

This newsletter is organized to align the updates with Strategies from the ***Laying a Foundation for Getting to Zero: California's Integrated HIV Surveillance, Prevention, and Care Plan*** (Integrated Plan). The [Integrated Plan](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DOA/CDPH%20Document%20Library/IP_2016_Final_ADA.pdf) is available on the Office of AIDS' (OA) website at www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DOA/CDPH%20Document%20Library/IP_2016_Final_ADA.pdf.

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Staff Highlight:

OA is excited to welcome new staff. **Sonny Jones** as a new Associate Governmental Program Analyst (AGPA) in the Care Housing Unit/Care Branch. Sonny will work with Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Project Sponsors to provide housing assistance to people living with HIV that have unmet housing needs.

Sonny comes to OA after spending 13 years working for Wells Fargo Bank, where he held various roles and most recently worked in compliance and risk management. He is a Sacramento native, and currently resides in the midtown area of Sacramento. In his free time Sonny likes to go for walks around the neighborhood and runs around the parks, consume copious amounts of chocolates, watch reality shows with his partner, and practice and teach yoga. He does not have any pets of his own, but he does enjoy spending time with his partner and his partner's pets Leo (dog) and Aries (cat).

Additionally, join us in welcoming **Jordan Folster**. She has joined the OA Support Branch as the Staff Services Manager I (SSMI) of the Personnel and Operations Unit.

Jordan has over 8 years of experience as a Human Resources Manager at Mikuni. She is well trained and experienced in



providing guidance related to the Family and Medical Leave Act, California Family Rights Act, Pregnancy Disability Leave, Workers' Compensation, Reasonable Accommodations, and more. Her knowledge and experience in human resources, project management, policy and procedure development, benefits, leave, training, employee development, and payroll administration will be a valuable asset to our team. In her spare time, Jordan enjoys doing DIY home projects and spending time with her family.

HIV Awareness:

The month of November celebrates the transgender and gender nonconforming communities and raises awareness for the community through education and advocacy

activities. **Transgender Awareness Week (TAW) is observed November 13 – 19** each year to help raise the visibility of transgender individuals and address issues members of the community face. Transgender people, allies, and organizations around the world, help raise visibility and address matters such as discrimination, prejudice, and acts of violence members of the transgender community face and provides space to uplift the voices and experiences of the transgender and gender non-conforming (transgender/GNC) community. TAW is a prelude to the Annual International Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) observed around the world on November 20th. TDOR is a day meant to honor the memory of the transgender individuals whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence and transphobia that year.

There are an estimated 220,000 Trans/Transgender/Gender Non-Binary adults in California. Visit the OA HIV Prevention Branch, Transgender specific webpage [OA Transgender Community Health in California](#) which highlights the impact of HIV and other health disparities transgender Californian's face. Additionally, the webpage provides significant dates, resources, and an opportunity for awareness and education while improving tools for those serving the transgender community in HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care efforts.

General Office Updates:

COVID-19

OA is committed to providing updated information related to COVID-19. We have disseminated a number of documents in an effort to keep our clients and stakeholders informed. Please refer to our [OA website](#) at www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cid/doa/pages/oamain.aspx, to stay informed.

Monkeypox (MPX)

OA is committed to providing updated information related to MPX. We have partnered

with the Division of Communicable Disease Control (DCDC), a program within the Center of Infectious Diseases, and have disseminated a number of documents in an effort to keep our clients and stakeholders informed. Please refer to the [DCDC website](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/monkeypox.aspx) at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/monkeypox.aspx>, to stay informed.

The CDPH MPX Stakeholder Engagement Team released a Request for Application (RFA) to provide eligible Community Based Organization (CBO) reimbursement for MPX vaccine administration and MPX vaccine outreach/education activities.

The purpose of the [MPX CBO Grant](#) is to provide eligible CBO reimbursement for vaccine administration and vaccine outreach/education activities. A CBO is a public or private nonprofit organization that provides services to individuals in the community. Federally Qualified Health Centers are considered a CBO as long as they are a nonprofit entity. A nonprofit entity is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. There is \$1.5 million available and, if requests for funding exceed the \$1.5 million amount, applications will be scored based on population served and clinic size, and the description of outreach/education statement of activities.

The grant reimburses CBOs for vaccine administration expenses incurred between July 1, 2022, and October 26, 2022, and for retrospective or prospective outreach/education efforts.

Racial Justice and Health Equity

The Racial & Health Equity (RHE) workgroup aims to gain insight and understanding of racial and health equity efforts throughout CDPH and take next steps towards advancing RHE in our work. The workgroup has formed subcommittees to address community stakeholder engagement challenges, improve OA policy and practices to support RHE and increasing OA knowledge and

attitude on RHE among leadership and staff.

The workgroup convened in October and discussion focused on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Allyship in the workplace.

HIV/STD/HCV Integration

As the lead state department in the COVID-19 response, CDPH has re-directed hundreds of staff to this effort. Because of this, the integration efforts of the OA, STD Control Branch, and Office of Viral Hepatitis Prevention are postponed indefinitely. Please refer to our [OA website](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cid/doa/pages/oamain.aspx) at www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cid/doa/pages/oamain.aspx, to stay informed.

Ending the Epidemics Strategic Plan



CDPH-OA/STD Control Branch are pleased to report that the roll-out of the **California Strategic Plan** to address the syndemic of HIV, HCV and STIs continues in November as our Workgroup finalizes our draft phase-2 Blueprint with input from our provider needs assessment, community survey and regional listening sessions. As soon as it is complete, we will be releasing the Phase-2 Blueprint draft for broad community input! Thanks in advance for reviewing this document when released and helping us make it better!

Below is the [website that documents our work](https://tinyurl.com/CDPHStratPlan):

- <https://tinyurl.com/CDPHStratPlan>

Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE)

- **Street Medicine Training Project**
In October, EHE counties attended a project kick-off meeting offered by the Keck School of Medicine to help plan to implement the

Street Medicine Model to strengthen their mobile services, especially aimed at people experiencing homelessness. Thanks to all the EHE counties that continue to implement their EHE plans to help accelerate the end of HIV in California.

- **Building Healthy Online Communities/ TakeMeHome®**

Through EHE funding, OA is planning to expand OraQuick HIV self-testing to all counties in California by the end of the year through the Building Healthy Online Communities (BHOC)/TakeMeHome program. OA will work with local health departments and community stakeholders to promote this program once it is up and running.

Strategy A: Improve Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Utilization

PrEP-Assistance Program (AP)

As of October 25, 2022, there are 195 PrEP-AP enrollment sites covering 178 clinics that currently make up the PrEP-AP Provider network.

A [comprehensive list of the PrEP-AP Provider Network](https://cdphdata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6878d3a1c9724418aebfea96878cd5b2) can be found at <https://cdphdata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6878d3a1c9724418aebfea96878cd5b2>.

[Data on active PrEP-AP clients](#) can be found in the three tables displayed on page 4 of this newsletter.

Strategy B: Increase and Improve HIV Testing

OA's HIV home-testing distribution demonstration project continues through Building Healthy Online Communities (BHOC) in the six California Consortium Phase I Ending the HIV Epidemic in America counties. The program, [TakeMeHome®](https://takemehome.org/), (<https://takemehome.org/>) is advertised on gay dating apps, where users see an ad for home

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Age and Insurance Coverage:

Current Age	PrEP-AP Only		PrEP-AP With Medi-Cal		PrEP-AP With Medicare		PrEP-AP With Private Insurance		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18 - 24	339	10%	---	---	---	---	43	1%	382	11%
25 - 34	1,026	30%	1	0%	---	---	258	7%	1,285	37%
35 - 44	823	24%	---	---	3	0%	171	5%	997	29%
45 - 64	493	14%	---	---	20	1%	109	3%	622	18%
65+	22	1%	---	---	158	5%	7	0%	187	5%
TOTAL	2,703	78%	1	0%	181	5%	588	17%	3,473	100%

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Age and Race/Ethnicity:

Current Age	Latinx		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		White		More Than One Race Reported		Decline to Provide		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18 - 24	186	5%	---	---	47	1%	18	1%	---	---	92	3%	9	0%	30	1%	382	11%
25 - 34	731	21%	1	0%	117	3%	76	2%	3	0%	290	8%	5	0%	62	2%	1,285	37%
35 - 44	636	18%	3	0%	84	2%	43	1%	1	0%	189	5%	9	0%	32	1%	997	29%
45 - 64	413	12%	3	0%	32	1%	16	0%	---	---	141	4%	---	---	17	0%	622	18%
65+	22	1%	1	0%	4	0%	3	0%	---	---	153	4%	---	---	4	0%	187	5%
TOTAL	1,988	57%	8	0%	284	8%	156	4%	4	0%	865	25%	23	1%	145	4%	3,473	100%

Active PrEP-AP Clients by Gender and Race/Ethnicity:

Gender	Latinx		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian		Black or African American		Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander		White		More Than One Race Reported		Decline to Provide		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	275	8%	1	0%	6	0%	6	0%	---	---	14	0%	1	0%	4	0%	307	9%
Male	1,578	45%	7	0%	261	8%	149	4%	4	0%	829	24%	19	1%	130	4%	2,977	86%
Trans	122	4%	---	---	15	0%	1	0%	---	---	14	0%	1	0%	4	0%	157	5%
Unknown	13	0%	---	---	2	0%	---	---	---	---	8	0%	2	0%	7	0%	32	1%
TOTAL	1,988	57%	8	0%	284	8%	156	4%	4	0%	865	25%	23	1%	145	4%	3,473	100%

All PrEP-AP charts prepared by: ADAP Fiscal Forecasting Evaluation and Monitoring (AFFEM) Section, ADAP and Care Evaluation and Informatics Branch, Office of AIDS. Client was eligible for PrEP-AP as of run date: 10/28/2022 at 09:48:22 AM
Data source: ADAP Enrollment System. Site assignments are based on the site that submitted the most recent application.

testing and are offered a free HIV-home test kit.

In the first 25 months, between September 1, 2020, and September 30, 2022, 3884 tests were distributed. This month, mail-in lab tests (including dried blood spot tests for HIV, syphilis, and Hepatitis C, as well as 3-site tests for gonorrhea and chlamydia) accounted for 110 (74.8%) of the 147 total tests distributed.

Of individuals ordering a test in September, 33.3% reported never before receiving an HIV test, and 45.6% were 18 to 29 years of age. Among individuals reporting race or ethnicity, 33.3% were Hispanic/Latinx, and of those reporting sexual history, 65.7% indicated 3 or more partners in the past 12 months. To date, 448 recipients have completed an anonymous follow up survey, with 94.0% indicating they would recommend TakeMeHome HIV test kits to a friend. The most common behavioral risks of HIV exposure reported in the follow up survey were being a man who has sex with men (72.8%) or having had more than one sex partner in the past 12 months (62.7%).

Strategy J: Increase Rates of Insurance/Benefits Coverage for PLWH or on PrEP

As of October 25, 2022, the number of ADAP clients enrolled in each respective ADAP Insurance Program are shown in the chart below.

Strategy K: Increase and Improve HIV Prevention and Support Services for People Who Use Drugs

Racial Disparities in Access to Medication for Addiction Treatment

Racial disparities in access to medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) are prevalent throughout California. As overdose rates increase for people of color, a recent report by [California Bridge Project](#) details whether state-wide MOUD expansion addresses racial disparities in MOUD access.

The [full report](#) can be found at: <https://secureservercdn.net/166.62.108.229/1k4.8f5.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/CA-Bridge-Zip-Code-Final.pdf>.

Research: Heroin Pipe Distribution to Reduce High-Risk Drug Consumption Behaviors Among People Who Use Heroin

The Harm Reduction Journal published research conducted by the [People's Harm Reduction Alliance](#), and the [Urban Survivors Union](#), and researchers from the University of Washington in Seattle that suggests distributing a pipe designed specifically as a harm reduction tool for heroin use could encourage people to inject less or switch entirely from injection to smoking. Smoking can help people to avoid some of

ADAP Insurance Assistance Program	Number of Clients Enrolled	Percentage Change from September
Employer Based Health Insurance Premium Payment (EB-HIPP) Program	531	- 2.03%
Office of AIDS Health Insurance Premium Payment (OA-HIPP) Program	5,724	- 0.78%
Medicare Part D Premium Payment (MDPP) Program	2,039	- 0.29%
Total	8,294	- 3.10%

Source: ADAP Enrollment System

the harms associated with injecting, including increased risk for infectious disease and soft tissue infections (abscesses).

The [full research report](https://harmreductionjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12954-022-00685-7) can be found at: <https://harmreductionjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12954-022-00685-7>.

For [questions regarding this issue of *The OA Voice*](#), please send an e-mail to angelique.skinner@cdph.ca.gov.