

Capital Region ETE Steering Committee Meeting
Albany Damien Center, 728 Madison Ave, Suite 100, Albany
June 16, 2020

Attendees List:

1. Mary Ellen Adams – Specialized Care Center for Adolescents & Young Adults at Albany Med at AMC
2. Scott Daly – Ellis Medicine Peer Navigator
3. Diane DeGroat – Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York
4. Brittni Gulloty – Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood
5. Sue Johnson – Whitney Young Health Center
6. Perry Junjulas – Albany Damien Center
7. Quentin Lott – In Our Own Voices
8. Todd Cramer – Albany Damien Center
9. Suzanne Beattie – Albany Damien Center
10. Christine Wasik – Albany Medical Center
11. John Hartigan – AIDS Institute BCSS
12. Kyla Loucks – Albany Medical Center
13. Tiffany _____ – Whitney Young Health Center
14. Meghan Thompson – Ellis Hospital
15. Melissa Carbonne – Hudson Headwaters Health Network
16. Caitlin Westfall Conheady
17. Teri Wilhelm – Albany Damien Center
18. Dave Gabrielson – Catholic Charities
19. Bonnie Kerr – Albany Damien Center (taking minutes)

Call to Order – Perry Junjulas welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. He noted that we do not want to lose focus on HIV and our ETE work while dealing with COVID. Next month will be a special guided discussion on 2020 and beyond hosted by AIDS Institute. All attendees took a moment to introduce themselves.

A motion to accept the minutes of May 19 was made by Kyla and seconded by Teri Wilhelm. Minutes accepted as submitted.

Legislative Update – Perry reported that there is an ETE Coalition meeting every other Thursday. Also started a new subcommittee that meets every Thursday re. 340B providers. These groups are trying to develop plans to negotiate with the state to have this legislation repealed or modified. MMR 2 Legislation takes agencies' 340B savings to balance the Medicaid budget. The only bills that are going through the legislature at this time are related to COVID or police reform.

On a national level, the Trump administration took away the federal protections in place defending transgender patients from health care discrimination.

On a more positive note, there was a landmark ruling from the Supreme Court amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act which bars discrimination based on sex to extend protections to include claims of discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

We are continuing to urge the New York legislature to pass Assembly Bill 654 (Paulin) and Senate Bill 2253 (Hoylman), which would repeal New York state's Loitering for the Purpose of Prostitution law. (more commonly known as the Walking while Trans bill).

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Committee Updates

Youth Committee – MaryEllen Adams

No meeting through COVID but looking to do a webex on June 25 at 4 p.m. Office is open for all services – majority of visits have been tele-health. Have started some on-line outreach (Facebook/Instagram) to highlight their services. Waiting to see what type of in person community outreach they can do as COVID restrictions are reduced.

HIV Testing – Kyla Loucks

Highlighting that they are still open for testing and have drive up testing. If people know of other sites available for testing, please share with Kyla so she can compile a list of providers that are open. Drive up is going slow – hoping to increase utilization of this service. Drive Up HIV Testing contact number: (518) 264-3309. Please encourage anyone interested to call and schedule an appointment.

PREP Committee - Sue Johnson

Has not been meeting. Looking for new members will be meeting in 1-2 months.

STI Committee –

Perry noted they was some interest in starting this committee back up. AIDS Institute may take the lead.

Perry is looking for a co-chair for the ETE committee. If you are interested, please reach out to him.

Black Lives Matter - Perry noted that we will be discussing agency's efforts in the Black Lives Matter movement at future meetings. Perry stated that racism and racial injustice are strong drivers of new HIV infections as well as poor health outcomes and thus needs to be tackled as a part of our Ending the Epidemic efforts in our region.

AGENCY UPDATES (what is new, do you have any efforts specific to Black Lives Matter?)

Quentin Lott – In Our Own Voices – coordinated with the City and OGS to paint Black Lives Matter down Lark Street. She encourages people to walk the street- it is very encompassing and moving. They have some grant money available = \$300 per case to help LGBT business. Pantry still open and still referring to testing sites.

Tiffany – Whitney Young

OPEN. Dental is open for emergencies. Mobile unit is doing testing in the community – other mobile services on hold. North Troy office had a provider retire – Waterford office still has a provider. Rapid walk in STI testing will be coming.

John Hartigan – AIDS Inst.

Walked Lark Street and it is amazing. Thank you to Quentin and the city for that. Joanne sent out a beautiful letter recapping her thoughts on COVID thanking everyone for what they have done to keep things going and reflecting on BLM. Providers opening back up as we enter Phase 3. Will be a refocusing on priorities as we move out from COVID. Thank you for everyone's hard work.

Dave Gabrielson – Catholic Charities

We have been working remotely 3 days in office – 2 days from home. Starting home visits tomorrow – had been doing tele-med. Received referrals – taking on new clients.

Scott Daly – Ellis Medicine

Has just started going back in the office within the past two weeks. Holding hour long calls in lieu of in person meetings. Congressman Brandese conference call re. HEROS Act that the House passed – held up in the Senate. Will be scheduling a Town Hall meeting with Congressman Brandese to see where HIV funding is in the federal budget in the coming weeks.

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Meghan Thompson – Ellis Medicine

Perry noted Paul's statement on BLM was very powerful. Last week everyone at the main campus took a knee in support. Clinics are starting to take on more appointments. Most still tele-med, will see how this is utilized moving forward.

Melissa Carbonne – HHHN

Offering at home testing – have given 8. Been doing support group weekly remotely. Have done a great deal of outreach to the community re. COVID and what lab services are available. Had been working remotely. For National HIV Testing Day – looking to utilize their COVID testing tent for drive up rapid testing.

Chris Wasik – AMC

We are doing well here. Have been open and seeing patients for all services. About a month or so ago appointments were more into tele—health, but are moving more towards bringing people in for face to face visits. Feel it is best for people to have face to face interactions.

Perry Junjulas– Albany Damien Center

Thankfully, there are still no COVID cases at the Damien Center among staff, residents, or members. Pharmacy still open – most have customers have been converted to delivery, but they are still open. Planning to keep center community room space closed through July. Doing curbside pick-up and delivery of meals, pantry bags, cleaning items, and pet supplies. We did issue a statement on BLM. Made a list of resources available to tenants, members, and staff. Sending a diversity survey to staff and will be looking to develop an action plan to make changes. Looking to partner with A Village to see how we can help. MPower program has been relocated from ROCKS to our offices at 728 Madison. Also moved our Finance team so our whole Damien Center family is under one roof.

Diane DeGroat – Legal Aid

We are slowly opening offices for staff to work. Most working remotely. Health program open for intake via phone. Also doing legal review for people from the Albany Damien Center. Moratorium on evictions still in effect through August -if anyone hears of someone having an order of eviction issued or verbally threatened with eviction, have them contact Legal Aid for assistance.

Brittani Gulloty – Planned Parenthood

Have been open – have also utilized tele-health. Have noticed some patients are looking to come to the office as they are feeling safer. They have masks at all offices to distribute. They have utilized their social media platforms to reach out re. BLM. They had a staff rally outside each of the facilities last week re. racial injustice. They are looking to form groups to keep this movement going – uplifting what can be done to keep their voices heard. Promoted how to be safe while participating in protests – masks, social distancing. Today is the deadline for requesting an absentee ballot for the primary – early voting is available now. Working on Say Their Name project.

You will need to register for the July 21st meeting

Perry will send the information so you can participate in this guided discussion facilitated by the AIDS Institute.

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

Contact information

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