

Rochester Area Task Force on AIDS, Inc.

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RAYS OF HOPE

Minutes
February 10, 2005

Members Present: Jeff Bookhart, Lisette Castro, Sady Fisher, Ebonee Johnson, Carol King, Isabel Rosa, Jennifer Wolfey, Lynn Varricchio, Pat Zacharias.

Introductions: Sady opened the meeting at 10:30AM, welcomed Jennifer and asked people to introduce themselves for Jennifer's benefit.

Review of Minutes: Lynn moved that the minutes of the January meeting be accepted as written, Lisette seconded it. The minutes were approved.

Agenda: Isabel moved approval of the agenda as distributed. Jeff seconded the motion and the agenda was approved.

Financial Update: Pat indicated that the committee has approximately \$5000 in its account plus a recent grant of \$500 from the Perinatal Network for an outreach targeted to women of child bearing age.

Outreach Event: Sady indicated that the focus of today's meeting would be to discuss an outreach event to women of child bearing age in the Northwest area of the city, which has been identified in the RARE Report and the Regional Gaps Analysis as one of two areas with a high rate of women with STDs who use substances, and have multiple sex partners, including some who have sex for money or to support their drug habit.

Jennifer Wolfey has joined the committee because this is the population that she works with and wants to join the committee's efforts to reach out to this population. She indicated that other ways she reaches out to this population are:

- A Friday afternoon program at the jail; others on the committee are welcome to participate, all that is required is a letter of introduction; Sady and Jeff indicated that they go to the jail on a regular basis;
- Day Reporting: Jeff indicates that he goes to day reporting on a regular basis.

With regard to outreach to the women there are several times of day that Jennifer would recommend that an event might be held. One is about 6 AM when they are getting off work. Another time is Friday or Saturday night from 8-11PM before they go to work.

Last Friday her organization did an all day event at the Rite Aide parking lot. (The lot is not owned by Rite Aide and it is a good site for events.) They handed out health kits, Little Debbie's and things from gifts in kind. They reached more than 120 women. The women are very receptive when they see the SUV with the Mary Magdeline House sign. During the day they are not high.

Sady indicated that ARI has done outreach from both the Burger King and Rite Aide on Lyell. Lisette indicated that the Needle Exchange group has done outreach on Clifford and Hudson for the women who stroll that area.

Lynn indicated that she received a request from a church in the Lyell neighborhood that is interested in having a health fair on May 21st from 10AM -7PM and was looking for agencies to participate. Mary Gayden from Arc of Jesus at 69 Whitney Street called staff and Lynn indicated that committee members would be apprised of her interest and that someone would get back to her after today's meeting.

The members decided that it would make sense to have an outreach event on Friday evening May 20th so that they could encourage people to attend the health fair the following day. Jennifer suggested that they alert the NET office so police don't interfere. They are usually good about not hitting people with bench warrants if they know people are trying to get the women services. Other groups that might be approached were as follows: the fire department, and metro ambulance. The reason for the fire department is that some of the women are using cans to heat robotussin and drinking it to get high. In the process some are getting burned and catching apartments on fire. Others are doing Robo highs in combination with huffing krylon paint. For about \$4 people get very high. But it is dangerous, that is why it is important to invite the fire department and the ambulance department to discuss the dangers they see as a result of these behaviors.

There was discussion of possibly having food for the church event. Possibilities included: a spaghetti supper prepared by one of the area churches, deli sandwiches, cookies. It was suggested that the food be prepared as a box lunch so that people would be able to take it home for family. This might attract people to the health fair. It is possible that area youth might be involved in making cookies.

What Agencies to Involve: Mary Magdeline, ARI, Westside, AFC will participate. Rural Opportunities, McCree McCuller, and the other members of the outreach collaborative will be asked. The group will try to have a testing van at Rite Aide and one at Burger King with outreach staff at both locations. ARI will bring bleach kits and crack kits. Mary Magdeline House will use its March and April Gifts In Kind opportunities to get incentives.

Next Steps: Lynn called the woman from the Church and an appointment was set up for Sady, Ebonne, Lisette, and Jennifer to meet with Mary Gayden at 3PM on February 15th at 69 Whitney Street.

Next meeting will be March 3, 2005 at 1:00PM at ARI 1350 University Avenue.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.