

The New Haven Mayor's Task Force on AIDS 2008 Town Meeting Questionnaire **Highlights**

Background

On Wednesday, October 29, 2008 the New Haven Mayor's Task Force on AIDS (MTFA) hosted a town hall meeting at Career High School. Entitled "*New Haven United to End AIDS*" participants listened to speakers and talked about the importance of reaching out to and involving youth in prevention efforts. Recurring comments were made for the need for more education, greater awareness, and unique ways to get the message out about preventing HIV/AIDS in both the group discussion and questionnaire feedback.

Overview

Who came?

Twenty four (24) questionnaires were turned in, eleven (11) of which reported themselves as being HIV positive. The total respondents were almost evenly split between straight and gay, almost half were white and about twice as many males to females.

There was quite a spread in age range from 14 years to 61 years of age, with a median age of 47.

A majority listed New Haven as their place of residence (19), **and almost all felt that the Town meeting was a good idea and should be held annually.**

Prevention

Eleven (11) said the City of New Haven is going a good job at HIV prevention, and seven (7) said it was not. **Interestingly there were nineteen suggestions (19) to improve HIV prevention by stressing more education, condom use, and condom availability. The 3 requests for condoms came from younger-teens, 14, 15, and 16 years of age.**

Care

It seems that most people thought that the City of New Haven was doing a good job at caring for people living with HIV/AIDS with fourteen (14) affirmative responses, and five (5) who said it was not. Of special note, comments seem to indicate the need for more education and awareness of what resources are available, and suggested improvements for tighter integration of care, services, and of course, more funding.

Stigma

A majority felt that stigma still exists about HIV, yet very few indicated that this stigma would interfere with their decision to get tested or disclose their HIV status.

MTFA Knowledge

As for MTFA knowledge, eight (8) blanks were found which may be due to the fact that the formatting did not include check boxes for the options. Four (4) people said they had heard but didn't know much about MTFA. Five (5) respondents said that they did not know anything about the MTFA before the town meeting. Seven (7) said that they previously knew about the tasks force.

Suggestions

Suggestions for future town meetings indicate the need for more publicity and awareness of the event. Some indicated that the acoustics were poor and it was hard to hear speakers.

For those listing themselves as HIV Positive, Total respondents eleven (11)

Positive Profiles

Eight (8) of the eleven (11) listed themselves as being gay, two (2) heterosexuals and one (1) bisexual. The positive group was predominately white (8), and a median age of 56, with a range of 44 – 60.

Satisfaction

Of those answering the question about their satisfaction with health care, of those who answered most said they were satisfied or very satisfied. The same held true of their medical case management.

Medical Care

All are currently under medical care, and have visited a physician in the last 6 months.

Suggestions to improve medical care included more nurses, office visits, alternative therapies, dental care, and gay men's health expertise.

Unmet Needs

In terms of suggestions and unmet needs, seems like alternative therapies for pain management (massage, acupuncture, chiropractic care), more funding for utility assistance, transportation, vitamins, and food were specified as needed.

The final need, which is a good reminder, requested a bullet to kill the HIV virus.

Conclusion:

The survey needs further refinement. Results showed some interesting responses but since it is a relatively small sample, the results need to be taken into context. Clearly the message of more education and greater awareness seems the most united response.

In discussing the event with those attending, it seemed that most felt there should have been many more people at the town meeting. After discussing the meeting with other consumers, they reported they were not notified and were unaware of the meeting, thus indicating for better inter-agency consumer communications and support for such events.

Possible Recommendations: (for future MTFA activities, collaborative projects)

Survey current educational activities by New Haven Dept. of Health and ASO's doing education and outreach, and pin point gaps or needs as may arise.

Brainstorming session on creative ways to reach out to and engage new haven youth

Brainstorming on ways to build a sense of community, isolate and target gaps in communication needs.

Investigate unmet consumer needs, and gauge the prevalence in a larger context.

Have a follow up health fair with Free HIV Testing and Counseling

Others:?

Appendix A

Summary of Responses

Town meeting survey results – 24 Returned

Source of information:

Case Manager: 6
Friend: 5
Mailing: 1
Poster 5
Other: 7 (APNH-3 , Email 2, Alex, Partner)

Good Location and Time

Yes: 22
No: 2 (It's Cold, Bad Sound)

Group Affiliation

Friend or Family Member: 2
Negative: 5
Positive: 11
Unknown: 4
Blank: 2

Ethnicity

African American: 5
Hispanic: 6
Native American: 1
White: 11
Other: 1

Gender

Female: 7
Male: 17

Orientation:

Bisexual: 1
Gay: 11
Heterosexual: 12

Age:

Range: 14 – 61
Average: 41
Median: 47

Felt that Stigma still exists:

Yes: 22
No: 2

Fear of being tested because of Stigma

Yes: 1
No: 22
Blank: 1

Fear of status disclosure due to stigma

Yes: 3
No: 11
N/A: 9
Blank: 1

Knowledge of MTFA

Heard, but didn't know much about MTFA: 4
Not until this town meeting: 5
Yes, knew about it: 7
Blank: 8 (Note: formatting did not have check boxes, and may have been overlooked)

Is New Haven doing a good job at HIV Prevention?

Yes: 11
No: 7
Blank: 6

19 prevention suggestions: (note: majority mentioned the need for more education and outreach, even when they said yes to the above question.)

Condoms
Condoms, sex education for teens
Could do more. Being out there again with prevention messages.
Education
Education
Education
Getting affected people involved.
More Education
More Education
More Education
More Education is needed especially for the adults, this all began in the early 1980s
More Education to more groups, Lions, ELKS, etc.
More effort with the community -- schools, community centers, churches
More focus on youth. Educating Them
More outreach to MSM
Safe sex
Safe sex, abstinence
Simply by telling your sex encounter that you have AIDS but can do it with protection, or not have it at all and use the holy hand.
Using Condoms

Is the city doing a good job at caring for people with HIV/AIDS?

Yes: 14
No: 5
Blank: 5

9 Comments to improve care

Better commitment of funds, training, more real action less talk
Expand the services to the homeless population
Hand out Free Condoms
I am not sure.

letting more people know that more help is available
lots of services are available, testing and counseling. Maybe more advertisement is needed.
More Awareness
More Case Managers. More Alternative Therapies. Too many to list.
More integration of medical care and other services

City/Town:

Branford: 1
New Haven: 19
West Haven: 3
Woodbridge: 1

Would like to get More information

Yes 13
No 2
Not sure 2
Blank 7

9 comments about getting more information

I do like to be more informed and step up as a viable consumer as i am.
I know enough
I live my life with HIV
Include them at AIDS Walk New Haven
Information helps everyone
Its a way of getting educated about different situations
Its very important for all residents (knowledge)
Learning what is available for help.
Not Sure

Was the town meeting a good idea?

Yes: 21
No: 0
Blank: 3

Should we have it every year?

Yes: 22
No: 0
Blank: 2

13 Comments for future meetings

Different location this is very uncomfortable and difficult to hear.
I really think it should be done no less than twice a year.
More advanced Notice, more firm commitments from ASO Eds to get the word out.
More people should be informed
More publicity, clarity of agenda (in publicity), outreach to university students
Mos informacion enlos sitios de apollo (?)
Not at this time. Need to see what comes of my first meeting then I will make certain suggestions in the near future.
Not the best location. Hard to hear. Need to publicize more, more press about it.
Perhaps have a National or Famous (speaker) ,, Dr, Fauci's Center of Disease Control
Possibly further outreach to undergraduates

Recruit more young people to attend the meeting
Should have a few, but this questionnaire caught me unawares.
Tell more people about it

Positive Persons Completing the Survey – N= 11

Gender:

Male: 11

Affiliation:

Gay: 8

Heterosexual: 2

Bisexual: 1

Ethnicity:

African American: 2

Hispanic 1

White: 6

Other 2 (Native American, Gay)

Age Range: 60 – 44

Average Age: 54

Median Age: 56

All currently under medical care, and have visited a physician in the last 6 months

Places specified giving medical care:

Nathan Smith: 1

Fairhaven Clinic: 2

Norwalk: 1

St. Raphael: 3

VA Hospital: 1

Things that could make medical care better:

Outstanding care. Possibly more nurses and alternative therapies.

todo mui bien (?)

Having a manageable job

Dental Health Clinic

Gay Men's Health issues seem to be lacking in New Haven in general

More Visits

Nothing

Satisfaction with health care:

Satisfied: 3

Very Satisfied: 5

No answer: 3

10 reported having a medical a case manager, 8 at APNH, 2 Fairhaven

Satisfaction with Medical Case Management:

Satisfied: 2

Very Satisfied 4

No answer: 5

Things reported that could make medical case management better:

Alternative therapies of various sorts

More Money

More funding for EFA, and taking into account fixed expenses like property taxes when determining EFA eligibility

Top 5 Unmet Needs: 4 responses

1	2	3	4	5
Cost of Meds. A Bullet to kill the Virus Money	Heating Bills, Electric Bills (what gets paid? Meds or Utilities?) Pain Management	Transportation to shopping and transportation to med/doc appts. Alternative Therapies	Transportation to Religious Services (weekly) and to family members (1x a week)	Food Vouchers in addition to Food Stamps and Vitamin Vouchers
Massage	Acupuncture	Chiropractic care	Help with Utilities	Food

Negative, Unknown, Friend and No Affiliation Persons – N= 13

Friend or Family Member with HIV/AIDS

Yes 3

No 5

Are they getting the Best Health Care Services?

Yes 1

No 3

Why or Why not?

Funding cuts for care and housing assistance

How often to you get tested?

Never 6

Yearly 2

Feel Informed about HIV

Yes 7

No 2

How would you like more information?

No responses

AIDS Service Providers – N = 4

Is it becoming easier or more difficult to provide care?

Yes 4 (Question needs to be reworded)

Why?

(easier) because there is better medical care (Other provider, 13 yrs in the field)

I am new to the field - not sure - (Social Worker 1 year in the field)

More difficult due to funding challenges. (Social Worker 10 yrs in the field)

More Difficult. Increasing number of HIV/AIDS Cases = overload. (Med Provider 10 yrs)

Things to help do the job more effectively:

Easier Access to Case Managers

Assistance for patients with housing needs

More awareness of policy issues and trends

Money, funding, funding, funding