



December 2016

From the Executive Director

Season's greetings! First of all, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and advocacy for the Delaware HIV Consortium. As we celebrate our 25th Anniversary, It is fitting that we look back at our history and the many people who have changed the course of HIV/AIDS in Delaware.

You may know that the Delaware HIV Consortium was born out of the desire to develop a community plan to both fight HIV infection and to provide service to people affected by the disease. With the epidemic only five or six years old, the Delaware Division of Public Health was charged with designing a comprehensive health and supportive system. The Consortium was born. In the following years, one AIDS clinic at Wilmington Hospital became one in each county, with satellite operations at other sites in the community. As Federal programs – like the Ryan White CARE Act – grew to deal with the delivery of healthcare, community-based organizations stepped forward to fill the needs – from Claymont to Delmar.

In the following decade, the Consortium was charged with integrating the State's plan for care with prevention activities. As a result of this effort, Delaware was one of the first states in the country with an integrated plan. We celebrate this achievement with the recent submission of the Delaware Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan for 2017-2021 (find it [here](#)).

The Consortium's services now include: case management services, HIV community planning, health insurance assistance, emergency financial assistance, rental housing assistance, a mail-order condom distribution program, a PrEP education program, a personal care items closet, and HIV counseling and testing.

When you look at what has been accomplished, you can only imagine the hundreds of individuals involved – from the first doctors, nurses and

healthcare providers to encounter the disease in Delaware, to the many health advocates who fought for action, to the state government staff who helped pull together scant resources. We couldn't possibly name everyone, but they are anything but forgotten. Their compassion and dedication are legendary, and their achievements are the reason why our health outcomes are better than many other states. It must also be said that we have miles to go to improve our prevention efforts.

As we mark our 25th year, we re-dedicate ourselves to the service of people with HIV/AIDS, to continuously work to improve the care and support services provided, and to strive harder to prevent HIV infection in the coming years. We must and will do better. And if we must do it with fewer resources, we will do that too, because it is right. Please join us in this fight.

Happy Holidays -- and may the New Year be full of promise, prosperity, good health and an incredible year of unbounded possibilities for the Consortium and the clients we assist. Believe!!

'Til there's a cure,

Peter Houle, MBA
Executive Director



Thank You, Iron Hill Brewery

Dorian Lobato of Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant - Wilmington Riverfront, presents a \$2,355 check for the annual proceeds from their triple chocolate hill dessert! Thank you for your continued support Iron Hill Brewery - that's a lot of brownies!



Case Management Continues Growth in 2016

The Consortium's Case Management program continues to grow with six case managers serving more than 250 clients statewide. The program began in 2012 with one case manager serving 40 clients and has grown steadily, providing Ryan White case management services that help support overall wellness and medical adherence, while also providing referral for additional services from partner agencies and other complimentary programs. Our Case Management team are: supervisor, Raphia Noubassi, case managers April Feague, Elise Harry, George Lincoln, Kristine Loller, Josh Sheets, and Kenya Smoke.

Counseling & Testing Program to Expand in 2017

As part of the Consortium's efforts to help prevent HIV infection, we are proud to announce the expansion of our counseling & testing program in 2017. In addition to our existing HIV test sites at three Walgreens stores in Wilmington, we have signed an agreement to conduct testing at Westside Family Healthcare's Northeast location. In addition to HIV testing, the Consortium will be offering Hepatitis C antibody testing at these locations beginning in January. Locations and schedule will be announced as soon as details are confirmed.

In cooperation with Christiana Care's HIV Community Health Program, Westside Family Healthcare, and our other community health partners, the Consortium will be developing a referral network in 2017. This Hepatitis C continuum will provide counseling and testing, referral for treatment, and linkage to care. There are several drugs that have been approved by the FDA to treat chronic Hepatitis C, with a cure rate on first treatment of 95-98 percent. Some patients do not respond to the first course of treatment and have to undergo a second round, but these medications are providing an effective cure for a disease that used to lead to incurable liver disease or cancer.

"Hepatitis C affects the same population as HIV," said Arlene Bincsik, RN, president of the Consortium's Board of Trustees and program director of Christiana Care's statewide HIV clinics. "Now that Hepatitis C is treatable, it is important that – first – we identify our HIV patients who also have Hepatitis C and treat them, and – secondly – to help identify other people who may need treatment. It's just good public health policy and in keeping with the mission of the Consortium."

Housing Assistance Program Expanding in 2017

The Consortium is excited to announce that it will be providing additional support for its housing assistance program in 2017, allowing the program to house 10-15 more individuals. Increased access dollars generated by the Consortium's 340B Pharmacy program will allow the agency to enhance its current housing services.

The Consortium is the administrator for the City of Wilmington and the Delaware State Housing Authority's HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS) program, a HUD (US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development) program offering rental assistance vouchers to individuals living with HIV/AIDS throughout the state. The Consortium currently provides rental assistance to 130 households, housing 239 individuals and their dependent family members. These clients pay a portion of their rent, up to 30%, based on their income.

"The most unique thing about our housing program is that our consumers can choose the apartment themselves," said Dianne Casey, director of Housing Programs. "As long as the landlord will accept a voucher from our program and the unit can pass an inspection, the client can stay where they are, or find another location that best suits them."

"We are thrilled to have the resources, through our 340B program, to be able to expand our support to Housing Assistance," said Peter Houle, executive director. "With a waiting list of 117, are excited to be able to help more people, even as Federal funding for the program has declined."



Michelle Brown, *above left*, 2015 WOW Award winner, of Giving Back with Coupons, continues to step up to donate hygiene products for our clients in need. Michelle made her final delivery of personal care items for 2016. Also pictured are case managers George Lincoln and Kristine Loller, and Scott MacKenzie, communications director. These personal care items help make life easier for our clients, most of who live on disability insurance. Thank you Michelle for being so wonderful to us, our clients, and happy holidays to you and your family!

340B Update

The Consortium's 340B Pharmacy program now has 51 participating members statewide, with pharmacy services at 10 Walgreens stores – soon to be 16! In late 2014, the Consortium started a 340B Pharmacy program in conjunction with Walgreens pharmacies in the Wilmington area. The 340B program provides participating consumers access to a larger list of approved prescriptions and also allows them to have their co-pays covered by the Consortium. This program allows the Consortium to receive wholesale discounts on medications, with the program generating increased access dollars for the Consortium. These increased access dollars allow the Consortium to provide more services to more people in need. (see "Housing" article above).

The Consortium's 340B Pharmacy program startup was funded by a generous 2-year grant from the Longwood Foundation, with the end goal of demonstrating that consumers who access the 340B program will have higher medical adherence to their therapies and improved viral suppression levels. We are grateful for Longwood's support – one year into the program the statistics are very promising and we have surpassed our goals!

Save the Date!

The 2017 WOW Awards Celebration was been scheduled for **Friday, April 28, 2017**, 6:30 pm, at The Belle – Clarion Hotel in New Castle. Save the date for an outstanding evening of awards, fine dining, one of the area's most diverse auctions, dancing and fun! Invitation will be mailed in early Spring. Hope to see you there!



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