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STAFF HIGHLIGHT

➤ Patrick Christensen

OA would like to welcome **Patrick Christensen!**

Patrick is the new Chief of the Local Capacity Building & Program Development Unit in the Prevention Branch.

Patrick comes to us with a wealth of experience and knowledge from the Complaints Section of the Licensing and Certification Division, within the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). In his previous role, Patrick served in a lead capacity to provide support and subject matter expertise to his team in conducting complaint investigations regarding alcohol and/or other drug (AOD) treatment centers. In his work, Patrick gained valuable insight into a sensitive population and learned how to serve as an ally and advocate for individuals who are often stigmatized by society. He came to understand substance use as a public health issue—not a moral failing—and has worked to shift public perception through education and advocacy.

Additionally, Patrick brings extensive hiring, on-boarding and training experience to his new role, both in state service and the private sector. Patrick also worked for Third Party Liability and Recovery Division, Estate Recovery Program, where he followed various Welfare and Institution Codes to ensure that regulations were followed and met. Patrick demonstrated effective

Patrick



communication with stakeholders by using Department regulations to explain and reinforce the collections process. Additionally, Patrick provided input and feedback on how to improve Departmental procedures.

Patrick has his BS degree in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration from San Francisco State University. During his course of study, one class that stood out the most to him was Therapeutic and Inclusive Recreation, which focused on creating inclusive environments, adapting to unexpected situations, and

understanding the lived experiences of people different from himself. This course helped clarify his life's purpose: he wanted to help people. Patrick is passionate about serving the community and is extremely excited to jump in and familiarize himself with our programs and to meet all the great folks here at OA.

Please give Patrick a warm welcome, we are so glad to have him on our team!

➤ **Customer Service Week 2025: Honoring the Heart of ADAP and PrEP-AP Support**

Each year, the first full week of October marks Customer Service Week, a time to recognize the vital role of customer service professionals across all industries. Established by Congress in 1984, this week is especially meaningful for call centers, where frontline staff are the first point of contact for those seeking help, guidance, and support.

At the heart of our AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis Assistance Program (PrEP-AP) call center is a dedicated team of Client Services Technicians who embody excellence in every interaction. Whether assisting clients, enrollment workers, or providers, they navigate complex inquiries with professionalism, empathy, and a deep commitment to service.

This year, we proudly celebrate the **ADAP and PrEP-AP Client Services Team** for their unwavering dedication. Your ability to listen, problem-solve, and uplift others—often under pressure—sets the gold standard for what customer service should be. Your work not only supports our clients but strengthens the mission of public health across California.

As we recognize Customer Service Week 2025, let's take a moment to applaud the incredible individuals behind the phones and emails. Thank you for your resilience, your compassion, and your tireless efforts to make every client experience a positive one. You are truly the voice

of ADAP and PrEP-AP, and we are grateful for all that you do. Thank you!

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Dear Ending the Syndemic Partners,

Thank you for helping to make this year's Ending the Syndemic Symposium a success! The Ending the Syndemic Symposium was co-sponsored by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), OA and the [California Planning Group \(CPG\)](#). This year's Symposium focused on the themes of Stigma Free Services, Economic Justice and Housing First: three of the social determinants of health on which our work in California is organized. Over the three-day Symposium, speakers addressed these themes and led participants to reflect on how they might implement work to center the health of the priority populations in our *Ending the Epidemics: Integrated Statewide Strategic Plan* and *Ending the Epidemics: Implementation Blueprint*.

This Symposium was free and was open to any partner working to end the syndemic of HIV, STIs and HCV in California. Simultaneous Spanish translation was available at all sessions.

The event website will be live through December 2025 to [access the conference recordings and materials](#). Both English and Spanish versions will be available.

CDPH/OA is also in the process of building a permanent website to house all of the recordings and materials from both this year's and last year's Symposiums.

HIV AWARENESS

National Latinx HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NLAAD) is observed on October 15 to raise awareness about the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on the Latine community. Social determinants of health to include systemic racism, discrimination, HIV stigma and limited access to quality healthcare.

According to CDPH/OA Surveillance Data, in 2023, the Latine community accounted for 42% of living HIV cases and 57% of new HIV diagnoses. For more information, the [HIV/AIDS Epidemiology and Health Disparities in California - 2023](#), is now available and additional reports can be found on our [HIV Surveillance Reports](#) webpage.

NLAAD promotes HIV testing, prevention and treatment, and education in the Latine community.

GENERAL UPDATES

➤ Mpox

OA is committed to providing updated information related to mpox. 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](#) to stay informed.

Digital assets continue to be available for LHJs and CBOs on DCDC's [Campaign Toolkits](#) website.

➤ HIV/STI/HCV Integration

We continue to move forward with the necessary

steps to integrate our HIV, STI, and HCV programs into a single new Division. We will continue to keep you apprised on our journey as new information comes in.

ENDING THE EPIDEMICS STRATEGIC PLAN OA/STD

The [visual at the top of the next page](#) is a high-level summary of our *Strategic Plan* that organizes 30 Strategies across six Social Determinants of Health.

OA and STD Control Branch would like you to continue to use and share the [Strategic Plan](#) and the [Implementation Blueprint](#). These documents address HIV as a syndemic with HCV and other STIs, through a Social Determinants of Health lens.

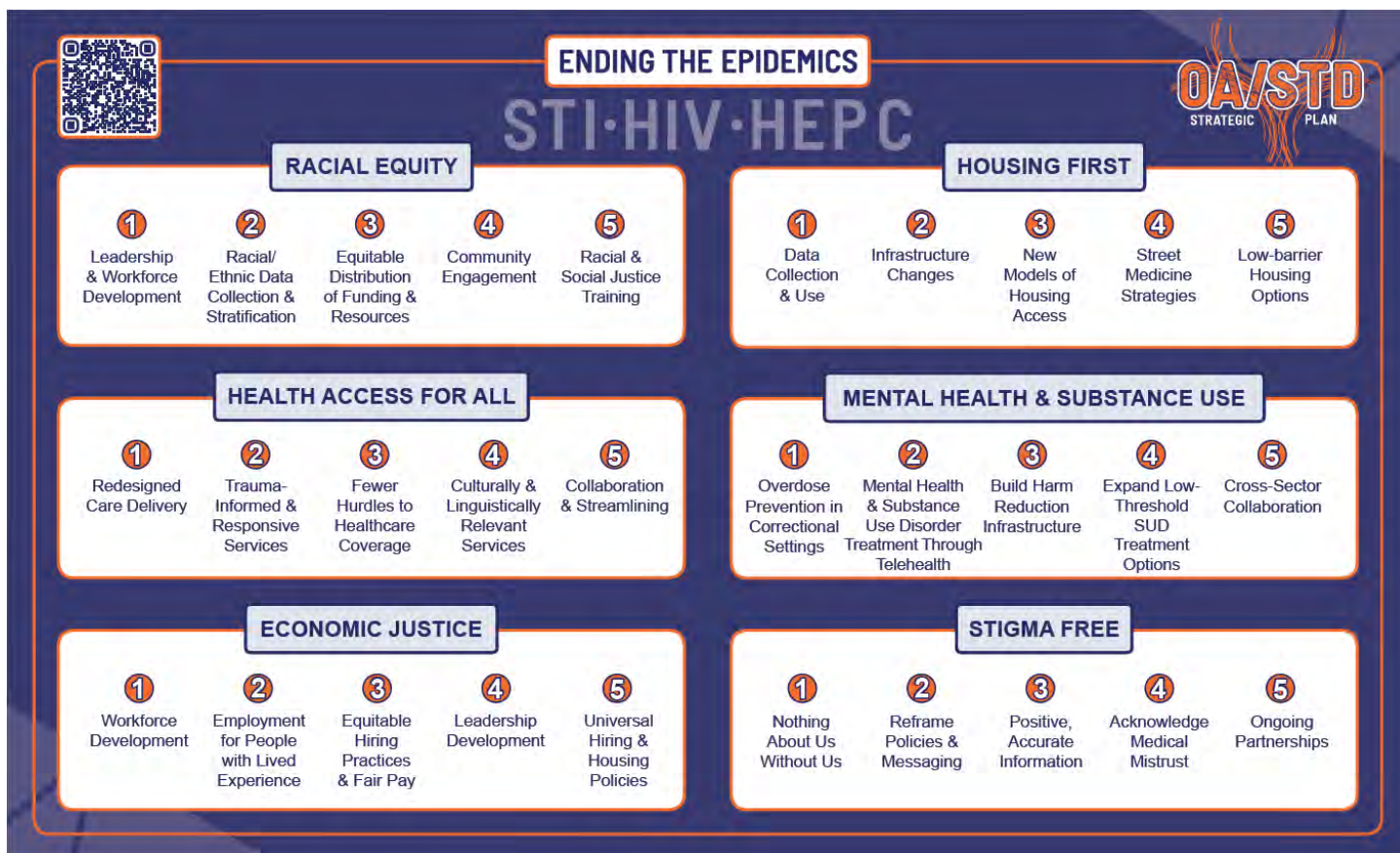
For technical assistance in implementing the *Strategic Plan*, California LHJs and CBOs can visit [Facente Consulting's webpage](#).

HEALTH ACCESS FOR ALL

➤ Strategy 1: Redesigned Care Delivery

OA continues to implement its **Building Healthy Online Communities (BHOC)** self-testing program to allow for rapid OraQuick test orders in all jurisdictions in California. The program, [TakeMeHome](#), is advertised on gay dating apps, where users see an ad for home testing and are offered a free HIV-home test kit.

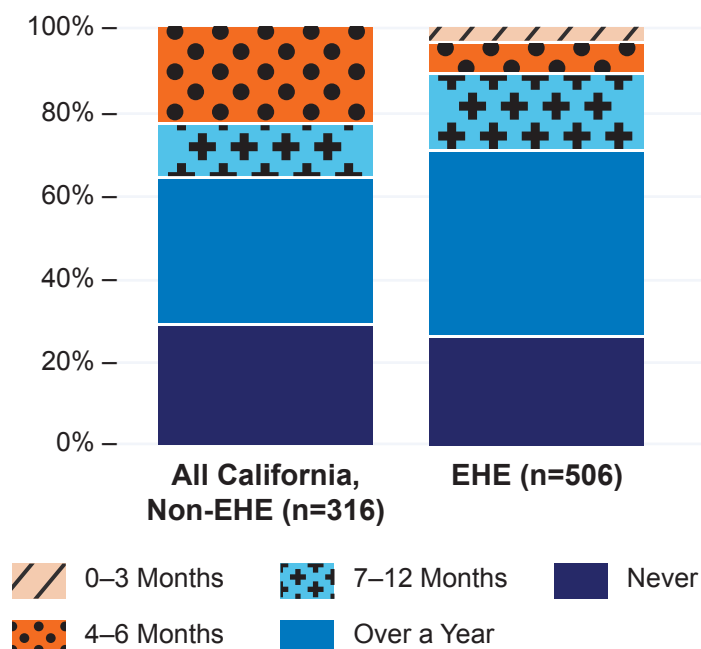
In August, 316 individuals in 36 counties ordered self-test kits, with 213 (67.4%) individuals ordering 2 tests. Additionally, OA's existing TakeMeHome Program continues in the six California Consortium Phase I Ending the HIV



Epidemic in America counties. Between the program's initiation in September 1, 2020, and August 31, 2025, 18,930 tests have been distributed. This month, mail-in lab tests (including dried blood spot tests for syphilis, and Hepatitis C, as well as 3-site tests for gonorrhea and chlamydia) accounted for 188 (37.2%) of the 506 total tests distributed in EHE counties. Of those ordering rapid tests, 240 (75.5%) ordered 2 tests.



HIV Test History Among Individuals Who Ordered TakeMeHome Kits, August 2025



Additional Key Characteristics	EHE	All California, Non-EHE
Of those sharing their gender, were cisgender men	39.9%	44.2%
Of those sharing their race or ethnicity, identify as Hispanic or Latinx	37.5%	38.4%
Were 17-29 years old	46.8%	40.5%
Of those sharing their number of sex partners, reported 3 or more in the past year	41.6%	38.5%

Since September 2020, 2,064 test kit recipients have completed the anonymous follow up survey from EHE counties; there have been 905 responses from the California expansion since January 2023.

Survey Highlights	EHE	All California, Non-EHE
Would recommend TakeMeHome to a friend	94.9%	94.5%
Identify as a man who has sex with other men	46.7%	51.3%
Reported having been diagnosed with an STI in the past year	8.2%	9.9%

➤ Strategy 3: Fewer Hurdles to Healthcare Coverage

As of September 30, 2025, there are 294 PrEP-AP enrollment sites and 232 clinical provider sites that currently make up the [PrEP-AP Provider network](#).

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

As of September 30, 2025, the number of ADAP clients enrolled in each respective ADAP Insurance Assistance Program are shown in the [table at the top of page 7](#).

RACIAL EQUITY

➤ Strategy 4: Community Engagement

California Planning Group (CPG) – Fall 2025 Meeting Announcement

The CPG and OA will be hosting the Fall In-Person CPG Meeting from **October 13–15**. On October 13, we will host a CPG Leadership Academy, which focuses on skills and capacity building for the current CPG members only. Attendance on October 14 and 15 will be by invitation only.

The meeting's theme is We Thrive in the Face of Adversity – Empowered by Communication. Strengthened through Collaboration. United in Connection. It will feature state-led presentations on CPG 101, HIV Care Connect, OA Branch

(continued on page 7)

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	303	11%	---	---	---	---	11	0%	314	12%
25 - 34	898	33%	---	---	---	---	134	5%	1,032	38%
35 - 44	670	25%	---	---	1	0%	110	4%	781	29%
45 - 64	363	13%	1	0%	4	0%	87	3%	455	17%
65+	28	1%	---	---	84	3%	7	0%	119	4%
TOTAL	2,262	84%	1	0%	89	3%	349	13%	2,701	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	180	7%	1	0%	35	1%	23	1%	1	0%	44	2%	5	0%	25	1%	314	12%
25 - 34	578	21%	2	0%	95	4%	84	3%	3	0%	196	7%	6	0%	68	3%	1,032	38%
35 - 44	468	17%	5	0%	64	2%	46	2%	2	0%	148	5%	7	0%	41	2%	781	29%
45 - 64	244	9%	---	---	33	1%	13	0%	1	0%	125	5%	1	0%	38	1%	455	17%
65+	14	1%	---	---	5	0%	5	0%	---	---	87	3%	---	---	8	0%	119	4%
TOTAL	1,484	55%	8	0%	232	9%	171	6%	7	0%	600	22%	19	1%	180	7%	2,701	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	38	1%	1	0%	3	0%	14	1%	1	0%	8	0%	---	---	9	0%	74	3%
Male	1,377	51%	6	0%	210	8%	155	6%	5	0%	573	21%	17	1%	153	6%	2,496	92%
Trans	60	2%	---	---	15	1%	1	0%	1	0%	7	0%	2	0%	1	0%	87	3%
Unknown	9	0%	1	0%	4	0%	1	0%	---	---	12	0%	---	---	17	1%	44	2%
TOTAL	1,484	55%	8	0%	232	9%	171	6%	7	0%	600	22%	19	1%	180	7%	2,701	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: 09/30/2025 at 12:01:26 AM
Data source: ADAP Enrollment System. Site assignments are based on the site that submitted the most recent application.

ADAP Insurance Assistance Program	Number of Clients Enrolled	Percentage Change from August
Employer Based Health Insurance Premium Payment (EB-HIPP) Program	589	-0.17%
Office of AIDS Health Insurance Premium Payment (OA-HIPP) Program	5,779	-0.40%
Medicare Premium Payment Program (MPPP)	2,348	0.77%
Total	8,716	-0.07%

Source: ADAP Enrollment System

updates as well as community-led presentations on the Ending the Epidemics Coalition, PrEP gap analysis, and CPG committee accomplishments.

For more information, please [visit our CPG webpage](#).

Also, the **CPG recently recruited 11 new members** to fill vacancies created by attrition and to fill representational gaps. Every CPG member has strong lived experience and/or expertise as well as the ability to advocate for and represent the voices and perspectives of a wide range of key partners, communities, and regions impacted by the HIV/STI/HCV syndemic in California.

Thank you to the CPG Membership Committee for leading the recruitment effort and ensuring that statewide community planning remains reflective of the diverse needs and communities in California.

Much appreciation to John Paul Soto and Vivian Gallardo (Community Co-Chairs), Tiffany Woods and Matt Willis (State Co-Chairs), Karin Hill (CPG Manager), and the CPG Steering Committee for their dedication and support during this effort. We are so excited to have new CPG members as part of the 2025 cohort and appreciate their commitment to ending the syndemic!

Please give a warm welcome to the new CPG members:

- Alasdair Burton
- Ashley Morris
- Carly Rachocki
- Danielle Campbell
- Daryl Russell
- Joseph Green
- Karina Torres-Cornejo
- Miranda Manning
- Rhea Van Brocklin
- Simon Nicolas Yapura
- Sophie Genigeorgis

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