

HIV/AIDS SERVICE COORDINATION at JRI HEALTH

SIDNEY BORUM, JR. HEALTH CENTER at JRI HEALTH

THE ASSISTED LIVING PROGRAMS AND THE HOUSING OPTIONS PROGRAM at JRI HEALTH

EVALUATION RESEARCH & PLANNING DEPARTMENT at JRI HEALTH

THE CENTER FOR TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT at JRI HEALTH
HUNTINGTON AT SYMPHONY AND SYMPHONY SHARED LIVING at JRI HEALTH



 *Justice Resource Institute*

HEALTH

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Our mission states “JRI HEALTH pursues social justice through providing underserved individuals and communities with opportunities to develop the tools and skills essential in creating strength, well-being and autonomy. We do this through compassionate support, constant innovation and community leadership.” Inherent in that mission is our commitment to meet the needs of individuals who face difficulty gaining access to services due to societal injustices, including health disparities, racism, homophobia, and economic discrimination. Our role at JRI HEALTH is to provide barrier-free services; to intervene with other systems when necessary; and to model empowering methods of advocacy, so that the individuals and communities we serve view us as partners on whom they can rely as they design the lives they choose for themselves.

We provide concrete services like primary health care and GED preparation to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and other marginalized teens and young adults, and we also offer the affirmation and encouragement that is often withheld from them as a result of prejudice. We deliver legal and case management services to individuals who are navigating the complexities of HIV, substance abuse and/or mental health issues, but we do it through a “stages of change model” that acknowledges and honors their progression as well as their setbacks. We work with communities across the globe to prevent the spread of disease and to bring into care those infected with and affected by HIV, while we also provide organizational development and leadership training so that the work is sustainable. Ultimately, JRI HEALTH, through its dedicated staff, works to make a difference and to further the vision of social justice that is the very foundation of JRI.

I hope that you will enjoy reading and learning about our programs.
For further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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THE CENTER FOR TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT JRI HEALTH

Using innovative and evidence-based approaches to the development and delivery of training, technical assistance, organizational development and community organizing, the Center for Training and Professional Development (CTPD) works in partnership with individuals, organizations and communities to strengthen their health and well-being.

Since the Center’s establishment in 2001, these services primarily have been provided to HIV/AIDS service organizations, but the Center’s growing client list includes departments of health in the U.S. and abroad; schools and universities; hospitals; and a variety of organizations working on social justice issues such as homelessness, violence, substance abuse and health disparities.

The Center has forged an especially close partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, offering many of the HIV/AIDS-related trainings required for service providers and other advocates working in the state. These core courses include Fundamentals of HIV, HIV Counseling and Testing, Positive Prevention, Supervisory Skills, Behavioral Risk Assessment and Case Management. In addition to training, the Center provides other avenues to professional and institutional development through its Leadership and Capacity Building Institute (LCBI), which supports board development, strategic planning, team building and executive coaching.

Beyond its local and national efforts, the Center is doing more work in the international arena, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. Drawing on the experience of helping to create and support sustainable infrastructures and programs in the U.S., the Center is partnering with in-country organizations and agencies to train local trainers, implement monitoring and evaluation strategies and provide leadership training.

In all of its endeavors, the Center combines and integrates the humanistic and client-centered approach of social work, principles of adult learning, and public health’s emphasis on harm reduction and health promotion. While the high quality of its curricula, trainings, technical assistance, and consulting sets the Center apart, the Center is also distinguished by its multicultural and multilingual staff. The Center’s diversity has been vital to its growth; cultural awareness and inclusiveness are fundamental to its success.

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HUNTINGTON AT SYMPHONY AND SYMPHONY SHARED LIVING

A 90-unit residential building near Symphony Hall in Boston is the anchor for two housing programs operated by JRI HEALTH.

HUNTINGTON AT SYMPHONY

The Huntington at Symphony Program is a supported housing program for people living with AIDS (PLWAs). Twenty-five subsidized studio units are reserved for PLWAs who are capable of living independently with some support. Residents, who were formerly homeless, are provided with a safe living environment, a community of caring and support, and access to needed resources and home-based support services. Staff are available on site to provide case management as well as to assist with activities of daily living.

Some of the services available include

- Group dinners on Tuesday nights
- Monitoring how residents are doing
- Tutoring residents who are taking classes
- Doing errands for residents who need assistance

Huntington at Symphony also operates River Street Community, JRI Health's oldest congregate supportive housing program for people living with HIV disease. River Street Community provides supportive services and subsidized housing for up to thirteen individuals in a 16-unit apartment building in Mattapan, which is owned by the Boston Housing Authority.

SYMPHONY SHARED LIVING

Symphony Shared Living is a supported housing program for seniors living with chronic mental illness. Eleven subsidized studio units are reserved for formerly homeless Department of Mental Health clients who are capable of living independently with some support. Similar to Huntington at Symphony, residents are provided with a safe living environment and a community of caring and support, as well as on-site mental health care and home-based support services.

On-site case managers provide support to residents including the following services:

- Monitoring and dispensing medications
- Assisting residents in managing mental health symptoms
- Coordinating mental health and medical appointments
- Doing errands for residents who need assistance
- Helping to plan/cook dinners, which are served nightly

The Huntington at Symphony and Symphony Shared Living programs respect and honor each resident's dignity and life situation while supporting residents' efforts to enhance quality of life and well-being.

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EVALUATION RESEARCH & PLANNING DEPARTMENT AT JRI HEALTH

The JRI HEALTH Evaluation Research & Planning Department has two tracks:

- 1] an internal program evaluation and performance improvement focus, and
- 2] an external community research and development focus.

TRACK 1] The Evaluation Research & Planning Department serves the evaluation needs of all JRI HEALTH programs and services by initially building evaluation capacity and then exploring evaluation options and conducting evaluation research projects that improve program performance and produce new knowledge. Evaluation expertise at the community-based organization level is extremely limited in public health programming. JRI HEALTH is uniquely positioned in that it has leaders that champion evaluation efforts and technical expertise and resources to support evaluation. The Evaluation Research & Planning Department aims to maximize and expand organizational capacity to conduct program evaluation that will not only comply with funders' contractual requirements but will enable JRI HEALTH to hone its programs so that it can provide the most effective services to its target populations.

TRACK 2] The Evaluation Research & Planning Department collaborates with public health departments, academic institutions and health systems to conduct evaluation and other research projects that align with JRI HEALTH's mission. The Department uses participatory and empowerment research models that engage the study population/communities in partnerships for learning and self-improvement. Examples of projects include the following:

- A Case Study of Six HIV Peer Support Programs: The Development of One-on-One Service Models. Conducted for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health – HIV/AIDS Bureau
- LGBT Youth of Color Health Assessment: A Community-Based Participatory Research Project. Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health – Health Equity Department
- Black Sexual Health & Sexual Networks Analysis, in collaboration with Fenway Research Institute and the Multicultural AIDS Coalition
- Leadership for Quality Improvements in Disease Management: A Survey of Massachusetts Primary Care Physician Groups. Done in collaboration with Brandeis University/Heller School for Social Policy & Management and Partners HealthCare system

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BOSTON GAY & LESBIAN ADOLESCENT SOCIAL SERVICES (GLASS)

Boston Gay & Lesbian Adolescent Social Services (GLASS) provides counseling, advocacy and referrals for health care services and housing to Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning (GLBTQ) teens and young adults, many of whom are of color. Boston GLASS operates a community center that gives the teens it serves a safe place to hang out, do schoolwork, use a computer, watch TV, eat, and talk to peers. Boston GLASS also provides free HIV counseling and testing and makes referrals, when needed, to JRI HEALTH's Sidney Borum, Jr., Health Center.

The health advocates at Boston GLASS meet with youth individually to address any concerns that are related to physical, mental, or emotional health. Boston GLASS also conducts an extensive outreach program that provides safer sex materials and education to GLBTQ teens and young adults in the community including condoms, information about HIV testing and a list of testing sites.

Often, GLBTQ teens are turned away by their families and forced to leave home, and many of these vulnerable youth drop out of school. Boston GLASS provides assistance to teens and young adults in finding housing, employment and in completing education. Boston GLASS operates a GED support program that provides instruction and online tools as well as a Housing and Employment Linkages Program (HELP), which helps teens on the path to self-sufficiency by linking them with jobs and housing. The staff at Boston GLASS also provide supported referrals to other providers in the community.

Boston GLASS also operates youth empowerment programs. The Shades of Color program is a peer education and leadership development program. Youth members participating in Shades conduct educational outreach to peers on the issues of HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), pregnancy, safer sex, homophobia, transphobia, racism, safety and decision-making, coming out and self-love. Members of this program and staff provide workshops on the aforementioned issues at high schools, colleges, and organizations. Boston GLASS' Stepping Out in order to Love Ourselves (SOLO) project is a program that focuses on educating GLBTQ youth of color on issues including racism and homophobia. SOLO allows for individuals to learn about and discuss these issues, as well as have the opportunity to speak with GLBTQ people of color in the community who may serve as role models and mentors.

If teens are not ready to engage in these supportive services, they can still drop in to the community center and socialize with friends in a safe environment, and most importantly, feel free to be themselves.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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THE ASSISTED LIVING PROGRAM AND THE HOUSING OPTIONS PROGRAM

JRI HEALTH's Supportive Housing Programs are comprised of the Assisted Living Program and the Housing Options Program. Both provide supportive services and access to housing subsidies. Each program is designed to work with individuals with disabilities who have been homeless or are at risk of being homeless.

THE ASSISTED LIVING PROGRAM

The JRI Assisted Living Program (ALP) works with persons living with HIV/AIDS. ALP has Greater Boston and statewide program components. In Greater Boston, ALP has access to a wide variety of housing subsidies. These subsidies include Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)/Section Eight, Shelter Plus Care, and Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) subsidies. All subsidies are administered through the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership. Supportive services include housing search, leasing and ongoing support to individuals or families. The Assisted Living Program provides services to nearly 250 participants in Greater Boston and is the largest provider of its kind in New England.

Statewide, ALP provides access to nearly 160 housing subsidies and ensures that all participants are linked to supportive services. JRI HEALTH works with the following providers: AIDS Project Worcester, CARE in Fitchburg, Seven Hills Behavioral Health in New Bedford, Brockton Area Multi Services, North Shore Community Action Program in Peabody, and Southern Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) in Framingham. Regional Housing Authorities administer all ALP Statewide subsidies. JRI HEALTH is extending the reach of the ALP by contracting with the City of Providence, Rhode Island to provide six households with subsidies.

THE HOUSING OPTIONS PROGRAM

The JRI Housing Options Program (HOP) is a collaboration between JRI HEALTH and the Department of Mental Health, Department of Mental Retardation, Department of Public Health Substance Abuse Bureau, and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. Each agency has access to Section Eight subsidies funded through the Department of Housing and Community Development. Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership administers all housing subsidies.

Since its inception in the Fall of 1995, HOP has housed over 500 formerly homeless individuals living with a wide variety of disabilities that include brain injury, HIV/AIDS, developmental disabilities, mental illness and substance abuse. Currently, there are over 300 active HOP participants.

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PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

JRI HEALTH's Peer Support Services program helps people living with HIV as well as individuals who are HIV-negative but are impacted by the disease, by providing peer-led social support activities including support groups for HIV+ young adults in their twenties, HIV+ gay and bisexual men thirty years and older, and HIV+ women and prenatally infected youth.

THE TICKET PROGRAM

This program is for adolescent HIV+ individuals who want to tutor and mentor younger HIV+ individuals. Mentors are required to create and stick to educational and medical adherence goals. The mentors are taught life skills and become employees of JRI HEALTH. This program is a collaborative partnership between JRI HEALTH and the SPARK Center at Boston Medical Center.

THRIVE MONDAY

Thrive Monday is a monthly social and educational event for people living with HIV as well as individuals who are HIV-negative but are impacted by the disease. The event is held at Club Café in the South End of Boston. Free dinner and an HIV-focused educational forum are provided at the beginning of the evening, followed by music, raffles and social time.

PEER SUPPORT GROUPS

The Peer Support Groups provide a forum for people to come together and talk about HIV. New members must meet with program staff and a volunteer facilitator before joining a group. All facilitators are volunteers living with HIV. The groups that meet multiple times a month include the following:

- Poz 20s – Men and women with HIV who are in their 20s
- Positive Crossroads – Men and women with HIV who have a history of substance abuse
- Long Term Survivors Group – Men living with HIV for 10+ years
- Men Living Positively and HIV Support Group for Men – Groups for HIV+ men

HIV+ DIRECT SERVICES NETWORKING BREAKFAST

The Networking Breakfast is a group for direct care service providers, housing advocates, nurses, physicians, mental health clinicians and others that meets once a month at rotating HIV/AIDS service organizations. A presentation by the hosting organization on its programs and services is followed by agency updates and networking.

PEER CLIENT ADVOCACY

This program is designed for individuals with HIV to work with one another to improve health outcomes, strengthen advocacy skills, stay linked to care and access health education including counseling on risk reduction. Program participants also provide emotional support and crisis intervention to their peers

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SIDNEY BORUM, JR. HEALTH CENTER

The Sidney Borum, Jr., Health Center, known affectionately by staff and patients alike as "the Borum," provides high quality comprehensive health care to Boston's most high-risk adolescents and young adults including street identified and homeless youth; inner-city gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning (GLBTQ) youth; and teens and young adults who are HIV positive.

The Borum provides basic primary care including regular wellness visits, vaccinations, and the management of chronic illnesses such as asthma. The Borum also provides urgent and acute care daily through walk-in and same-day appointments. It also provides free family planning and STD screening and treatment for males and females and is one of the first care providers in the region to offer free rapid HIV screening tests. Other services include case management for patients with complicated psycho-social needs as well as focused case management for HIV+ patients.

The Borum has physicians, nurse practitioners, a nutritionist and a child/adolescent psychologist on staff and makes referrals, when needed, to Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Children's Hospital for appropriate specialty needs.

In many cases, the Borum functions as a provider of last resort for a high-risk population that is not able to successfully access and navigate the traditional health care system. The Borum's clinical staff meets patients "where they are" and will examine and treat patients even when they are impaired due to alcohol or substance abuse.

The Borum provides non-health services to support its population, including shower and changing facilities for homeless youth.

The Borum understands the trauma that many patients have experienced and uses a non-judgmental harm reduction model that enables the Center to provide high quality care that respects patients' dignity and earns their trust.

Funding for the Borum is provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the Boston Public Health Commission and foundations and non-profits, including Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD). The Borum also receives private donations.

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THE GREATER BOSTON/METROWEST HIV/AIDS SERVICE COORDINATION COLLABORATIVE

The Greater Boston/Metrowest HIV/AIDS Service Coordination Collaborative (SCC) is a program of JRI HEALTH's Center for Training and Professional Development (CTPD). The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) HIV/AIDS Bureau contracts with JRI HEALTH to coordinate the Greater Boston/Metro-west SCC, one of 11 regional SCC groups working to improve the HIV/AIDS service system in Massachusetts.

The purpose of the SCC is to improve and facilitate access to medical care and support services for people living with HIV/AIDS in the Greater Boston/Metrowest regions of Massachusetts.

THE GOALS OF THE SCC ARE:

- To improve the referral network
- To assess service quality
- To identify and address service gaps and barriers to care for people living with HIV/AIDS
- To maximize access to care while reducing inefficiencies

SCC MEMBERSHIP IS MADE UP OF:

- People living with HIV/AIDS (also called "consumers")
- HIV/AIDS service providers who receive funding from DPH
- Other providers serving people living with HIV/AIDS who share the goals of the SCC

Much of the SCC's work is done in workgroups. As of September 2008, there were four workgroups: Peer Support, Case Management, Mental Health and Substance Abuse, and Resource Guide development. Examples of recent workgroup projects include two service guides, The Ultimate HIV Resource Guide for Consumers and Providers and The Peer Support Guide – HIV Support Groups and Peer Support Programs in the Greater Boston and Metrowest Areas.

WHY SHOULD I GET INVOLVED?

- To help shape and improve services for people living with HIV/AIDS
- To share your opinions and experiences with people living with HIV and HIV service providers
- To develop leadership skills and gain community planning experience

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

- Attend an SCC meeting
- Attend an SCC workgroup meeting
- Join the SCC E-mail Network to receive updates on HIV-related programs, events, and job postings

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THE HEALTH LAW INSTITUTE

The Health Law Institute (HLI) serves an exceptionally diverse client base including individuals living with HIV/AIDS and/or other disabilities; people suffering from serious mental illness; individuals with histories of addiction and homelessness; and members of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) communities. HLI's mission is to serve its clients by providing high-quality, culturally competent legal assistance that addresses the fundamental needs of daily living so that clients can optimize their health and maximize their opportunities to achieve stability, self-advocacy and self-sufficiency.

Since its inception, the Health Law Institute has served a unique role in providing advocacy and direct representation for people living with and at risk for HIV. HLI has the experience to allow its clients to feel welcomed, understood and comfortable with their advocates.

SERVICES IN GREATER BOSTON

HLI offers legal consultation, advice, advocacy, and/or full representation in cases involving housing, benefits, and consumer issues.

SERVICES BEYOND GREATER BOSTON

Through a grant from the Massachusetts Bar Foundation, HLI operates Serving the Underserved: Closer to Home. Through this program, HLI offers onsite legal services, including wills and permanency planning, at AIDS service organizations in Northeastern, Southeastern, and central Massachusetts.

AREAS OF FOCUS

- **HOUSING** – Many of HLI's cases focus on helping clients maintain stable, safe, and affordable housing by defending against eviction from their homes or working to reverse a termination of a housing subsidy.
- **INCOME MAXIMIZATION** – Another major area of HLI service involves helping clients access or maintain Social Security or other public income benefits. Receiving a regular income has a direct beneficial impact on clients' health, because it improves clients' financial ability to pay for self-care expenses such as adequate nutrition, clothing, shelter and transportation
- **ESTATE AND PERMANENCY PLANNING** – Despite advances in HIV treatments, HIV+ clients still face a health crisis that can be life-threatening. Estate and permanency planning continue to be vital needs, and clients can access these services through Serving the Underserved: Closer to Home.

INNOVATIVE MODEL OF SERVICE DELIVERY

SERVING THE UNDERSERVED: Closer to Home represents a cutting edge model of service delivery by placing a traveling attorney at health centers and AIDS service organizations in clients' hometowns. In most clients' lives, it takes an enormous effort to address health needs. If a case manager identifies a need for legal services and can only make a referral to another unrelated, and often distant, legal services agency, the client is less likely to follow up. But because Serving the Underserved comes to the client, follow-up is automatic. As a result, not only does the client get the necessary legal service, but the client also develops a positive track record for following up on their needs and gains self-esteem and positive momentum to tackle other problems in their lives.

Approximately 250 clients are served by the Health Law Institute annually. Funding for the Health Law Institute is provided by the Department of Public Health AIDS Bureau, the Massachusetts Bar Foundation, and contributions from individuals and foundations.

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