



County of San Diego

NICK MACCHIONE, FACHE
AGENCY DIRECTOR

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 206, MAIL STOP P-501
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2417
(619) 515-6555 • FAX (619) 515-6556

DEAN ARABATZIS
CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

September 28, 2015

TO: Helen N. Robbins-Meyer
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Nick Macchione, Agency Director
Health and Human Services Agency

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AD-HOC TASK FORCE ON HIV

On October 31, 2014, Supervisors Ron Roberts and Dave Roberts sent a memo to you requesting the formation of an ad hoc committee, under the auspices of the HIV Health Services Planning Council (Planning Council), to improve the current status of HIV disease in San Diego County.

Thanks to the support of Supervisor Ron Roberts, Supervisor Dave Roberts, and Councilmember Todd Gloria, the Planning Council formed an Ad Hoc Task Force, composed of Planning Council members, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) staff, HIV service providers, and persons living with HIV to review data and research, gather input from community members, and make recommendations for improving outcomes related to HIV. The Task Force was chaired by Planning Council Chair Terry Cunningham.

The Ad Hoc Task Force met nine times between December 2014 and July 2015. During those meetings, participants reviewed:

- 1) Local epidemiological data;
- 2) National guidelines and recommendations, including the National HIV/AIDS Strategy, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for testing, U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommendations regarding HIV testing, and U.S. Public Health Service guidelines for treatment of HIV;
- 3) Research regarding the use of HIV-drugs to prevent HIV infection in those who are HIV-negative;
- 4) Past and current local efforts to address the epidemic;
- 5) Best practices for addressing HIV; and
- 6) Service delivery and funding allocations for HIV services administered by the HIV, STD and Hepatitis Branch of Public Health Services.

The Task Force noted that there has been much progress in slowing the spread of HIV and in reducing early death related to HIV. Since 1990, there has been a 64% reduction in new cases of HIV reported annually, and since 1994, there has been an 86% decline in the number of deaths among those living with HIV. Despite these gains, HIV continues to be a major public health challenge in San Diego County, and the epidemic has continued to grow, albeit at a slower rate than in the past. In 2013, the most recent year with a complete data set, there were 478 new infections reported, which is one new

infection approximately every 18 hours. Further, there were 101 deaths of persons living with HIV in 2013, which is approximately two deaths every week.

Nonetheless, there is good reason to be optimistic about further reducing the epidemic and its impact on our community. Due to treatment advances, the Affordable Care Act, and advances in HIV testing and prevention, the CDC has identified HIV as a winnable battle; all the tools required to significantly reduce or even end the epidemic already exist. These tools include education and awareness campaigns, routine HIV testing, treatment as prevention (TasP), and pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP and PEP).

In the attached report, the Ad Hoc Task Force makes six recommendations that, based upon their review, will help San Diego County achieve the goal of ending the epidemic:

- 1) Develop a media campaign or campaigns to provide general education as well as targeted education to individuals at high risk for infection;
- 2) Engage private healthcare systems, including independent medical providers treating HIV disease and Medi-Cal managed care plans, to ensure the availability of routine, opt-out HIV testing;
- 3) Develop action plans for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), two medical interventions that can prevent HIV infection;
- 4) Implement strategies to utilize surveillance and Ryan White program data to identify individuals who are out of care and bring them into care;
- 5) Develop and incorporate specific, culturally appropriate strategies for addressing the needs of populations that are disproportionately impacted by HIV; and
- 6) Develop a policy that will focus the County of San Diego, its programs and partners on ending the HIV epidemic over the next decade.

The report also summarizes many of the key findings made by the Task Force.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me or Patrick Loose, Chief of the HIV, STD and Hepatitis Branch at 619-293-4709.



NICK MACCHIONE, Agency Director
Health and Human Services Agency

NM/pl
Attachments