

CHAPTER 7: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Capacity building, training, and technical assistance are provided to health department staff, HIV prevention providers, care and support service providers, and other prevention partners to build their capacity to provide the full spectrum of HIV prevention services for people living with HIV.

Capacity building and technical assistance needs are identified through a variety of strategies including the following:

- 1) Periodic surveys of the providers delivering HIV prevention services,
- 2) Evaluations of trained participants at the conclusion of each training event conducted throughout the year to determine additional training/capacity building needs,
- 3) Surveys of training and capacity building needs at periodic interdisciplinary or discipline-specific meetings of health department staff and/or contractors,
- 4) Special request of health department and/or contractor staff;
- 5) Evaluation of HIV Planning Council meetings, including future training needs, and
- 6) Supervisory staff input based on site visits and reviews of quarterly narrative progress reports.

Based on the findings from these various assessment strategies, capacity building and technical assistance are provided in a number of ways including, but not limited to: in-person training workshops, broadcasts, site visits from DHEC central office staff, periodic meetings and in-service events, conferences, and in-state and/or on-site technical assistance from CDC's network of national Capacity Building Assistance (CBA) providers.

For HIV Planning Council members, presentations are offered at Council meetings on topics or issues of interest. In some cases, an identified training need cannot be met through a brief in-meeting presentation and members are referred to other Division courses to meet those needs. When referrals cannot be made to existing courses, every attempt is made to identify the appropriate course content and instructor(s) to provide the necessary content. At every HPC meeting, an updated training course calendar is provided with the latest training opportunities noted.

With most training courses, certain prerequisites must be met prior to participation in the course. Generally, all staff working in STD/HIV must complete three courses: SC STD/HIV Laws, HIV 101, and STDs 101. As new courses are available or requested, it is determined by the Division and CBA providers whether or not certain prerequisites must be met and what those are.

In addition to Division, region, and contractor staff, course offerings are open to other community partners on a space-available basis. Occasionally, courses may be limited to specific audiences as may be appropriate (Many Men, Many Voices; d-up: Defend Yourself!; SISTA; CLEAR; SIHLE). In some cases (i.e., Waived Rapid Testing), special permission or clearance must be received from the Central Office program coordinator prior to a registrant's acceptance for a course.

Courses are usually offered in Columbia for ease of access to participants from across the state; however, with increasing budgetary and travel constraints, attempts have been made to offer courses on a regional basis. In some cases when courses have been offered on a regional basis, these efforts have resulted in the course being cancelled due to insufficient registration. Additionally, when possible, the Division offers broadcasts and DVDs of training events to decrease barriers to access.

Cross-training is encouraged to better equip all staff to deal with the multi-dimensional aspects of HIV and STDs and co-morbidities such as alcohol/other drug use, addiction, and/or co-infections (i.e., TB, Hepatitis, etc.). Division training staff serves on training committees of other agencies and organizations to maximize the availability of and access to cross-training opportunities.

The STD/HIV Division frequently offers to host national or regional training events (especially Train-the-Trainer courses) in an attempt to meet the training needs of in-state staff while assisting in the coordination and implementation of these CDC- or other specially-sponsored events.

Assessment of Capacity Building and Technical Assistance Needs

The STD/HIV Division conducts ongoing assessment of the needs of the prevention staff and contractors. This information is extrapolated both from meetings with the prevention staff, contractors, HPC members, and from data retrieved from training evaluations. In addition, prevention staff and contractors are encouraged to complete a TA form to request technical assistance.

Annually, the STD/HIV Division collaborates with CDC and AED to identify the needs of our prevention staff and contractors in the selection of Effective Behavioral Interventions (EBIs). The DEBI Training Needs Assessment for States and Jurisdictions Update Survey is completed to request training on interventions identified by both prevention and contractual staff. As a result of this process the STD/HIV Division has offered the following training opportunities to aid in identified capacity building for our grantees:

Healthy Relationships

Many Men, Many Voices

Popular Opinion Leader (POL)

SISTA

VOICES/VOCES

As a means of providing guidance to prevention staff and contractors in the selection and management of Effective Behavioral Interventions the following courses are offered:

Selecting Effective Behavioral Interventions (EBIs)

Using Process Evaluation to Strengthen EBIs

The STD/HIV Division offers training opportunities to assist CBOs in building capacity in CTRS by providing the following course offerings:

Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling

Addressing the Prevention Needs of Men Who Have Sex With Men

Addressing the Prevention Needs of Clients Who Test Positive

Fundamentals of Waived Rapid HIV Testing and Prevention Counseling

Once identified, these requests are directed to the appropriate provider for assistance. Those needs that can be addressed by in-house staff are channeled to the appropriate provider. In instances where the aid of an outside provider is required, the necessary requests are made and the process is coordinated to finalize arrangements for the needed training and/or technical assistance.

Targeted Needs Assessment

In the Spring of 2007, the STD/HIV Division conducted a targeted needs assessment to secure data from three populations: 1) HIV/STD prevention contractors, 2) DHEC regional staff, and 3) Central Office staff. This effort was designed to assess the populations' preparedness to provide services central to their professional disciplines and identify any needs for capacity building. Central to the survey was the need to determine what trainings were completed by each population, their existing training needs, preferred days for training, preferred medium of instructional delivery, and barriers to enrollment in and completion of training. The survey instrument included both open and closed-ended questions.

Responses from the three targeted populations were representative of 29 DHEC regional staff; 10 Central Office staff; and 13 staff from HIV/STD prevention contractors. A total of 52 responses were received.

The results of the survey determined the following:

- Each professional discipline should establish a learning plan inclusive of all required training for program staff. This would clarify what instruction is required and what instruction is viewed as electives.
- Instruction should include topics central to professional disciplines (i.e. DIS, Health Educators, Social Workers, etc.). It should be specific to core training requirements as well as requirements to ensure staff development, competence, and quality assurance (i.e., updates for clinical and non-clinical staff, services integration, etc.).
- Barriers to attending trainings included travel restrictions and budget restraints; conflict with other duties/ demands; and training scheduled at dates/time that are inconvenient.
- The preferred instructional delivery method is instructor-led in-person training, followed by televised broadcast, and online web-based.
- The preferred days for instruction are Tuesday-Thursday, with Fridays being preferred over Mondays as an alternate day of instruction.

Challenges and limitations identified as a result of this process included timely access to the training by participant, contractual delays, and the cost of training materials when not provided by the CBA provider. Participants experienced difficulties due to budgetary restraints and travel restrictions which hampered their ability to travel to centralized training sites. Results from

several surveys suggested the need for training to be offered in parts of the state other than Columbia. Additional comments suggested training needed to address the needs of multiple disciplines.

The Division makes a concerted effort to identify and provide training and training materials to all participants at no cost. The Division and/or CBA providers accomplish this through the purchase of materials. Some CBA providers, however, are unable to provide the necessary materials. In these instances, the Division provides agency and organizational participants with contact information for ordering the needed materials. When funding permits, the Division purchases the materials for participants or provides supplemental support materials.

The Division plans to continue building capacity in delivery of evidence-based interventions, CTRS and other prevention services. It is our goal to provide training in new EBIs as they become available. The identification and selection of other training priorities will depend on the identified needs of the state, Division and regional staff, and the contractors.

Collaborative Needs Assessment of DHEC Staff

In the summer of 2008, a needs assessment survey was conducted collaboratively between the Southeast AIDS Training and Education Center (SEATEC) and DHEC. The purpose was to assess the training needs of DHEC personnel regarding the implementation of rapid HIV testing. With input from DHEC and the South Carolina HIV/AIDS Clinical Training Center, the needs assessment survey was modified from previous assessments conducted by SEATEC. The survey instrument was finalized in July 2008 and was completed by 181 DHEC personnel in eight regions across South Carolina in August 2008. Data entry and analysis was performed by SEATEC. The HIV Testing Needs Assessment Report, including descriptive results of the survey and a copy of the instrument, are included as **Appendix I**.

As a result of the survey, the SC HIV/AIDS Clinical Training Center worked with Division staff to identify and provide training to meet the identified needs of staff regarding implementing rapid HIV testing. Additionally, Division training staff has met with Central Office's CTRS staff, discipline-specific consultants, the STD/HIV Medical Director, and the HIV/AIDS Clinical Training Center staff to develop specific training plans for DHEC staff regarding implementation of rapid HIV testing.

Five-Year Recap of Training Activities

This section is designed to provide a historical recap of the capacity building and professional development activities of the STD/HIV Division. Information reported is reflective of all training activities beginning with 2005 through the first six months of 2009.

For calendar year 2005, 50 training opportunities were provided to meet the needs identified by the HIV Planning Council, HIV prevention and care contractors, other community based organizations (CBOs), and DHEC regional staff. During the period of January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2005, the following training opportunities were provided:

- Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling (3)
- The ABCs of Hepatitis and HIV (2)
- Addressing the Prevention Needs of Men Who Have Sex with Men (3)
- HIV, STDs, and SC Laws (3)
- American Red Cross African American HIV Education and Prevention Instructor Course (2),
- SISTA
- Healthy Relationships
- VOICES/VOCES
- Addressing the Prevention Needs of Youth
- Addressing the HIV Prevention Needs of Clients Who Test Positive (3)
- Helping Clients with HIV Status Disclosure (2)
- Prevention Case Management
- Update on Rapid Testing for HIV
- and other related courses.

These training opportunities represented collaborative efforts with independent consultants, the Dallas STD/HIV Behavioral Intervention Training Center, the Emory Regional Training Center, the Florida STD/HIV Training Unit of the Florida Health Department, Jackson State University's Mississippi Urban Research Center, and the American Red Cross.

For calendar year 2006, 49 training opportunities were provided to meet the needs identified by the HIV Planning Council, HIV prevention and care contractors, other community based organizations (CBOs), and DHEC Region Staff. During the period of January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006, the following training opportunities were provided:

- Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling (4)
- Addressing the Prevention Needs of Men Who Have Sex with Men (2)
- HIV, STDs, and SC Laws (4)
- American Red Cross African American HIV Education/Prevention Instructor Course (2)
- Healthy Relationships
- SISTA (2)
- VOICES/VOCES
- Addressing the Prevention Needs of Youth
- Addressing the HIV Prevention Needs of Clients Who Test Positive (2)
- Prevention Case Management
- Update on Rapid Test for HIV
- Overview of TB and the TB/HIV Connection
- Transgender 101
- and other related courses.

These training opportunities represent collaborative efforts with independent consultants, the Dallas HIV Prevention Training Center, the Emory Regional Training Center, the Florida STD/HIV Training Unit of the Florida Health Department, Jackson State University's Mississippi Urban Research Center, and the American Red Cross.

For calendar year 2007, 26 training opportunities were provided to meet the needs identified by the HIV Planning Council, HIV prevention and care contractors, other community based organizations (CBOs), and DHEC Region Staff. During the period of January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007, the following training opportunities were provided:

- The ABCs of Hepatitis and HIV (2)
- Advanced HIV Prevention Counseling
- Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling (2)
- Addressing the Prevention Needs of Men Who Have Sex with Men
- HIV, STDs, and SC Laws
- American Red Cross African American HIV Education and Prevention Instructor Course
- SISTA
- VOICES/VOCES
- Introduction to Human Sexuality
- Addressing the HIV Prevention Needs of Clients Who Test Positive (2)
- Addressing the HIV Prevention Needs of Hispanic and Latino Populations
- Cultural Competency
- Essentials of HIV/AIDS for AOD Professionals
- HIV 201: An Advanced Knowledge-Based Course
- Introduction to Human Sexuality
- Introduction to Behavior Change (2)
- HIV Prevention and the ‘Silent’ Population in the Hispanic/Latino Community
- Skills building for Culturally Competent Healthcare and HIV Prevention Efforts with Transgender Populations
- Understanding Sexual Addiction
- and other related courses.

These training opportunities represent collaborative efforts with independent consultants, the Dallas HIV Prevention Training Center, the UCSF Transitions Project, the Emory Regional Training Center, and the Southeast AIDS Training and Education Center (SEATEC).

For calendar year 2008, 33 training opportunities were provided to meet needs identified by the HIV Planning Council, HIV Prevention Contractors, other Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and DHEC District Staff. During the period of January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008 the following training opportunities were provided:

- Advanced HIV Prevention Counseling and Risk Reduction (2)
- Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling (3)
- Addressing the Prevention Needs of Men Who Have Sex with Men (2)
- HIV 101: A Basic Knowledge-Based Course (3)
- HIV 201: An Advanced Knowledge-Based Course (2)
- Introduction to Human Sexuality (2)
- STDs and SC Laws (3)
- HIV Stigma and Access to Care (2)
- VOICES/VOCES (2)
- Ethics, Boundaries, and Limitations (2)
- Addressing the HIV Prevention Needs of Clients Who Test Positive (2)

- Behavior Change in the Real World (2)
- Implementing the HIV-1 Rapid Antibody Test (2)
- Understanding Sexual Addiction (2)
- and other related courses.

These training opportunities represent collaborative efforts with independent consultants, the Dallas HIV Prevention Training Center, the Emory Regional Training Center, and the Southeast AIDS Training and Education Center (SEATEC).

In the first six months of 2009, 19 training opportunities were provided to meet the needs identified by the HIV Planning Council, HIV prevention and care contractors, other community based organizations (CBOs), and DHEC Region Staff. During the period of January 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009, the following training opportunities were provided:

- CLEAR
- Social Marketing
- HIV 101: A Basic Knowledge-Based Course (2)
- Group Facilitation Skills (2)
- SISTA
- SC HIV/STD Laws (2)
- d-Up!
- Healthy Relationships
- Popular Opinion Leader (POL)
- Introduction to Human Sexuality
- Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling

Due to contractual difficulties in early 2009, some courses offered through the Division were postponed until the contractual matters could be resolved and appropriate trainers identified. As a result of the difficulties, some courses have had to be offered on a less-frequent basis; however, all necessary courses will be offered. Some of these courses are up for review or are in the process of being updated by the CDC (i.e., Prevention Needs of MSM; Fundamentals of HIV Prevention Counseling) and revised offerings will replace the planned courses as soon as possible.

Division-sponsored training opportunities represent collaborative efforts with independent consultants, the Academy for Educational Development, the CDC Capacity Building Branch, the Dallas HIV Prevention Training Center, and the Southeast AIDS Training and Education Center (SEATEC).

Additional courses are scheduled for the remainder of 2009. Other training needs have also been identified and will be scheduled and promoted when arrangements are finalized.