

# HIV Care Network for the Finger Lakes Region

Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency

1150 University Avenue

Rochester, NY 14607

(585)461-3520

www.knowingisbetter.org



## Policy, Advisory/Education Committee

### Minutes

November 17, 2008

**Present:** Roberto Burgos (City of Rochester), Catherine James (ABC), Debra Khani (VA), Mary Beth Lowery (ACHC), Calvin Twoguns (LRG)

**Excused:** Mike Mulé

**Staff:** Pat Zacharias, Nora Rowland

#### **Review of Minutes:**

Calvin motioned that the minutes be approved and Catherine seconded it. The minutes were approved as written with a correction on pg. 2 to the spelling of Catherine's name.

#### **Review of Legislative Breakfast:**

The Committee discussed rescheduling the Legislative Breakfast. Calvin expressed his frustration that the event was cancelled after all the work that went into it. The Network Coordinator explained that the decision was made due to a very low response from legislative officials. The Committee decided to not reschedule the Legislative Breakfast. Instead they will work on making in district visits, face-to-face dialogue with one legislator at a time. This seems to be more preferable.

#### **Prison Healthcare Updates – Calvin Twoguns:**

Calvin presented members with an updated presentation on the New York State Prison Health Issues. The presentation included a handout on the passing of the State Senate Legislation (S.8508/A.8849) that requires New York State correctional facilities to provide people in prison with information about the prevention of HIV, and how to obtain services upon release. Calvin also wrote the following 2006/2007 position statement on the current actions and response of the State concerning HIV and incarceration:

*Adequate medical care in prisons and jails is an essential component of the public health responsibilities of the State. New York State inmates suffer disproportionately from serious illness, including HIV/AIDS. Of the 63,000 inmates in the custody of the Department of Correctional Services (DOCS), more than 5,500 are HIV-infected.*

*Incarceration provides an opportunity to test, treat and educate a population that has*

*not had sufficient access to health care, yet has high incidences of chronic diseases, mental illness and substance abuse problems. Deficiencies in care have persisted in part due to the fact that prison environments are insulated from general public scrutiny and no other State agency or independent authority has consistently reviewed the care being provided DOCS inmates.*

*As well, we call for correctional facility to implement STD/HIV education and prevention programs, including the distribution of prophylactics.*

This is a good issue for this Committee to undertake with the Governor's office as well as Monroe County officials. The Committee was also asked if we would be interested in meeting with the Governor's local representative. All in Committee agree that this would be a good issue to take up with the local representative of Governor Paterson's office.

### **Planning for Education Topics:**

It was suggested that members should themselves become educated on the Committee's priorities and be prepared to answer questions on these topics. Also members are being asked to select a priority topic and organize or prepare a presentation for a future General Meeting.

Calvin also feels the PAEC should do a presentation to the General Membership on the process it takes for a bill to move through legislation until it is passed.

### **Suggested Topics:**

1. Administration of DHHS Benefits
2. What It Takes to Pass a Law?
- 3.

### **Announcements:**

- Calvin announced that the planning for the National American Indian AIDS Summit has been going along very well. The event will take place July 14-15, 2009 at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center.

**Next Meeting: Monday, December 15, 2008 at 9:00 am at FLHSA.**