
- HAB Update – Coming up in February all of the State of New York will have monthly committees for COVID & Mental Health issues and research the impact.

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- PROS/CONS of telehealth – many have agreed that it is increasing isolation
- March 17<sup>th</sup> and March 18<sup>th</sup> are both ½ day meetings. Will share registration information once this is available.

### Youth Committee – Lauren Quinn

Reported that Alliance funding has been cut, Hanna is no longer there due to funding. Next meeting will be Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm. Perry thanked them for all of their hard work and told her if any support is needed to reach out. Maybe the AIDS Institute can help.

### HIV Testing – Chris Wasik & Kyla Loucks

Drive up test and home test are still being done. They are encouraging appointments be made but they are still taking walk ins. ETE link on Albany Damien Center site has list of testing sites.

### AIDS Watch – Scott Daly

AIDS Watch 2021 will be March 22, 2021 – March 23, 2021 – This is a virtual face to face with Congressmen & Senators.

### Agency Updates

#### Albany Damien Center – Geri Walsh

- Lyndsi & Geri are still having their Working Wednesdays on Facebook Live at 2pm on The Albany Damien Center fb page. Everyone is invited on call.
- If you have any referrals for Employment Pathways please have them reach out to Lyndsi or Geri on their cell phone 518-641-9195

#### Albany Med- Chris Wasik

- Open for all services. Social distancing is in effect. Asking patients to come alone unless they have a caretaker that needs to come with them.
- New Nurse Manager starting in February. One provider is leaving at the end of the month. Recruiting for Doctor, Case Manager & Mental Health Specialist (must have Masters Degree & be licensed)

#### Albany Med – Kate Thorpe

- Office is open for youth testing, youth 13-24
- Next meeting is January 28, 2021 at 4pm

#### Legal Aid Society – Diane DeGroat

- HIV AIDS Law –HIV+ client intakes they can call her as the funding did expire with AIDS Institute on 9/30/2020, there are limited services using a different grant that may be eligible thru legal aid.
- Benefits Counseling – Soft legal advice/information can be given. Example – confidentiality at work
- NYS Housing Renewal Program expires February 1, 2021.
- Housing Eviction Prevention Program – Questions on eviction notices call Diane or Legal Aid.

#### World AIDS Day – Claire Mone

- HUGE SUCCESS!! World AIDS Day will be virtual in 2021 as well due to COVID. The agenda will be available again ahead of time and you can register for the sessions that you are interested in.
- Sessions were taped. You can go back & watch sessions you registered for and if you were not registered for them, go in and register then watch
- Please be sure to fill out the surveys if you haven't already. The feedback is very helpful with planning for next year.

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- Shout Out to Albany Damien Center for the Quilt presentation.

**Alliance for Positive Health – Randy Viele**

- Completely operational – no home visits, face to face community setting
- Testing – Tuesday/Thursday 9:30am – 4pm, closed 12p-1p
- Testing is by appointment only. Prescreening before and after appointment
- Transportation is proceeding on. Randy encouraged that you reach out if having any problems

**Ellis Medicine, Scott Daly**

- Peer Group – Struggling to find participants to participate in zoom meetings. Most want in person meetings but that is not possible right now
- COVID vaccine is at main hospital for staff and special agencies
- McClellan location is a testing location – rapid testing starting soon.

**In Our Own Voices – Keoin Hennessey**

- May open back up in the beginning of February with limited hours. Testing still suspended, hoping to resume that soon.
- Food Fridges are something that their CEO granted permission to have on their property but they do not have anything more to do with those.

**AIDS Watch, Scott Daly**

- If you would like input on the program go to [aidsunited.org/aidswatch](https://aidsunited.org/aidswatch) and register by March 15<sup>th</sup> to confirm your spot. Dates for annual AIDSWatch are March 22-24, 2021.

**AIDS Institute, John Hartigan**

- Transportation program is still running strong
- Transportation can be used for COVID vaccine visits & any other medical appointments

**Hudson Headwaters Health Network – Melissa Carbone**

- Shifting to Telehealth visits
- Splitting the day between well visits and sick visits seems to be working great
- Telehealth visits – not everyone can do zoom calls. This telehealth line is a confidential call in line that they need a code to get on the call
- Self test kits
- Doing informal outreach regarding the vaccine

**New Business**

**COVID Vaccines now available for compromised immune systems and anyone over the age of 65. You can go to NYDOH Website or go to [capitalregionvax.org](https://capitalregionvax.org) and click AM I ELIGIBLE?**

**We are asking all Subcommittees to come up with 3 attainable goals this year.**

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**ETE Capital Region Meetings are from 9 AM to 10:30 AM on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues of each month**

Next ETE Meeting is February 16, 2021

**Contact information**

Kyla Loucks     [loucksk1@amc.edu](mailto:loucksk1@amc.edu) 518-264-5839 (work phone)

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ETE Webpage at <http://www.albanydamiencenter.org/capital-region-ete.html>