

Louisiana Commission on HIV, AIDS, and Hepatitis C Education, Prevention and Treatment

January 28st, 2022

9:00-11:00am

Virtual Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84612644091>

Or by phone:

USA 602 333 0032

Conference code: 595740

Commission Members Present:

Tanya Brown, Baylor Boyd, Fran Lawless, Angie Brown, Sam Burgess, Austin Matthews, Mitchell Handrich, Amanda Dumas, Paulette Pinargote, George Nawas, Andrew LaPlante

I. Call to Order

Called to Order at 9:05am by Austin Matthews, Chairperson

II. Roll Call

Roll called by Jimmy Gale, Quorum reached.

III. Old Business

a. October Minutes

Motion to accept the minutes as read by Angie Brown, seconded by Mitchell Handrich.

b. Modernize It – HIV Criminalization Summit Debrief

Austin Matthews provided a debrief of the summit and shared the feedback received. Attendees of the summit are requesting more events like this and appreciated the non-partisan stance and presentation. It has been requested that if we are unable to host this event in-person in the future, that the zoom sessions be shorter and more frequent. Many attendees have reached out, expressing interest in getting more involved in the future. The next HIV Decriminalization workgroup meeting is scheduled to happen on February 4th at 2pm.

Fran Lawless suggested that this event should be held annually or semi-annually, in order to advise and educate legislators and increase credibility of the Commission. Austin Matthews agreed and suggested that we table the discussion until 2022 priorities have been set. Legislative mandate states that the Commission should hold similar events each year. Lawless also acknowledged Aisha McKenzie for her work in organizing the Summit. Matthews acknowledged the Louisiana Coalition on Criminalization and Health (LCCH) for their partnership in making the summit so successful.

IV. New Business:

Presentations

a. HIV and HCV Testing Trends in Louisiana – Debbie Wendell, STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program

- i.* Kanayo Okeke-Eweni asked questions regarding statistics of high school and college aged clients and the positive rates being seen in the clinic. He discussed the need for more PrEP interventions within those age groups.
- ii.* Wendell responded and cited the lack of sexual health education in schools leading to a lack of awareness and testing.

b. The Power of Universal Opt Out Testing – Brandon Mizroch, MD and Nouri Ningbinnin, STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program.

- i.* Austin Matthews asked a question about how Opt Out testing can be expanded across the state.
- ii.* Mizroch responded stating that this form of testing is highly beneficial to all communities, citing the legal mandates regarding Syphilis testing during the 1st and 3rd trimesters of pregnancy.

- iii. Matthews inquired about quality measures and how similar mandates are enforced.
- iv. Sam Burgess responded that many states are creating their mandates based on CDC recommendations and states like New York have created a bonus reimbursement for Medicaid to incentivize high volume screening. Burgess suggesting working with the Insurance Commission to discuss reimbursements to incentivize screenings across Louisiana.
- v. Jen Laws discussed how opt-out testing will likely increase in private providers as well; need to establish screening as a standard of care. Laws inquired about issues with testing on the North Shore and the lack of community education.
- vi. Burgess responded and noted that HIV/STI education is focused on zip codes with the highest positivity rates and rural areas are often left out due to lack of resources.
- c. Opt-out testing at Our Lady of the Lake – Anne Dewitt, Our Lady of the Lake
 - i. Fran Lawless asked if tests are incentivized and if the hospital is participating in the Gilead FOCUS Program.
 - ii. Anne Dewitt responded and confirmed that their screening is a part of the Gilead FOCUS program.
- d. Opt-Out testing at University Medical Center – Kanayo Okeke-Eweni, MBBS, MPH, University Medical Center
 - i. No Questions

Discussion of 2022 Commission Priorities

- e. Austin Matthews stated that the Commission is set to expire in 2022, noting that the process to renew legislation has started.
- f. By-law revisions – Fran Lawless made a motion to create a strategic planning committee, Amanda Dumas seconded the motion. No opposition was raised to forming the committee, motion was passed.
- g. Annual Summit – Lawless brought up the need to host the summit annually, Matthews agreed. Matthews noted that we need to pick a topic soon and opened the discussion up for community feedback.
 - i. Jen Laws brought up OPH asking the legislature to amend drug paraphernalia laws to remove testing for purity and allow for fentanyl test strips. Laws suggested that the Commission get behind these efforts, noting the need to educate legislature on this issue as well as ARV medications, HCV, and Injectable PrEP. Laws also suggested further discussion around transparency and 340b dollars.
 - ii. Vatsana Chanthala suggested discussion around 90-day access to medications, stigma reduction and utilizing data for planning/collaboration with agencies to coordinate care and services.
 - iii. Anne Dewitt requested more free CME's be made available for medical providers with a focus on PrEP, U=U and internalized stigma.
 - iv. Matthews reminded participants to join the Strategic Planning Committee.

V. Other Business – Austin Matthews, Chair

- a. Announcements
 - i. Austin reminded the Commission about the HIV Decrim workgroup on February 4th and listed open positions within the STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program
- b. Public Comment - None
- c. Next Meeting Date – Date was not set. Announcement will be sent out by Jimmy Gale

VI. Adjournment – Austin Matthews, Chair

- a. Austin asked for a motion to adjourn at 10:59am
- b. Angie Brown made the motion, seconded by Tanya Brown.
- c. Meeting adjourned at 11am.